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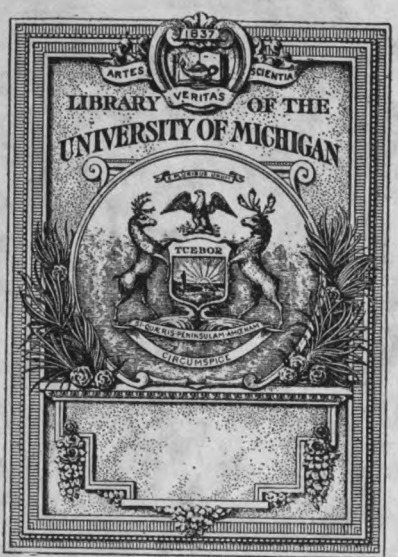
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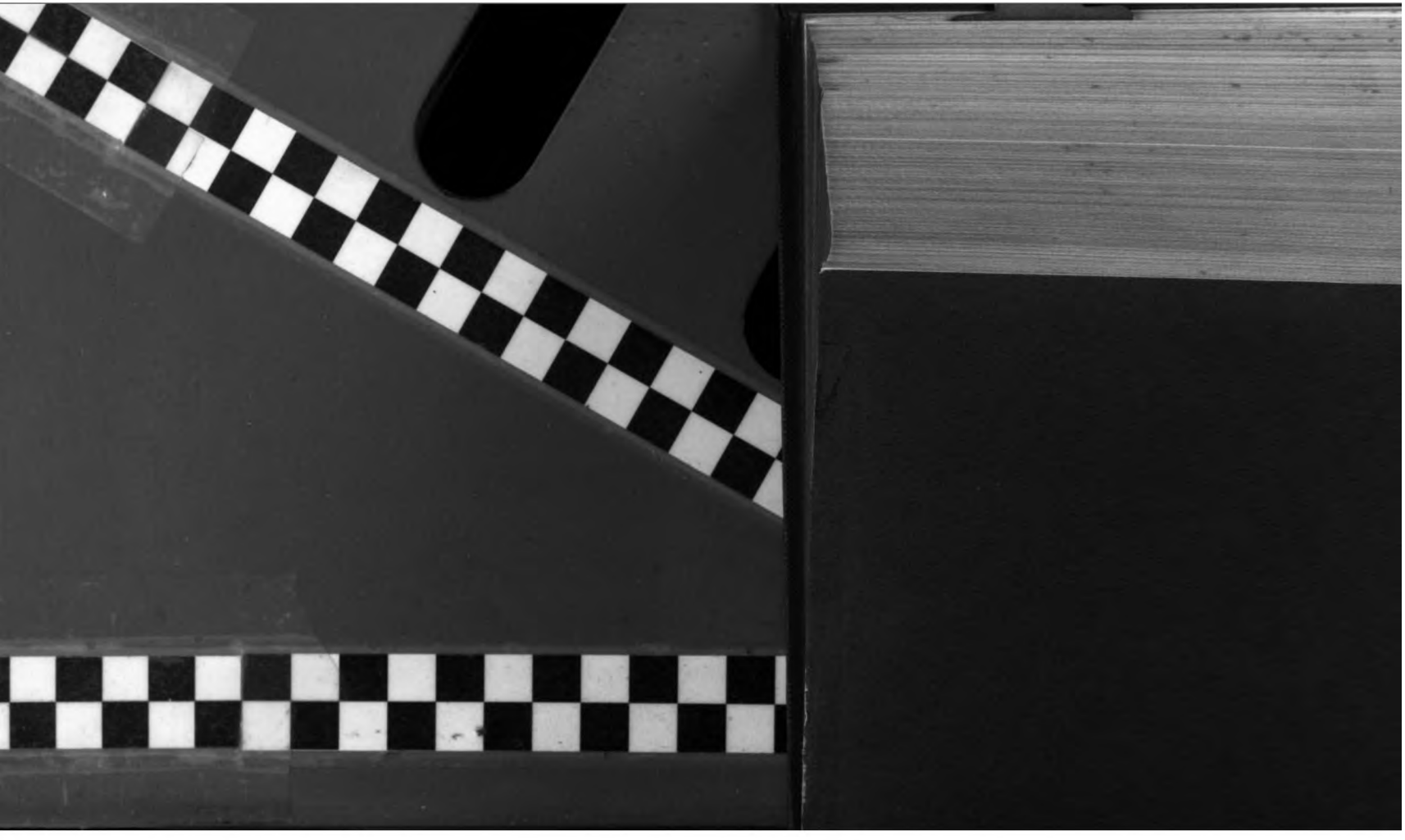

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,
Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

## CHAPTER I.—HOW THEY PLAYED IN THE LAND OF MAKE-BELIEVE.

The appreciation of such an act places us in the terrible alternative of blaming virtue or applauding crime. . . . We must leave this mystery to be debated in the abysses of the human heart. . . . There are deeds of which men are no judges, and which mount without appeal direct to the tribunal of God. . . . There are human actions so strange a mixture of weakness and strength, pure intent and culpable means, error and truth, that we know not whether to term them crime or virtue.—LAMARTINE.

'ANY signs of the en'my, sergeant?' asked a clear, girlish treble in the concentrated suppression of uttermost make-believe.

'No.' And after a searching glance all round, with special consideration of the thickets and pollard-oaks and willows along the river-bank, the patient sentry, with the wooden gun on his shoulder, stolidly resumed his beat. It carried him to and fro across the landward neck of a tiny peninsula formed by a freakish twist of the stream, and the clearly defined path he trod bore testimony to much similar travelling by his or other feet.

On the one side the meadow-land swept gently up towards Castle Bear and Hanger Hill, where here and there a stately mansion stood among its elms and oaks. The double row of willows on the river-banks rambled east and west in hap-hazard fashion, like wavering lines of grenadiers flickering across country under a heavy fire. Just behind him was the tiny peninsula, all a dense thicket of whitethorn and guelder-rose and bramble-bushes. And, shouldering up out of the tangle, as though at some time of his life he had had to fight for it, and still felt the effects, was a very aged pollard-oak; his inside was hollow and blackened—indeed, a thin, blue curl of smoke hung about him at that moment, but it did not seem to trouble him in the slightest. Nay, from the jovial look of him, one could almost have imagined that he enjoyed a fire in his inside as much as the fire-makers themselves. His lower branches disported themselves as a natural staircase, the higher ones round his stunted crown as a watch-tower. Obviously, an oak of parts and of importance in the world.

On the other side of the river, where the buttercup and dandelion studded meadows rolled up to an elevation of quite six feet, a tiny church, with gray walls and red roof and stunted spire, looked proudly down on the capricious stream and the lower lands, as it had looked for close on seven hundred changeful years.

The thicket was tunnelled here and there with runs which permitted entrance—to bodies of a certain smallness and on rigidly enforced toll of fragments of skin and clothing—to a few feet of cleared space round the old oak. One still lusty bough stretched temptingly over the water, into whose clear, brown depths the thickset bank dropped abruptly. The stream, still jubilant with the spring rains, coiled here and there in pools where plump, suspicious-eyed trout waggled lazily to and fro and turned up scornful noses at all amateur attempts at capture. But for the most part it swept merrily over stretches of yellow gravel, where the sunbeams lay like golden bars, and its steep banks were thick with white violets and forget-me-nots.

In commonplace matter-of-fact, the little stream was only the Brent winding through the county of Middlesex to the Thames. But in the ampler world of make-believe it was the mighty Mississippi rolling onward to the Gulf—delicious words, conjuring up what of wonder and romance to outreaching souls overlarge for small bodies even in those days when Louisiana still belonged to France! And what finer in the way of frontier fort could heart of man desire than this hollow oak and this tunnelled thicket, with the brown Brent waters swirling at their feet?

'I do wonder what's become of them,' came the voice from the thicket again, with more than a touch of impatience in it.

'There's Charles now!' said the sentry, standing stolidly to gaze at a distant point along the river-bank.



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'Charles! Who's Charles?' somewhat of impatient disgust and much of rebuke in the voice from the fortress this time. 'I do wish you'd remember where you are, John Sax—sergeant, I mean.'

'Oh, well,'—and the thoughtless sentry flushed, as one caught tripping again after much futile tuition—'Red-Eagle, then. And I b'lieve he's hurt himself. He runs a bit, and then falls down and wriggles on his stomach. There! he's down again!'

'Silly! He's tracking us across the prairie by the blades of grass we trod on, and'——

'But we didn't come that way. We came straight across, and he's crawling along down there among the bushes.'

'And if he came straight across wouldn't we see him and shoot him dead in his tracks, and doesn't he know it? John Sax, you haven't any 'magination at all!'

At which the sentry's honest face warmed again. He half-turned towards the thicket, as though to resent the truthful imputation, then said tersely, 'I can see him as plain as my foot; but I'll pretend not to, till he gets close enough. Then I'll run out and knock him down.'

'You challenge him three times—"Who goes there?"—and if he doesn't give the password you shoot him dead. What's the password?' warningly.

'Mavie!' quick enough this time.

'Well then, don't you go and forget it! Can't you see anything of the Frenchman?'

'No, not a bit of him,' after a searching glance along the other bend of the river-bank, and careful survey of every tree and bush. 'Perhaps he's gone across to the other side and is creeping up that way.'

'No, he's not. He can't be. That's Louisiana, and it's out of bounds, and we're not allowed to go across. Charles—I mean Red Eagle—would tell him. Besides, I told him myself.'

But John Sax shook his head. He knew the Frenchman and his ways. With another look at Red Eagle, to make sure that he was not getting too close, he marched to the end of his beat upstream and cautiously examined Louisiana from that point of view. Then to the down-stream end, and at the first glance over the forbidden land cried, 'He's there, Mavie—General, I mean. He's creeping up under the bushes to get across by the plank. Hey, you! who goes there? Give the word or I'll fire.'

'You 'tend to Red Eagle. I'll see to the Frenchman;' and up the old oak from branch to branch, as active as a squirrel, climbed the General, a black smudge across her red-hot face, her eyes blazing with indignation at this abominable breach of faith on the part of the Frenchman.

'Etienne de Montessonne, you're a cheat, and if you can't play fair you sha'n't play at all! That's out of bounds, and you've no right to be there.'

'Why, then?' and Etienne came out of the bushes to discuss the question.

'Why! 'Cause Louisiana's out of bounds, and we've given our word, and when we give our word we stick to it. That's why.'

'I've never given my word, and I'm a Frenchman, and Louisiana's French. So there! I've a right to be here.'

'No, you haven't. When you've given your word it's dishon'rable not to stick to it.'

'But I'——

'Lauristons—and Saxes,' as her eye fell on the worshipful face of the sentry below—'always stick to their words.'

'And so do Montessonnes. I'd like to find any one that said they didn't.'

'Well, I say so. So there! Lauristons—and Saxes,' with intense scorn, 'would sooner be cut into tiny little pieces than do anything dishon'rable.'

'Well, so would'——

Then, with a blood-curdling war-whoop, crafty Red Eagle, unmistakable with the red feather tied rakishly over his left ear, hurled himself on the negligent sentry and bore him to the ground, and the General up aloft danced on her perch with indignant excitement, and then came scrambling down to straighten matters out with her vehement little tongue.

'Let be, Charles! Let be! Oh, stop, both of you, and get up! We're not playing now because your side didn't play fair;' and she made frantic grabs at the bundle of writhing arms and legs at her feet. 'Stop, I say!—stop! both of you!' and, hopeless of making any impression any other way, she danced wildly round the strugglers, administering impartial kicks whenever opportunity offered.

Chances of battle, and perhaps an extra modicum of dogged strength, brought the guardian of the fort suddenly uppermost. But before he had time even to realise his victory the vehement hands of his General tore him off the foe, and both boys were on their feet, panting and laughing with the enjoyment of the fray.

'I say, Mavie, you can kick!' said her brother, rubbing his leg with exaggerated affliction.

'Well, you wouldn't listen any other way. Etienne crossed the river, and it's not fair. Oh, look! look!' and she gripped their arms in an ecstasy of surprise as a fox sped out of the bushes and swept like a streak of light across the plank, and they became aware of a distant clamour of yelping dogs and shouting men drawing towards them along the river-bank, though still invisible by reason of the bushes.

Etienne had been just about to cross the plank when the brown body flashed past him so suddenly that he fell back with a yell, and then stooped to hurl a stone after his discomfitor. But Reynard was already in sanctuary through the little churchyard, a device he had doubtless employed times without number for the checking of a too hot pursuit and the snatching of the precious minute that landed him safely on the side of Horsington Hill.

When Etienne turned again to the plank he saw Mavie tugging at it with both hands, her face ablaze

with excitement. Charles and John Sax jumped down and tugged also, but ineffectually. Then John Sax, slow of wit but full of common-sense, crawled under the plank on hands and knees, and raised his sturdy back with every ounce that was in him. The plank moved, rose with a sob, and under the impulsion of the other two, fell with a splash and went joggling away down-stream.

Mavie straightened herself with a sigh of relief and a triumphant 'There!' just as the ardent pack came frothing up and scattered like a living bombshell along the river-bank, with angry yelps and twisting noses and gleaming eyes and teeth.

There was no time even to be frightened.

'Go 'way!' cried Mavie, hammering at them with her fists, while the boys kicked out right and left; and then John Sax dragged her away along the bank.

The General knew every inch of ground hereabouts. Just ahead gaped a tunnel-way up into their thicket, and in a moment they were all scrambling up the old oak, Mavie's sparkling face showing her vast enjoyment of the adventure, John Sax's somewhat startled at the novel experience, Charles's alone agog with amazement at the sight of hounds after a fox in the month of May.

But a glance down at the yelping crew told him what had happened. Some were still coupled in the leashes, and broken thongs dangled from the necks of the rest. The pack had been out for exercise, when Reynard—from lack of thought or of malice prepense, and pining for a run—crossed their path and led them into evil courses.

By the time the keepers came up, too breathless even to curse, the dogs, quartering the bank to and fro, had discovered the plank aground in a shallow and still excitingly odorous. They gathered round it, leaping and yelping, heedless of everything but the fact that the fox had passed that way; and the men ran in and secured them as best they could with the broken thongs. Then, with clamour of recovered curses and much cracking of whips, the dogs were dragged back to straiter paths, with lust of death in their panting jaws and eager eyes, and wild yearnings for the joy of life, and much puzzlement as to the why and wherefore of things.

'Horrid things!' commented the General from her perch, in the still present perturbation of her late undignified flight.

'Beauties!' said her brother admiringly.

'Pooh! All after one poor little fox!'

But John Sax was staring at a tear in the sleeve of her frock.

'They didn't bite you, Mavie?' he asked anxiously.

'No, I don't think—I don't know,' hotching the arm uncomfortably now that her attention was called to it.

'Let's see,' said John, and pushed the sleeve up, baring the little, white arm; and then, at sight of discoloured flesh and a spot or two of blood where the long eye-teeth had pierced, he bent forward suddenly and set his lips to the wound and sucked as hard as he could.

'Oh!' cried Mavie; but he held her tight and sucked away. 'You hurt me a great deal more than the dogs, John Sax!' she cried.

'Be quiet, Mavie!' said Charles authoritatively. 'It's the proper thing to do. Like Cœur de Lion, you know.'

''Twasn't, then! It was Edward the First.'

'It's all the same. You have to suck it to get the poison out.' And so, as it was the proper thing to do, and Edward the First had had it done to him, Mavie submitted till her medicine-man was purple in the face and he could suck no more.

'Now we'd better put that plank back in its place or somebody 'll walk into the river in the dark,' said John Sax as soon as he had got his breath back; and they scrambled down and set to work on the reinstatement of the plank.

But this was a day of quite unusual diversions. They had played there for weeks at a time without ever seeing a soul, save in their own lively imaginations, which peopled all the country-side with lurking enemies, red and white. But now they had barely managed to get the other end of the plank floated across-stream, and the impatient Etienne had drawn it up into its place, and they were stamping their end into security, when the Frenchman gave a shout, and whirled his arms ecstatically, and set off running at top speed towards the little church.

And then the others saw what their preoccupation had hidden from them—a long, glittering line of mounted soldiers winding down the road that led past the church and manor-house; and in a moment boundaries, and orders, and given words, and nice questions of honour flew with the wind, and they were all in as hot pursuit of Etienne as the hounds had been of the fox a few minutes before. For these were stirring times at home and abroad, and the pomp and circumstance of war held all youthful minds in thrall, and the sight and sound of warriors in the flesh drew all movable youthful bodies as surely as did the pipe of him of Hamelin.

Across the buttercup and dandelion bedecked Louisiana then, past the little church-tower, and into the road, glowing and panting, just in time to see the great, smooth-skinned, gray war-horses and the mighty ones they carried. Such champing of bits and tinkling of steel chains! Such clanking of swords, and gleam and glitter of white belts and epaulettes and buttons! Such grim, grizzled, shaven faces below the tufted head-dresses! Such hard, kindly eyes turned appreciatively on the huzzaing little hero-worshippers in the mud below!

A smiling glance from above that clicked on a hungry look from below, a motion of the hand, a bending down and a grip, and Charles was seated in triumph on the bumpy discomfort of the cornet's pommel and holsters.

But what are raspings and bruisings of unaccustomed legs on unaccommodating lumps and unyielding ridges of stiffened leather? What the fact that the knobby projection of the pommel greets the

base of one's small spinal column with a paralysing jar at each step of the mighty war-horse? What even the still more poignant fact that the tooth of a holster-buckle is drawing blood from the inside of one's small, tightly clinging left leg? What are all such trifles as these—what is anything in the world—compared with this mightiest fact of all, that here we are actually astride of Bucephalus, with clink of chains and rattle of arms and accoutrements all about us, in fearful but delightful proximity to a haughty curving neck, and a tossing gray mane, and a pair of nervously twitching gray ears which duck up and down and eclipse the back of the man in front every second; while the trees and hedges flit mistily by on either side in a series of joggling jumps, and the muddy road below swims past as if it were a rushing stream?

And below there, too, somewhere between us and the muddy torrent, but a long, long way below us—oh! miles away below us—a sweet little face, glowing with pride and admiration at our daring, and a pair of brown eyes ablaze with longing to do likewise! And it was no lack of invitation that kept her trotting in the mud, you may be sure. Many a great gauntleted hand had proffered her welcome to similar precarious height. And she would have liked—oh, how she would have liked!—to cling to one and scramble up as Charlie had done! But, valiant General and Commander of a Frontier Fort as she was, and no whit behind her companions in mighty deeds in the privacy of the fields and woods, here maidenly doubts assailed her as to the absolute propriety of mounting in front of one of these gorgeous men of war, and possibly having to sit astride his pommel as Charlie was doing.

So she trotted alongside in the mud, with cheeks aglow and longing eyes; and Etienne trotted close behind her, jerking out his enthusiasm in such palpable French that the stalwart Englishmen scowled down at him, and wondered what the *et cetera* he did there, but extended no invitation to him to mount.

And John Sax trotted doggedly behind, wondering confusedly what had become of given words and promises as to boundary-limits, but vaguely trustful that, since Charles and Mavie did it, it must somehow be all right, or at all events not absolutely and beyond all question wrong.

But, as the leading files turned into the road that led through Alperton towards Harrow, Charles awoke from his dazzling dream to sense of trespass and the breaking of bounds. He turned his bright face up to his own particular warrior and jerked, 'Thank you—so much! It's splendid—but we're out of bounds—and I must go;' and he wriggled round to slip off. 'Are you—going to the—wars?'

'If the chance comes.'

'Good-luck to you, then! I'm going—to be a soldier too—when I grow up.'

'What name—and I'll look out for you?' in quite a matter-of-fact voice, with no provoking hint of laughter in it, but as between man and man, and as though he really meant it.

'Lauriston—Charles Lauriston.'

'Ah!' and he seemed about to say more, but Charles had slipped down and was standing in the mud, with Mavie and the rest of his company bunched alongside; and they stood there waving and shouting till the long procession of glossy skins and tossing manes and tails, and their wonderful riders, had passed.

And when the last red coat and the last gray tail had flickered away out of sight, Charles turned, with his sense of trespass emphasised by the emptiness of the muddy road, and without a word led his company back past the little church, across the river, and up the rolling meadows towards Castle Bear and home.

*(To be continued.)*

# MARS AS A HABITABLE WORLD.

By Alexander W. Roberts, D.Sc., Lovedale.

During the autumn of 1909 the brightest star in the sky has been, without doubt, the planet Mars. Its fierce, ruddy glare, like fire glowing on a brazen hearth, could not fail to attract, and even to hold for a space, the attention of even the most casual and indifferent beholder. As one watched it slowly climb up the eastern evening sky, peerless in its glowing splendour, one understood how the ancient folk associated its fiery, almost baleful, light with tumult and war and dire disaster. It seemed to menace men and nations.

Yet, perhaps, during the autumn of 1909 another star divided with Mars the honour of being first among the lights of night. Away down in the western sky, softly white against a daffodil radiance, hung Venus. It was thus no ordinary phenomenon that one looked upon. Guarding the eastern and western portals of the sky were two supremely beautiful stars, one ruby-red, the emblem of battle and passion; the other pearly-white, even as the spirit of purity and peace. Between them, and filling the dome of night with their beauty and variety, shone the myriad and many-coloured gems of the sky.

The writer has it in purpose to say something about both of these stars, our Earth's nearest neighbours, Venus and Mars. Because of its more immediate interest at this date we may consider the latter planet first.

Now, so much has been written regarding the appearance of Mars during 1909—and much more will yet be said—that one moves forward to any

further statement in a spirit of apology. Yet, after all, there need be no apology, for fewer astronomical questions have raised a wider or keener interest among all classes of men, the scientific and the non-scientific, than those which gather round the planet Mars, and are concerned with the possibilities of life existing on its ruddy shores. With a strange insistence that will not be denied, the man in the observatory and the man in the street, the novelist and the scientist, have fastened their thoughts on this neighbouring world as the one which seems most likely to fulfil the longing that almost all thoughtful men have to discover life and intelligence outside their own world, and, if possible, to enter into communication with it.

Whether this concentration of interest on one star out of the thousands upon thousands that shine in the sky is the outcome of an instinct that some day will have its justification, or whether the recent very remarkable discoveries connected with the physical features of Mars have drawn the minds of men in the direction of considering this planet as a habitable globe, one cannot say. Perhaps both influences operate, the result being that our papers and magazines are full of articles on Mars, that men speak with confidence of signalling to it, and that one astronomer of repute has even urged the spending of a million of money on the enterprise.

This being the present position of intention and expectation as regards interplanetary communication, it may be of some interest to gather into a brief article what is known regarding the possibilities of life upon Mars. I have in an article, 'Are the Stars Inhabited?' published in *Chambers's Journal* for July 1904, considered the question from a much wider standpoint than I shall do in this paper. Nevertheless, this paper is a continuation and a special application of the former article.

Now, it may be urged, why all this excitement about Mars during 1909? Is its appearance in 1909 different from what it will be during 1910 and 1911, or from its appearance in any other year? Most assuredly yes. Not since 1892, and not again till 1924, will Mars be so near the Earth, and consequently so bright, as it was in September of 1909. And it may not be lacking in interest to indicate how this variation in nearness and brightness comes about.

As is well known, none of the planets move round the sun in perfect circles. The path of each is more or less eccentric, some moving in an almost circular orbit, and others again along a much more eccentric path. Thus, for example, the orbit of the Earth may be regarded as a circle with a radius of 92,800,000 miles. This orbit it completes in three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter days. Immediately outside the Earth lies the very eccentric orbit of Mars.

A distance of 128,200,000 miles marks the nearest approach of Mars to the sun, and a distance of 154,600,000 miles its farthest sweep. This elliptical orbit it describes in six hundred and eighty-seven days. This is the length of the Martian year, so that it moves much more slowly along its path than our Earth does. As each body circles round the sun it is evident that the Earth, like the swifter of two runners on a circular racing-track, will pass Mars each lap. And it will be also plain that the condition governing a near approach of Mars to the Earth will be this simple one, that when the Earth passes Mars, the latter planet is at that instant near the sun—the nearer the better.

Now, this condition is fulfilled but rarely. It was fulfilled in 1877, when the two moons of Mars were discovered. It was fulfilled in 1892, when some new and delicate markings were detected. It is fulfilled this year of grace 1909, when great things are expected in the way of delineating Martian topography. It will be fulfilled again in 1924, when a very near approach will take place.

Indeed, there are only half-a-dozen favourable approaches during the twentieth century, namely:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **September 24, 1909.** | **Distance,** | **36,500,000** | **miles.** |
| **August 24, 1924** . | " | 35,400,000 | " |
| **July 23, 1939** . . | " | 36,200,000 | " |
| **September 11, 1956.** | " | 35,500,000 | " |
| **August 10, 1971** . | " | 35,800,000 | " |
| **September 28, 1988.** | " | 36,900,000 | " |

A glance at the above table will indicate that favourable approaches of Mars to the Earth take place every fifteen or every seventeen years. A still more perfect cycle is seventy-nine years. In this cycle there are five favourable approaches, and these repeat themselves at intervals of seventy-nine years and a few days.

If from the distance which separates Mars from the sun at its nearest approach (128,200,000 miles) we subtract the Earth's distance from the sun (92,800,000), we obtain the nearest distance that we can ever hope to get to Mars, roughly 35,000,000 miles. We emphasise this fact because, in the buoyant exuberance of hope regarding the possibility of signalling to the possible inhabitants of our neighbouring world, the immensity of the gulf that separates us from that world is forgotten. Even if we used telescopes magnifying two thousand times, we should still be looking at Mars as it would appear to the naked eye at a distance of 18,000 miles. Further, under the best conditions of seeing, we should be trying to detect details through 200 miles of shimmering, perturbing, distorting air. How large, we ask, would the object require to be that we should see clearly and distinctly, with our unaided eyes, at a distance of 18,000 miles? Then, just as large would the signal require to be on Mars that we should discern with the most powerful telescopes at present in existence. This is not a question of theory, it is a matter of plain fact. Then it seems to be entirely forgotten by those who speak with confidence of signalling to the planet Mars that when *we* are able to see the planet most distinctly, and under the most favourable conditions as to distance, dwellers on Mars, if there be any, cannot see the Earth at all, for it is then hidden in the brightness of the sun's rays.

A moment's reflection will make this clear. When Mars is at its nearest approach to us it is on the opposite side from the sun. It is then 'in opposition.' But when to our Earth Mars is in opposition, our Earth to Martian astronomers is in conjunction; that is, to them the Earth and the sun are practically in a straight line. Thus, if during September 1909 the whole earth were set on fire as a signal, not a soul on Mars would have an inkling of the catastrophe. When the time came for the Earth to emerge from out the sun's rays as a morning star, they might wonder what had happened to it, or where it had got to, but that is all!

That we shall ever be able to signal to any of the planets either by light-flashes or by powerful electric waves is very questionable. Personally, I have the hope, shared by not a few, that the veil which hides from view life on other worlds will never be lifted in our time. Consider the burden we should have to bear if each morning we were inundated with tidings from Jupiter, from Mars, from Venus, from the million and one worlds which fill our sky. And if, in addition to the many problems we have yet to solve, we were submerged under an avalanche of questions from all the philosophers, politicians, theologians, cranks in the four corners of the universe, life would be impossible.

Now, although the space that lies between us and Mars is vast enough to prevent our ever signalling to it, yet, chiefly due to the indomitable patience of Professor Lowell, of Flagstaff Observatory, United States, and two or three other outstanding men, we have been able to discover a great deal regarding the physical features and topography of the planet Mars. Indeed, we know far more about it than we do about any other planet or star in the sky. Thus, to take some of the longest established facts first, we know that Mars rotates on its axis in almost twenty-four hours, so that the Martian day is the same length as ours. We know also that it has seasons just like our Earth, for the axis of Mars is inclined twenty-nine degrees to its orbit—our Earth's inclination is twenty-three and a half degrees. True, its year is nearly double as long as ours; but that is not a serious difficulty. The human race could easily accustom itself to a year of a thousand days! Then the presence of snow at the poles, or what appears to be snow, is proof of the existence of vapour, and vapour means an atmosphere. Apart from this indirect proof, the spectroscope has proved indubitably the presence of vapour on Mars. So that we find on Mars day and night even as on our own Earth, spring and summer, autumn and winter, snow and ice, rain and dew, soft-blowing breezes, and the ever-changing colours of growing vegetation. So far, Mars is not unlike our Earth. But we also find on Mars much that has no counterpart on these shores, much that we should find not only utterly strange, but very, very speedily fatal.

To take one simple yet far-reaching difference: the diameter of Mars is only a little more than one-half that of the Earth, namely, 4230 miles; and the density of the materials which go to make up this lesser planet is only one-half that of the substances which form our Earth. This means that on the surface of Mars the force, the restraining force, of gravity is only one-third what it is with us. But a weakening of the grip of gravity means a thinning of the atmosphere to a corresponding amount. Thus at the surface of Mars the atmosphere, the Martian atmosphere, is as rare as the atmosphere at the top of our highest mountains. This is not merely an indirect deduction. It has been proved both by the telescope and the spectroscope that the atmosphere on Mars is at least a tenth the density of ours. Whether any life under such conditions is possible we dare not say. This we know, that life as we understand it, and conditioned as we experience it, is not possible with an atmosphere so rare as exists on Mars.

But the rarity of the Martian atmosphere has a further sequence of results besides this inability to support terrestrial life. There can be little or no evaporation from the surface pools and canals even though water boils on Mars at one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. Thus clouds rarely screen the tortured ground from the sun's heat by day or shelter it from the terrible cold of space by night. Again, this is no indirect deduction. The fact that we can *at all times* see clearly the surface-markings of Mars is direct proof of the non-existence of clouds. Further, the darker patches on the surface which at one time were held to be seas are now known to be large tracts of vegetation of some kind, so that water, if it exists on Mars, is confined to the poles, the strange canals, and any small streams that may meander through the forest regions.

Thus Mars would indeed be a sad and dreary world for any Earth-dweller to live in. One could dig a grave easily, for the soil there is lighter and shovelling less burdensome than on these shores; and graves are what would be before us did any of us reach the inhospitable, waterless, windless, cloudless Martian shores. The monotony, also, would be appalling. No mountains have been seen on its level lands, only vast stretches of plain crossed hither and thither by what we children of Earth call canals; though what we would term them were we on Mars is another story. Then there are no restless, health-giving seas; no flowing, gladdening rivers; no smiling lakes. The whole view breathes a death-dealing monotony. One feels the stagnation at a distance of 35,000,000 miles.

If human beings are somewhere on these distant plains, on these vast Martian savannas, then their thoughts, their outlook, their whole condition of life must be so different from ours that it would take us a cycle of centuries to understand them and their language, were it possible to communicate with them. Men living in the Stone Age or in any prehistoric period of the world's history would be infinitely nearer us in thought and feeling than the dwellers on a globe

Where falls not rain, nor snow,
Nor any wind blows loudly.

Yet there are those—and among them men who command attention because of their great attainments and important achievements in science—who say that Mars is inhabited. What arguments do these men advance in aid of their contention?

The polar snow-caps on Mars are about the earliest topographical discoveries connected with the planet. More than a hundred years ago it was proved by Sir William Herschel that these polar snow-caps varied with the seasons; nay, further, he proved that the colour of Mars also changed with the seasons. Oliver Wendell Holmes's lines will be familiar to many:

The snows that glittered on the disc of Mars
Have melted, and the planet's fiery orb
Rolls in the crimson summer of its year.

The dark and light shading on the surface was a very early discovery; but thirty years ago it was noticed by Schiaparelli that the whole surface of the planet was intersected by a number of fine lines which also changed in intensity as the seasons changed.

The recent discoveries of Lowell at Flagstaff will be fresh in the minds of most: how he traced the melting of the snows at one of the poles when its summer was drawing nigh; how he watched the slow widening of the canals from the polar area outwards to the equator; how the colour of the dark and bright areas changed as the polar water apparently reached them; how the ever-widening process at length reached the equator, and finally the opposite pole from which the movement started; then rest for a space, only to have the phenomenon repeated again from the pole that the water had just reached—melting snows, widening canals, changing fields, and then the pole again. Lowell found that this whole circulation from pole to pole, and back to pole again, was completed in a Martian year.

Professor Lowell's explanation is that as the northern summer on Mars draws nigh the northern polar cap begins to melt, and the melted snow finds its way southwards along the canals that have been dug by Martian dwellers, whom dire necessity has made great engineers. All along the canals are sluice-gates and lesser waterways, and by these rills and furrows the precious water is led on to the Martian fields. Hence the seeming widening out of the canals, and the change in colour of the fields from bright orange to dark olive, and then to green, as the Martian vegetation grows. Reaching the equator, the water is still forced southwards, till in six months' time it reaches the south pole and is there frozen, only to appear again as a life-giving stream of water when the southern summer dawns. Then once more the canals open out, but this time the trend is northward; once more a garment of green covers the dreary Martian plains. The duality of some of the canals is explained on the ground that overflow channels would frequently be required. The round-like marks where many of the canals intersect, Professor Lowell regards as huge reservoirs into which the water from the canals is pumped.

There is something fascinatingly interesting about this explanation, about this vast hydraulic system. And what is more, the observations tally with theory. The snow-caps are there, the widening of the so-called canals is there, the chameleon fields are there, the apparently circular reservoirs are there; they have, indeed, all been photographed, so that it is not a question of the eye seeing what it wants to see.

Yet most astronomers are unwilling to accept these explanations of the observed Martian phenomena. One difficulty at once presents itself: how does the water which nourishes the fields and thereby produces such a magnificent growth of vegetation get back to the canals? Then, again, there is the simple fact that all the water obtained from the melting snows would be evaporated long before it reached the equator, as evaporation is three times more active on Mars than on the surface of our Earth. Against this it has been urged that the canals are mammoth water-pipes! Take also the difficulty of forcing water through 60,000 miles of waterways! However smooth the banks of the canals might be, the resistance due to pressure and friction would be enormous. No body of engineers on our globe would face the problem, for compared to it the construction of the Panamá Canal would be like making a child's furrow in the sand. True, the ancient Egyptians raised great blocks of stone in some unknown way, and it is just possible that Martian engineers may be thoroughly acquainted with forces that we have never even thought of. But admitting all this, water would still be water on Mars; and this being so, it seems an impossible feat to force it from one pole to the other through open waterways.

Professor Pickering, of Harvard, suggests that the canals are cracks on the crust of Mars through which carbonic acid gas escapes. In the northern summer, for example, the heat of the sun would expand the soil, and thus force out the imprisoned gases. We know the effect of carbonic acid upon vegetation, but we also know its effect upon animal life; and so, if Professor Pickering's theory of the seasonal exudation of carbonic acid be correct, then human life, as we know it, on Mars is impossible.

Then, again, the suggestion is made that the canals may be long lines of plantations, such as one often sees in new countries where forests grow in long strips. But how the trees receive their water is thus left unexplained. True, there may be very heavy dews on Mars, as there are on most tropical countries and on all lands where the difference between the heat by day and the cold by night is very great. On Mars the diurnal changes in temperature must range through one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. Would life under such extremes be even tolerable?

Every astronomer has a theory about the Martian canals, and the writer has his. His view is that the canals are cracks caused by the long winter cold—the Martian winter lasts through nearly twelve of

our months; that these cracks are filled with ice; that as the summer advances the ice melts; that the Martian soil expanding under the heat of summer forces out the water into the adjacent fields. The difficulty is to get the water back again into the cracks; but no theory is perfect.

And now to sum up all that has been said in this article. The question which the title suggests is not what are the possible explanations of the Martian markings? but can life, as we know it, exist on Mars? True, the question of life existing on Mars is most intimately bound up with the various phenomena we see on its surface; for if it can be proved that there are mechanical changes taking place on Mars, changes in no way due to physical causes, but which are connected in some way with rational, thinking beings, then we must conclude that intelligence of some kind—it matters not what the outer garment of that intelligence may be—exists on Mars. As we have already indicated, the mechanical-looking canals of Mars are said by many eminent astronomers to be the work of intelligent beings. No physical forces could produce them, could secure their almost geometrical regularity of design. Then, again, it is averred that the changes one sees taking place on Mars are just those which we might expect thinking men to desire and to labour for. That the magnitude of their enterprise is greater than any on Earth could attain to is no counter-argument for the inhospitality of their world; its poverty in all that makes this world rich and fertile and beautiful may have made the Martian men wise, strenuous, daring. Yet there is no getting away from the physical drawbacks to life which exist on Mars: the tenuous atmosphere, the terrible drought, the fierce extremes of cold and heat.

We can only reason from what we know. There are no doubt boundless possibilities of life in a boundless universe, but as far as our judgment is concerned we can only bring to bear upon the problem the touchstone of our own experience; and when we deal with the problem of life upon Mars thus, we must unhesitatingly say that life as we know it is impossible upon Martian shores.

# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.*

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Luck o' the Spey*, &c.

## CHAPTER I.

**There the aged north wind sporteth**
**With the glassy waves of ocean.**

LOOK down on a sunny day from some heathered slope on Speyside towards the Firth, and see in the shining distance a long palette of bright sand bordered by creaming seas; at its eastern corner a tiny sepia speck, with perhaps a faint trail of smoke lingering round it; near it, the bright white column of a lighthouse straight and definite in the sun.

The little speck is the port of Findburgh, held between the Findhorn and the Spey in the rugged, tender grasp of the Moray Firth's long white arm. Brown sails of fishing-boats, the funnels of a few unclean cargo-steamers and little, squat 'drifters' or 'liners,' and the tall spars of sailing-ships people the harbour. For the rest, the girdle of gray, wrinkled seas; dull streets, colourless save for a public-house mirror and a flaming eye in the chemist's window; ugly, featureless houses; a peculiarly drab 'square' of waste land blanketed by sprawling burnt-umber nets, flanked by grim, opposing kirks of austere and quarrelsome Scots sects; gaunt firs neighbouring an inhospitable shingle, their shuddering heads bent southwards, away from the clutch of the north wind, join forces in hastening the impression of a dull monochrome, saved from abjectness by an invincible nobility in its environments—the majestic curve of sand of the bay; the clean masculine airs; the wine and colour and movement of life of the crested seas that carol and dance along that wind-swept and reverberant shore.

Serious-looking men dwell there—fisher-folk, with long Scots upper-lips; the older men with Calcraft beards fringing tanned faces; all of them with a stolid gaze for strangers and the laconic speech of a curiously detached community. For Time's tide, racing past, has left in its backwaters many such little towns untouched here and there along that coast. Old-time speech and superstitions linger there. Countless 'tee' or distinguishing nick names fall quaintly on the stranger's ear; the names springing from a hopeless network of intermarriages, for the fisherman of the North-East rarely marries out of his little town or his circle of fisher-friends or relatives, and the same baptismal name may be held by a score of them. Ashore, like the ploughman in *A Lowden Sabbath Morn*, they daunder 'perplext wi' leisure,' clad in dark-blue jerseys and in high-heeled deck-boots, their arms up to the elbows in trouser-pockets, pipes alit, sauntering heavily, out of their element, from one silent cluster to another at the frowsy street-corners. The stranger (whose chief concern with the elements as likely as not may be never to go out without an umbrella), finds their sluggish movements ashore an easy target for jests, good-natured if cheap. But afloat, their life's business, the call of the sea, claims them; with good or bad markets, fair weather or foul, they are ready as greyhounds in the slips, good seamen, at home in the boats, masters of their calling. The few cowards or shirkers are soon ruthlessly labelled by them in the lifelong duel

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with the North Sea, where the glibly quoted, oft misunderstood law of the survival of the fittest works its hard, kind will. Wherefore the bronzed fishermen of the North-East, well-nigh useless ashore, are when afloat of the breed of men, grave, resourceful, steady-eyed, as those whose sailing-orders often lead them to look without falter on the gray face of the Enemy.

Generations of them have come and gone, following the same hard calling. Though set in this curious semi-detachment from the outer world, their brown sails and venturing prows range afar, buffeted and drenched by beating gales and spray from the Moray Firth to Yarmouth, to the sounding Hebrides and the rock-bound coast of Ireland. It may well be that their memories of wet decks and pitiless seas, of bitter north-easters, of the flood's moving accidents, have coloured their outlook, their speech, and their mental habit. Steam, co-operation, and the veneering of the School Boards have perhaps improved the lot of the younger men; but they come of a race whose traditions are of few joys, of hard weather, of the paying of toll to the gray Firth. Walk round their little kirkyard, within sound of the eternal surf and the wailing seabirds, and forget their colourless setting, for there you may often read the simple statement, doubtless written on many of their hearts, 'Drowned at Sea.' It is the 'killed in action' of their order.

From this cramped, capable race sprang Captain Hugh Flett, master of the steamship *Covesea*, of Findburgh, five hundred and fifty-two tons register. Many thought of his dour-looking port of registry as a blemish on the gracious seaboard, but to Captain Hugh it was the City of Dreams. He loved its dull streets, loved its 'snell' winds; tolerated its ancient and fish-like smells; smiled at its savage village gossip. To him the strong voice of the North Sea on the shingle was the very music of the spheres, for the place was Home.

Flett was a generous fathom of humanity, with big, pleasant Scots features and high cheek-bones. The seas and winds of his career as boy, man, mate, and master had given him a complexion as of the red granite of the North-East. His was a rare instance of one sprung from a fishing community successfully deserting the family calling. The names of men great in the State, scholars, soldiers, thinkers, born of Scots peasants, leap to the mind; but few from the fisherfolk, for they and their sons go straight from school to the boats, and from that day until the long Last Voyage their hands bear the marks of the bondage of the nets. Travel and training had whittled down some of the skipper's transmitted tendencies; but he was narrow, ignorant (if you like), in his parochial view of higher things; hospitable and suspicious; charitable to his neighbours; with the itch of his kind for preaching; careful in money matters; sensitive, vain, as many of his race on the North-East seaboard are, fiercely independent, and a scrupulously honest steward for his masters.

Moreover, was he not an elder? If a Sunday came round on one of his runs home you might see him on duty (did you chance that way), demure at the kirk-plate, clean-shaven, with shining morning face, solemn and vastly uncomfortable in Sunday 'blacks,' 'dicky,' and decorous necktie.

As good a sailor as ever weathered the rebellious seas of his homeland, Hugh was a favourite along the coast. The fisher-crews in 'jumpers' and big sea-boots welcomed him home from his voyages, and he had always a cheering word and the time o' day for them or their clattering, ungainly wives. 'A credit to the place,' was their verdict on Hugh Flett, with his fine sailor's record, his big, well-set-up figure, and good-natured eyes. Children and dogs sought his company.

It was a June evening, and the skipper was taking a quarterdeck walk up and down, up and down, in his cottage garden on the brow of the hill. The little plot of ground was starred with friendly common flowers, those beloved by the Little Poor Man of Assisi—pinks, marigolds, Canterbury-bells, pansies, Madonna lilies, and the like, that have a gracious habit of looking after themselves and raising their loyal heads in poor folk's gardens. He glowered seaward across the Firth, over the smoke of the little town, at the sun just beginning to dip behind the blue hills of Sutherland, and puffed meditatively at a cigar, a ripple of wrinkles on his tanned forehead. He was due to sail in the morning; hence his ghost of a frown. A minute or so passed. The comforting odour of the cooking of yellow haddocks rose on the evening air. The incense stole over him. He rose and went into his cottage, where his supper awaited him.

There was a nautical note in the room, struck by various atrocities in shell-ornaments, paintings of ships all under crowded sail, and a model or two under glass cases; visible also a photograph, consisting largely of whiskers and white bands, of the Reverend Gavin Sneckdraw of Findburgh (M.A., author of *My Fortnight in Switzerland* and *Some Aspects of Scottish Episcopacy*); and a picture of Saint Paul. The shepherd on earth had the place of honour, hung as it were on the line, above the chimney-piece; the saint was 'skied,' beside the exotic and somewhat dishevelled glory of a stuffed cockatoo.

The skipper made excellent trencher-play, silently. 'Jean,' said he to his wife, pausing half-way through his meal, 'I'm fair scunnered wi' headwin's, an' fogs, an' sic-like. I've been thinkin' I wish I could get a harbour-master's canny berth ashore. Ay, I wish to the Lord I could!'

'Wheesht, Hughie!' said Jean; 'ye needna be aye bringin' in the Lord's name. Never a word comes oot o' the heid o' ye but maun ha'e some blasphemin' or sweerin', an' you in the eldership.'

This was unfair on the good woman's part, for her man's language was anæmic compared with the vivid speech of the British merchant service; but it was her one little indulgence in nagging, and she revelled in it. Hugh, like the 'decent man' that the folk called him, never gave her a chance in

other directions, for he was saving, sober, and loyal.

'Weel, Jean,' he said, 'I'm no' sayin' but what ye may be richt. There's no' mony shipmasters elders. I ken twa or three deacons'—he waved a brown hand vaguely, as if indicating obscure sects of fire or devil worshippers—'but of coorse they're no' on the chart. No.' He swallowed the last of his supper and lit another manilla in the same busy moment.

'I whiles think the minister gi'es ye a keek in the kirk when he reads oot aboot "they that go doon to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters"'——

'"These see His wonders in the deep." Ay, that's in the Hunder and Seeventh Psalm, Jean,' continued her spouse, the words losing no dignity, though given by him complacently and as one who knew his bearings; 'but I doot it's no' muckle "business" I can do for you or masel', my lass. Twa' poun' ten a week an' three days ashore now an' then! It's owre muckle siller for one man to ha'e the handlin' o',' grunted the skipper sarcastically. 'I wonder whether I'll spend my savin's in free libraries or organs for the kirks. I would ha' been better at the fishin', like my father afore me. Siller! Naethin' but expenses cut doon, an' freights doon! Accordin' to my owners, I think freights maun be like whales—for every meenit they're showin' their heids they'll be twa hours doon. Dagon't, they're aye doon!'

'Ye're near sweerin' again,' said his spouse with a warning eye over the glint of her knitting-needles.

'Maybe so would you, gin ye were a man, elder or no elder. There's Davie growin' up, an' Jean an' Wullie an' Angus, siller gey scarce, an''—— He strangled the sentence and stopped short. It was a shame, he thought, to say anything disheartening to Jean to-night. He was to sail in the morning, and would be away for a month. Jean was a good wife. He would keep his grumbles to himself. Yet, as he smoked in silence, the wings of his thoughts hovered uneasily over the question of ways and means of providing for his children, his wife, his old age. So many of his shipmates had sailed away and never come home. Sometimes he dreamed o' nights of the storm in the North Sea in Ninety-five; felt again the lash of the blizzard on his face, saw the unspoken *Te morituri salutamus* in his men's eyes when he and the mate brought the *Covesea* in after a forty-eight hours' fight in blinding snow. Ay, that was a near thing! Or there arose visions of masterful seas, wild skies; a dull crash splitting the gray silence of the fog, and he would lie awake, afraid. No fear of Death! That was not in the mettle of his pasture; but the more haunting, colder thought of leaving his wife and bairns unprovided for shook him. There was no getting away from it—money was scarce, save as he might, and the bairns were growing up. Jean and he had their dear ambitions and dreams for them. Davie was a clever lad! Aberdeen University for Davie, if it could be managed. Hugh's eyes fell on his own tanned, rough hands, and he mentally reviewed his hard, underfed, overworked apprenticeship to the sea in coasting-schooners, in undermanned, under-engined 'tide-makers,' with poor pay and hard tack, under bullying mates. He would give his sons a better chance than ever he had, so he would!

Jean cleared her throat and gave an almost imperceptible glance at her husband. 'Speakin' o' organs an' free leebraries,' she began tentatively, 'I see a millionaire has gi'en an awfu' lot o' siller to the colleges for free eddication. I—I was thinkin' maybe we micht get Davie's name put forrit'——

'Never!' Hugh's fist on the table made the dishes rattle. Peter, their solemn Aberdeen terrier, crept from below the table and made a dignified exit. 'Never, Jean Marget Flett, as lang as I can mak' a shillin'! My bairns maun win a way without sornin'! I'll pay for them masel'.'

Jean loved and understood, a by no means common achievement; but these two belonged to the very rich poor, who had mated their hearts' desires. She smothered a sigh, laying a gentle hand on her husband's, and the two sat in silence.

The quiet was broken by a light step on the walk, and a pleasant voice called, 'May I come in?'

'Surely, sir; surely!' answered the skipper, and rose to greet the new-comer, a tall, spare man of about thirty-five, with black hair, moustache, and beard slightly tinged with gray. A pair of blue spectacles gave him an indoors look subtly at variance with his sunburnt hands and face and his gait of easy muscularity. He had a fine forehead and a small but clean-cut and delicate jaw and chin. His voice was of the mellowest bass. A handsome man, except perhaps that his eyes were a trifle too near each other. Until three months before, he was a stranger to the place. He lived at the 'Spey Arms.' The gossips soon discovered or invented his history: that his name was Westwater; that he was an Englishman, but, despite this blemish, appeared to be unobtrusively contented; that he was a bachelor; that he paid his way scrupulously, even generously; and the landlord of the 'Spey Arms' certified him to be a 'rale gentleman,' meaning thereby that he was not one of those who audited his hotel-bills too closely. Uncommercialism is the first peculiarity discovered in us by our acquaintances. They soon cure the most of us of it. He was recovering from an illness which had left his eyes weak, and had come to the bracing North for a change of air and to indulge in his hobby of geology. Hence his long, long tramps with hammer and knapsack along the coast and on the hills. The tall geologist, although somewhat of a solitary, was unmistakably well-bred, well-mannered, and good-looking, and a suggestion of reserve perhaps added to his personality. The villagers spoke of him as 'Mr' Westwater even behind his back, an eloquent concession in a community where nearly everybody knew and

spoke of each other by their Christian or 'tee' names. The women liked him.

He shook hands with Flett and his wife, lit one of the skipper's cigars, and the two men strolled out into the garden.

'You sail to-morrow morning, captain?' he asked. 'My reason for asking, in few words, is this. I am picking up strength here, and, except for my eyes, am nearly as fit as ever I was; but I fancy that the cruise of a month or so would set me up. As you know, I am much interested in geology, and I think that a short voyage with you would be useful if my information as to where you are bound for tallies with yours. The long and the short of it is, that if you can take me with you I'll be infinitely obliged; for passage-money, name your own terms.'

'Oh,' laughed the skipper, 'we're tramps, an' dinna charge passage-money; but I'll tak' ye like a shot, sir, for friendship's sake, for ye're a good neebur. We gang up the Baltic, then on to the Gulf o' Bothnia. But I must telephone my owners, of course. However, there'll be no deeficulty. I've plenty o' room, an', truth to tell, I'll be glad o' your company, for of course ye'll be the only passenger. Wi' decent weather, the trip should please ye weel. I wadna swap June in Finland an' the Gulf o' Bothnia for'—the skipper dredged for a sufficiently startling parallel—'for a fortnicht at Strathpeffer!'

'Finland!' said the other, ignoring the dazzling analogy. 'Can you let me have a look at the chart?'

'I'm jist goin' aboard before I turn in. Come along, an' I'll show ye the coorse.'

The two men sauntered down through the drab streets to the harbour, towards the yellow funnel of the *Covesea*; and in the chart-room Flett pointed out the course up the fairway of the Baltic, and, away farther north, a multitude of dots in the Gulf of Bothnia.

'We sail licht from here, and load granite at one o' the wee quarries on a nameless island away north fra Uto, then back to London. I've never been there, an' I'm told it's gey kittle wark. We'll ha'e to tak' three different pilots through the channels an' the islands for a matter o' forty or fifty mile.'

'Uto,' said Westwater, and then, half to himself, 'Uto, Lohm, Weymo.' His finger was tracing the names out, and his left hand holding the chart trembled suddenly, making the paper crackle.

The captain saw it. 'Are ye weel enough, sir?' he asked gently, for he liked the tall Englishman.

'Thanks, Flett. A touch of my old fever,' said the other. 'I got a chill on the hill yesterday, I think. A little quinine will put me right.' He bent down over the chart. 'Yes. We ought to have a pleasant voyage, captain,' he said, and straightened himself as the chart rolled up.

Flett went off to the telephone at the Customs Office, and in a short time reappeared.

'It's a' richt. Ye'll ha'e to ship as purser, though, to save bother in passports an' maybe the Russian wrong side o' a jail.'

So the geologist 'signed on.' His wage as passenger-purser was the nominal one of a shilling a week. He paid four shillings a day for his board, and the owners took no risk of his life, health, or chattels. His mellow laugh rang out as they left the *Covesea*.

'You must call me "purser" now. Well, well! we ought to have an interesting voyage. If I've any luck in my geological trips it's as good as a fifty-pound note in your pocket, skipper, and welcome.'

'Good-luck to ye, then, Mr Purser. As for the geology, my mind's a blank on't. The only stones I ken aboot are cobbles an' granite blocks. But I reckon ye'll be an expert in stones?'

The amateur purser gave another musical laugh. 'That's it, skipper! That's it! You've hit the gold first time! An expert in stones. I couldn't describe myself better. An expert in stones.' He found something quaint in the description, and repeated the words softly and to himself, his eyes twinkling behind his glasses.

'Good-night, then,' said Flett, and the two men shook hands. 'Ye'll be ready aboard to-morrow forenoon at the flow o' the tide. Ye'll put up wi' plain fare, of course, an' whiles a modest glass o' grog. Bring your gun an' fishin'-rod, an' some eucalyptus-oil, in case the mosquitoes fancy ye.'

It was growing dark. Westwater went to his room at the 'Spey Arms,' lit a lamp, closed the shutters, and locked the door. He brought out a chart and some papers from a locked case, took off the blue spectacles with obvious relief, and studied the chart with dark eyes that showed neither weakness of sight nor weakness of resolve. Then he put the chart in an oilskin cover, and carefully burned the rest of the papers. He sat silently into the night, thinking, thinking. Once he fancied he heard a sound, listened intently, put the oilskin into his pocket, and tiptoed to the shuttered window, peering cautiously through a chink; but there was nothing stirring in the quiet streets except a gray gull or two, no sound but the rumour of the sea. A thin shaft of gray light through the shutters shamed the lamp. He put the light out and opened the shutters and the casement.

The sun was rising over the broad, gray waste of waters, slowly, gently, as a mother loath to waken a child. The pearl of the summer dawn flushed as the first few rose-petals touched the sea. Gulls began to pipe, circling and swooping round the roofs; early birds twittered tentatively; the far-off bugle-note of a cockcrow was answered by one challenge after another, until the air quivered with gay réveilles. Above, patches of corn-flower stole shyly into the widening sky, the faint pink haze on the sea gradually broadening into a clear, trenchant highway of changing opals. Out of the slowly melting shadows a virile ridge formed north of the awakening Firth; the clean-cut cone of Morven etched against the pale morning; the long crest of the mountains, slowly changing from agate to

blue, rose magically out of the sea from Caithness to the Sutors, the scarred sentries on guard at the outer gate of the Cromarty Firth. Morning banks of mist cleared. Eastward, the sky and the calm waters met and mingled on the horizon, where a ship hung painted on the pearl-gray canvas of the morning. Brown dots of half-a-dozen sails marked homeward-hurrying fishing-boats; beyond the Black Isle the broad shoulders of Highland bens; nearer, trim, bright havens, light and dark green patches, fields and woods, yellow sands; and on far hillsides here and there a gleam of white cottages, where peat-smoke would be rising from humble, happy roofs, and men setting thankfully about their day's work, active and hopeful.

The morning air stirred in a delicate caress. It touched and startled the light-sleeping skirmishers of waves, unfurling the sea's thousand bannerets, spurring brisk-moving legions to gallop shorewards, stirring softly the feathers of the bents near the foreshore; then tiptoed down the empty street, to rustle the lilacs near the casement, and lay a cool, elusive hand on the man's hot eyes and drawn face.

He watched in silence, without movement, around him an ineluctable glamour.

A lark sang, mounting above the flaming gorse.

Sleep at last called him. He bit off an oath, whispering to himself with a joyless smile, 'An expert in stones!' and slowly turned his back on the virginal eyes of the morning.

*(To be continued.)*

# QUEEN HORTENSE'S DIAMOND NECKLACE.

By R. A. Gatty.

THE battle of Waterloo was over, and the French were in full retreat. Napoleon lingered on the field with his still unbroken Old Guard. His brother, Prince Jerome, urged him to commit an act of desperation. 'Here, brother,' he exclaimed, 'all who bear the name of Bonaparte should fall!' Napoleon, who was on foot, instantly mounted his horse; but his generals and staff, though willing to perish themselves, would not listen to any proposal which involved his death, and finally an aide-de-camp, seizing his bridle, led him at a gallop from the field. Many times during the terrible night the Emperor, jaded and worn-out with fatigue, fell asleep on his horse, and had to be supported by the arms of his attendants riding at his side.

Meanwhile the Prussian army, which had not arrived on the battlefield till the victory was nearly complete, continued the pursuit, which the worn-out English troops were unable to sustain. A dreadful slaughter ensued, and the French, abandoning their guns and baggage, were cut down as they fled before the merciless troops of Blücher. All through the long night the slaughter continued, while the Emperor, closely followed by the enemy's cavalry, pressed his retreat, through Genappe, Charleroi, Philippeville, Laon, to Paris.

It cannot be said that Napoleon's conduct in the hour of his defeat and humiliation was anything but noble and dignified. He refused all suggestions of coercing the National Assembly and playing the part he did on the 18th of Brumaire. 'I did not return from Elba,' he said, 'to inundate Paris with blood. I do not wish to employ force. I came in the hope of combining our last resources. They have abandoned me with the same facility with which they received me back. But let them do for the country what they will not do for me. I doubt their intentions. Those who wish to deliver me up to-day say that it is to save France. To-morrow, by delivering up France, they will prove that it was to save themselves.' After this he sent his act of abdication to the Assembly.

There was something to be said in favour of a policy of further defence of Paris. Grouchy had arrived under the walls with his army of seventy thousand men practically intact, and the lower classes were clamouring to be led against the enemy. The members of the Assembly thought otherwise; and well knowing that any rally to arms would be impossible without Napoleon taking the command, they decided to remove him from the capital to Malmaison, under the close observation of General Beker, who had orders not to lose sight of his person.

It soon became evident that the Emperor was, in a sense, a prisoner in his own house; and his friends and relatives prepared for the one remaining chance of escape, which was a flight to the United States. To this, apparently, the Assembly offered no resistance; and acting upon the advice of that arch-conspirator Fouché, they allowed Napoleon's preparations secretly to go on, and General Beker was ordered to accompany him to the port of Rochefort, where he hoped to embark. Meanwhile Fouché had informed the Allies of what was taking place, and British ships were sent to guard the French coast and render the Emperor's escape impossible. 'The Provisional Government,' says Sir Walter Scott in his Life of Napoleon, 'like skilful anglers, had been gradually drawing their nets around Napoleon, and it was now time, they thought, to drag him upon the shallows.' Whatever hopes had been raised in the breast of the unhappy Emperor were destined to be shattered on his arrival at the coast. Escape was utterly hopeless in the presence of the English ships of war.

Owing to Napoleon's hurried departure, very few preparations had been made for his requirements when in exile. The total sum of money obtainable was only about five or six thousand pounds, but a

large amount of valuable silver plate was collected and put amongst his baggage. Queen Hortense showed her affection by presenting him with a diamond necklace valued at two hundred thousand francs, and this Napoleon placed in a leathern girdle worn under his waistcoat. It was a treasure which might prove very serviceable in the coming time of trouble, and would be easily convertible into money should the occasion arise.

The surrender of Napoleon to Captain Maitland, and his removal with his suite on board the *Bellerophon*, need not be recapitulated; but the story of the necklace is not generally known. It cannot be said that the English Government behaved handsomely to the imperial captive who had placed himself unreservedly in their hands. Petty slights, and almost cruelty, seemed to govern the policy of the English authorities. Sir George Cockburn, the Admiral to whom Napoleon was consigned, received orders to seize the baggage, wines, provisions, plate, money, diamonds, bills of exchange, and saleable effects of all kinds belonging to the Emperor, and, with the exception of the plate, to retain them in support of the prisoner and his attendants. A proviso was added that should the Emperor die before the whole of his property happened to be consumed, he would be permitted to dispose of the surplus by will. Accordingly, assisted by a Custom House officer, the Admiral searched the effects of Napoleon and his suite, and seized four thousand napoleons in gold, leaving with Marchand, the Emperor's *valet de chambre*, who alone of all engaged in the imperial service consented to be present at this humiliating scene, fifteen hundred napoleons for his master's present use. The weapons of all Napoleon's attendants were next taken from them, the British Admiralty's order being that 'arms of every description should be taken from the French of whatever rank on board His Britannic Majesty's ships.' To Lord Keith's credit, it must be stated that he ordered the sword of the Emperor to be respected. Afterwards, when his secretary reminded him that this was contrary to the orders from headquarters, he desired that functionary to mind his own business.

It is, of course, quite impossible to know what Napoleon felt under this degrading treatment. He knew that his private effects had been ransacked and appropriated, and that his suite had been deprived of their swords, and no doubt he anticipated similar treatment for himself. There was upon his person Hortense's necklace, a rich prize if captured by the English Admiral; and it may have been in his mind to avoid this danger by transferring the necklace into the keeping of one of his suite who had already been under examination, and therefore not likely to be further molested. Anyhow, Count Las Cases states that, 'while walking with the Emperor in the stern galley, he drew from under his waistcoat, still conversing on a totally different subject, a species of girdle, which he handed to me, saying, "Take care of this for me." Without interrupting him, I placed it under my own waistcoat. The Emperor soon afterwards told me that it contained a diamond necklace worth two hundred thousand francs, which Queen Hortense had forced him to accept on his leaving Malmaison.' Nothing further passed at the time regarding the necklace, and the weary voyage was pursued to St Helena.

Count Las Cases states that on several occasions afterwards, at Longwood, he reminded the Emperor of the great charge he carried about on his person; but he received no reply. At length one day he reminded him again, and Napoleon said dryly, 'Does it annoy you?' 'No, sire,' was Las Cases' answer. 'Then keep it,' replied the Emperor. The necklace thus became part of Las Cases' personal attire, and he never laid it aside. Habit reconciled him to wearing it, and, as it eventually turned out, made him forget it altogether.

No one can read the story of Napoleon's imprisonment at St Helena without a feeling of disgust at the coarse and tyrannical behaviour of the Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe. Restrictions quite unnecessary were not only placed upon the Emperor's movements round Longwood, but even the necessaries of life were cut down to such an extent that the Emperor was forced to sell portions of his silver plate from time to time to procure what he required for his own table. It might be supposed that the silver plate with the imperial arms upon it would have fetched a large sum of money if it had been sold entire, but this Napoleon would not allow. Every piece was broken up and the silver sold by weight. As an instance of these transactions, the following appears in the diary of Dr O'Meara, Napoleon's medical attendant, under the date December 29, 1816: 'About five hundred pounds' worth of plate brought down by Cipriani in the morning to be sold. When Sir Hudson Lowe saw it he sent for Cipriani, from whom he demanded in what manner they could spend so much money. Cipriani, an arch and intelligent Corsican, replied, "To buy food." His Excellency affected surprise, and said, "What! have you not enough?" "We have purchased," said Cipriani, "so many fowls, so much butter, bread, meat, and divers other articles of food daily for some months; and I have to thank your *chef d'état major*, Colonel Reade, for his goodness in not only procuring me many things that I wanted, but for his kindness in seeing that the people did not impose upon me when I was paying for them." Sir Hudson was a little disconcerted at this reply at first, but afterwards resuming an appearance of astonishment, asked, "Why do you buy so much butter or so many fowls?" "Because," replied Cipriani, "the allowance granted by your Excellency does not give us enough to eat. You have taken off nearly half what the Admiral allowed us." Cipriani then gave him an account in detail of their wants, explaining the difference between the French and English mode of living, and accounted satisfactorily for everything.'

The strained relations between the Governor and the Emperor and his suite led to unfortunate results. Count Las Cases was made the victim of Sir Hudson Lowe's spite; and advantage was taken of a letter of complaint written by the Count, and he and his son were arrested and taken away from Longwood without a final interview with Napoleon. The Governor determined to send Las Cases out of the island and banish him to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the moment of his arrest all intercourse with the Emperor and Longwood was forbidden. This was a very serious blow to the Count and Napoleon, who greatly valued Las Cases' attendance upon himself. In the stress and worry of the moment the diamond necklace was completely forgotten, and Las Cases found himself in prison with this precious relic on his person and debarred from restoring it to the Emperor. He thus describes his own feelings: 'From wearing the girdle so long the necklace became, as it were, identified with my person; and I thought so little about it that it was not till some days after my being torn from Longwood, and by the merest accident, it recurred to my memory, when I shuddered at the idea of depriving the Emperor of such a resource. For how would it now be possible to make restitution? I was in the most rigorous confinement, surrounded by jailers and sentinels, so that all communication was impracticable. I vainly endeavoured to contrive a plan. Time pressed, and only a few days were left, and nothing could be more distressing than thus to quit the island. In this predicament I resolved to run all risks. An Englishman to whom I had often spoken came to the prison on a particular errand; and it was under the eyes of the Governor himself, and one of his most confidential agents whom he brought with him, that I ventured to communicate my wishes to the Englishman. "I think you are a man of principle," said I, "and I am going to put it to the test, though with nothing injurious or contrary to your honour—merely a rich deposit to be restored to Napoleon. If you accept the charge, my son will put it into your pocket." He answered only by slackening his pace. My son, whom I had prepared for the scene, followed him, and the necklace was transferred into this man's possession almost in sight of the military attendants. Before quitting the island I had the inexpressible satisfaction of knowing that the necklace had reached the hands of the Emperor. How gratifying to the heart are the recollection and recital of such a trait on the part of an enemy, and under such circumstances!'

## AN HOUR IN THE MUSEUM OF THE RECORD OFFICE.

A NARROW, irregular street turns out of Holborn, and runs towards the Strand and Fleet Street, and from the other end, of course, conducts wayfarers from those busy scenes to that great central highway. This crossway street is well known as Chancery Lane; but only a few of the hundreds of thousands of individuals forming the quick streams of life always flowing along the metropolitan thoroughfares mentioned are aware that about midway in it stands the comparatively new Record Office, and that within its spacious precincts is a museum open to the public for five afternoons every week, in which are deposited writings of supreme historical interest. These writings, all fraught with the fragrance of old times, as well as shaded with their tragedies, include such well-known items as Domesday Book, or Books (for there are two volumes); the letter sent to Lord Monteagle warning him not to attend Parliament, in consequence of a terrible blow that was about to be dealt to the wicked; two declarations signed by Guy Fawkes (Guido Faukes), and the sixteen questions drawn up by King James's own hand for the guidance of those appointed to examine the conspirator. It is satisfactory to see that the royal instructions recommended the use of the gentler tortures first before proceeding to those of more severity, and distressing to feel that the difference in the signatures to the two documents can only be accounted for by the conclusion that the later faint and feeble one must have been written after the application of the rack.

Domesday Book occupies a central place in this museum. The glass case in which it is placed is divided into three compartments, one of which contains the folio volume, the next portions of former bindings, and the third the quarto relating to Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. Both volumes are open, and we note that the scribes indicated a fresh subject by drawing a red line through the first few words of it. There are many charters of the early kings, and other documents ranging from a writ of William II. to the Coronation Roll of Queen Victoria.

Among those touching the confines of the literary world, Chaucer is represented in a bill sent in, when he was Clerk of the King's Works, for the issue of a commission to Hugh Swayn to purvey stones, timber, tiles, and shingles, &c., and to take masons, carpenters, and other workmen to Westminster, Sheen, and other places. Shakespeare is mentioned in a warrant from King James to Lord Cecil for the issue of letters-patent authorising the king's servants Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Richard Burbige, and six others, to play for the recreation of the king's loving subjects, and for his own solace and pleasure when he should think good to see them. The poet Spenser informed commissioners in May 1589 that four thousand acres of attainted lands (formerly belonging to the Earl of Desmond) were allotted to him, but the necessary

patent had not been passed, and at least one thousand acres were wanting, and only six households of English people were upon his land when he wrote, but others had promised to come over as soon as his patent was passed. Ben Jonson's signature occurs at the close of a letter he sent to the Earl of Salisbury informing him of an interview with the chaplain of the Venetian ambassador concerning some business with which he was entrusted. There is a letter from Sir Walter Raleigh to Queen Anne, wife of James I., declaring that he never sought employment in Guinea, but only desired to do the king such service as had seldom been performed for any king, and complaining that after eight years' imprisonment he was as 'strayghtly lockt up' as on the first day. A letter from Francis Bacon, Viscount St Albans, written after his fall, piteously asks the king for a cell to which he may retire, the cell in question being a provostship.

One from Milton to Bradshaw introduces Andrew Marvell as a scholar of singular desert open to employment. Mr Marvile, he wrote, had spent four years in Holland, France, Italy, and Spain, and gained the languages of those countries, and was, no doubt, of an approved conversation, for he had been entrusted with the instruction of the daughter of Lord Fairfax; and if it should be seen he required an assistant (in consequence of his failing sight), he thinks it would be hard to find a man so fit every way for that purpose as this gentleman. John Strype the antiquary is also in evidence, making a request to George Holmes, then lodging at a sword-cutler's in Fleet Street, to consult the Liberate Roll, 25 Henry III., for an entry concerning the Great Tower; and the Patent Roll, 16 Henry VI., for information concerning the keeper of the lions. The great undertaking of the printing of the Bible is touched on in a letter from Miles Coverdale and Rychard Grafton, grocer, to Thomas Lord Cromwell, that accompanied two samples of it, one on parchment and the other on paper. There are letters, too, from Defoe (he prays the queen's mercy, and, in preference to penalties, offers to raise a troop of horse at his own expense); Mathew Prior, giving information, among other facts, of the whipping of a maid-servant in public for having conveyed letters to prisoners; Sir Richard Steele (he recommends John Rollos, engraver, as having a very pretty thought for the more commodious dress of women); and Addison, concerning an agitation among the clergy in Ireland. There is a memorial from Sir Isaac Newton relating to medals for the coronation of Queen Anne; and there is a letter from Sir William Dugdale recommending the bearer of it as a transcriber of records, 8th March 1668. Inigo Jones figures in this goodly company in a reminder to Sir Dudley Carleton that there was 'a great summe yet behind to the workmen,' involving delay in the removal of a nuisance before Scotland Gate. A similar difficulty concerning building expenses is shown in a memorial from Sir Christopher Wren praying for allowances for works at Hampton Court, Kensington, and elsewhere, signed 'Chr. Wren.' Some well-known artists also are brought vividly before us. Peter Paul Rubens writes to Sir Dudley Carleton, ambassador at the Hague, offering to exchange a selection of pictures, mostly by his own hand, for a collection of antiques; Vandyck requests Balthasar Gerbier to suspend negotiations touching a proposed journey to England in 1632; and Sir Peter Lely certifies he believes George Freeman to be the best and fittest person in England to be employed in making designs for tapestry, prints, or any other inventions belonging to a history-painter.

But these are as naught compared with the appealing interest of such royal personages as Jane the Quene (as it was permitted Lady Jane Grey to subscribe herself), Mary Queen of Scots, Queen Mary (or Marye the Quene, as she signed herself with or without 'Phillipus'), Anne Boleyn, and Queen Elizabeth and her courtiers. It happened that the signature of the unhappy queen of nine days related to the appointment of Edward Bernarde as Sheriff of Wiltshire, while it was reserved for Marye the Quene to issue the necessary letters-patent for it. Anne Boleyn sent cramp-rings to her correspondent Master Stephen Gardiner. These were blessed by King Harry, and supposed to exempt wearers from epilepsy. The Queen of Scots wrote to Sir William Cecil in Scottish-English to express her desire to conciliate 'the quin her good sister,' and signed herself 'Yowr Richt asured good frind, Marie R.' John Knox, however, wrote to the same official that if he did not strike at the root, the branches that appear broken would bud again—which probably helped to neutralise her efforts to establish a good understanding. Queen Elizabeth's signature occurs to a warrant for the delivery of twelve prisoners, who had incurred or were likely to receive the penalty of death, to Martin Frobisher, to the end that they should make a voyage with him or 'a viage by the seas' to discover new countries. This was in 1577. The Earl of Leicester, six days before he died, sent his royal mistress a letter to inquire after her health, assuring her the chief thing he prayed for was her good health and long life. He said he continued her medicine, and concluded: 'I humbly kyss your foote.' The Earl of Essex wrote more fancifully twelve years afterwards: He told his paper to haste to the queen's presence and kiss her fair correcting hand that laid new plasters to his lighter hurt, but to his great wound applied nothing; and added the paper was to say it came from 'shaming, languishing, despayring SX.' There is a letter in French from Catharine de' Medici to Elizabeth, signed as her '*bonne seur et cousine Caterine.*'

It is difficult to turn from the charm of the older writings and the spells they conjure up, though there are many attractions in view, such as a prayer in the handwriting of Charles I. that is in the *Eikon Basilike*, which seems to confirm his claim to the authorship of that work; and an array

of names as brilliant as Sir Philip Sidney's, Sir Francis Drake's, or that of John Duke of Marlborough. We see letters, petitions, and seals bearing upon the history of America. One document is a round-robin signed by certain Walloons and Frenchmen who promise to go and inhabit Virginia, then under the sway of the king of Great Britain; another is a petition, dated August 1685, from William Penn, praying that the difference between Lord Baltimore and himself may be soon heard by the Lords of Plantations; another is a petition to King George III., signed by John Hancock, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and forty-six others, regretting the late war, and desiring a restoration of the former harmony between Great Britain and her colonies; and there is also a letter from George Washington to his great and good friend George III. concerning ratifications of a treaty of amity, including matters of commerce and navigation, besides a map of Hudson's and Rareton River surveyed in the year 1700 by W. W. Romer. Sidelights upon still more recent transactions are given in letters from Nelson, Bonaparte (First Consul), Wellington, and a joint communication from the Emperor of Russia and the Emperor of the French to George III., signed 'Alexandre' and 'Napoleon.' The log of the proceedings on board His Majesty's ship *Victory* is here preserved. Thomas M. Hardy, captain, set down particulars of the battle of Trafalgar, when Nelson, having been wounded in the shoulder about 1.15 P.M., a victory was reported to him at 4.30 P.M., and 'he then died of his wound.' Two letters from Nelson are signed with his left hand, and one is here preserved that is among the last he wrote before the loss of his right arm.

The museum occupies the site of the ancient Chapel of the Rolls; and in it are retained a few of the old sepulchral monuments, notably those of Richard Allington (dated 1561), Edward, Lord Bruce of Kinloss, Master of the Rolls (1611), and Dr John Yong (1516), the effigy on which is attributed to the sculptor of the figures on the tomb of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey. Besides the numerous documents alluded to, and many of a similar nature, there are arranged in it some other items, such as half-a-dozen old chests (some of which long lay hid, so to say, in the Chapel of the Pyx), several coffers, a hanaper or two containing deeds, wooden skippets dating from the fourteenth century, keys, tallies, and pouches for records, dies, and seals; some pottery, found in course of the rebuilding in 1895; and a pair of doors for a large press, inscribed with the information that it was intended for the keeping of all pelles of receipts, warrants, and writings in the reign of Philip and Mary. Not the least interesting item among these more miscellaneous relics is a roll showing the marks on the bills of swans by which their owners could recognise them, between the years 1497 and 1515. The monks of Croyland, Thorny, Ramsay, and Revesby, several parsons, 'my Ladie's grace the Kynges moder,' are mentioned in this list of swan-owners.

All the varied and valuable contents have been carefully, copiously, and learnedly catalogued by Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, Deputy-Keeper of the Rolls, for the guidance of visitors. As we pass out into Chancery Lane we seem to emerge from an atmosphere laden with the thoughts and aims of great personages for a time extending over nine centuries; we seem, too, to have been amidst surroundings and suggestions of valour, courtesy, and endeavour not to be held lightly. Many of the early royal writings are in French, and many in Latin; and great seals are appended to them placed in bags of quilted damask, or striped silk, or white linen, or dark worsted. The seal attached to a confirmation by Thomas 'Beket' is in a bag of gold brocade. A treaty between Edward I. and Guy, Count of Flanders, has four seals; a document signed by the claimants to the Scottish throne promising to abide by the decision of Edward has their eight seals appended by cords of red and green silk. Some seals of the time of Henry VII. are in silver cases. Some Oriental paper as early as 1665 is of a reddish tinge flecked with silver, and some is powdered with flowers in gold. Pondering in this confused way over these writings and old phrasings that tell so much—the relief of some executions, the pity of others; the confiscations and restitutions, defeats and victories; the lament of the Sire de Coucy to King Richard II. that there should be war, and his request that another person should be appointed to the Order of the Garter in his stead, as he must renounce his fealty; the list of vestments bequeathed by Edward Prince of Wales to Canterbury; the 'illnesse of the ways and height of the waters' that delayed Pepys on his journey to Norwich—we draw near to Fleet Street, and these lingering and crowding thoughts are lost in the traffic of to-day.

## A LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE.

There's rosemary—that's for remembrance.

When old age doth on us creep,
When for dear dead days we weep—
For remembrance, rosemary.
For all treasures that we keep—
For remembrance, rosemary.
When to light again upleap
Thoughts that we had laid to sleep,
Sweet past joys or sorrows deep—
For remembrance, rosemary.

For the joys of youth, rose-red;
For the happy hours long fled—
For remembrance, rosemary.
Of the words of love we said—
For remembrance, rosemary.
For the times our hearts have bled,
For the tears that we have shed,
And in memory of the dead—
For remembrance, rosemary.

MARIA STEUART.

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# UNTRODDEN WAYS IN NIGERIA.

By CONSTANCE LARYMORE, Author of *A Resident's Wife in Nigeria.*

WE found our way there by long marching through dark, cool forest and smooth, slippery rock-land where foothold was all but impossible. In the open, too, the path was almost obliterated, and had diminished to an infinitesimal channel trickling with water; the grass, meeting over our heads, had to be battled with, making each mile the length of three; and thus we struggled along, striving to shield our eyes from the stinging, ripe grass-seeds, loose and sharp as needles.

It is called Ikarre. It lies fifty miles south of Kabba, which also is sixty miles from the Niger, and that (as some people know) is in its turn a long way from London; and as the last European visit there happened more than a year ago, it can fairly claim to be approaching the 'back of beyond.'

On arrival in the little, brown, dusty town we received a noisy and enthusiastic welcome, and were ceremoniously conducted to the 'royal' compound, there to be lodged as the Sariki's guests.

The compound itself is an unusual sight. In the centre is a square courtyard about the extent of an acre, with deep verandas running all round under immensely deep roofs thatched with the broad leaves of the plantain. Opposite the entrance are the Sariki's dwellings. The veranda is loftier and wider than the rest, the clay walls smoothly faced with a pale-gray native cement and roughly but effectively decorated with mouldings of the clay. In the centre is a doorway, and a wide couch of the same gray clay, spread with brightly coloured mats, cloths, and huge scarlet cushions. Here his Majesty reclines during the afternoon and evening for social intercourse, small-talk, and professional story-telling. In the mornings he occupies a somewhat similar 'throne' at the main entrance to his apartments, and holds audiences, hears complaints, receives visitors, and generally transacts the business of the day.

Ikarre is the home of the wood-carving art of Northern Nigeria, and these verandas are upheld by weird, carved wooden figures of men, women, children, horses, alligators, and monkeys in fantastic shapes and attitudes, grotesque to a certain extent, but equally amazing; the wood, a kind of teak, being almost of the hardness of iron, and carving-tools an unknown luxury. My heart covets the carved doors in that compound, huge slabs of timber completely covered with carved figures of human beings and animals; but the plant-world seems to have no attraction for the artist.

Around the compound, behind the verandas, is a veritable rabbit-warren of dwellings occupied by the members of the household—low, dark doorways, full of peeping women and children, leading to a labyrinth of tiny courtyards one behind the other. Our lodging consists of one huge chamber, cool and dark as the crypt of a cathedral, and about as comfortable to live in. It is intended, one supposes, as a kind of courthouse or audience-chamber, as there is a wide seat running all round the sides, and in the centre a highly imposing but most inconvenient dais approached by three steps—an exceedingly ready trap for the unwary in the gray twilight, which is all that can penetrate there. The ceiling is formed of immense slabs of wood, absolutely black with age and a recent fire, which latter made no more impression on them than to darken their colour. Opposite the dais stands a carved column, the sides being merely dog-toothed, but the front bearing two boldly carved figures, the work so deep that they are attached to the column itself only here and there. The upper one is a seated figure playing (with an expression of ecstasy) on a reed instrument, and the lower (also seated) holds a shield. The facial expression given to these quaint creatures makes them almost life-like and a source of constant joy; but they utterly defeat my poor pencil, and a camera would be useless in the semi-darkness.

On the evening of our arrival we decided to celebrate the event by giving a ball, a suggestion received with huge delight. The guests were asked for half-past seven, and we arranged to dine earlier to accommodate them. But the good people of Ikarre reck little of time beyond sunrise and


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sunset; wherefore, to our dismay, when we had scarcely commenced to change for dinner the crowd surged into the compound—men, women, and children—running, jostling, and squeaking from sheer pleasurable excitement. All the musicians of the town were drumming, rattling, and braying their loudest, and we had to communicate our feelings to each other and converse by signs while we dressed. A small space was cleared for our table, and we dined amid the deafening uproar—a spectacle of deepest interest to the hundreds of watchers, judging by the valiant struggles for front places. Dinner over, the dance began in earnest; a most remarkable sight, if 'sight' it could be called, for the fearful danger of firing the thatched roofs all round had forced us to forbid unprotected lights. The performance, accordingly, was illuminated only by a few feeble lanterns and flashes of brilliant blue lightning out of deep-black sky, the pink-shaded candles on our table merely serving to make the darkness darker where the ever-shifting crowd moved and swayed. Dancer after dancer (all men) sprang out of the throng, capered, shuffled, circled, and pranced, apparently entirely to his own satisfaction and that of the spectators. Suddenly, to our embarrassment and dismay, the Sariki, squatting at ease on his mat beside the Resident, jumped to his feet, and, addressing the performers in high-voiced indignation, rated them soundly for 'bad dancing and bad drumming,' and generally condemned in round terms the whole entertainment offered to us. We felt horribly uncomfortable when this was interpreted; but the admonition was effective in the extreme, the 'dancing' that followed being of quite a different kind, and in its way remarkably clever, though as far removed from dancing as any form of motion could be.

A man clothed in a long white robe, the wide sleeves of which covered his hands so that only his bare feet were visible, appeared at one end of the clear space. Without raising heels or toes from the ground, and with white-draped arms spread wide, he began to revolve slowly, with movements of the feet so imperceptible as to give the impression of a figure moved by wires, the rest of his limbs rigid and motionless. Quicker and quicker he revolved, making his way down the open space, till on reaching our chairs he twirled round and round so rapidly that he became a mere whirlwind of flying white cloth revolving on a pivot of apparently motionless black feet. Then he stumbled and fell, gasping and exhausted, into the crowd, which opened to receive him with loud and long plaudits; and the Sariki smiled, well pleased at our appreciation.

About nine o'clock we made the brilliant discovery that it was for us to give the signal for departure, and in less than ten minutes the courtyard was empty, silent, and dark. What a millennium for the weary London hostess if etiquette permitted her, after a couple of hours of her ball, to smile at her guests and say pleasantly, 'Thanks so much. You have danced beautifully; you can go now,' and see them depart in high good-humour and with no resentment!

The next day was given over mainly to matters judicial, and gave one curious glimpses of what these primitive folks feel to be very real grievances. The Resident spent some hours unravelling what appeared to be a serious trouble. A man had brought a complaint that the people of his native town, a village close to Ikarre, had forced him to fly owing to their threats to kill him. These people, being summoned, arrived in force, and entirely bore out his statement, vigorously repeating their firm determination to have his life, and all on account of his refusal to join them in cleaning a path and some further recalcitrant behaviour in the matter of a yam-farm.

Another case where public feeling ran very high was that of a truculent princess, a sister of the Sariki. She appeared to have tangled her matrimonial affairs pretty considerably, and stated her case with immense vigour, producing two 'husbands' of such unprepossessing appearance that I entirely sympathised with the Sariki's strong disapproval, her selection being a most repulsive-looking gray-beard with only one eye. But the lady displayed passionate affection for him, refused utterly to return to her lawful owner, and made excited rushes forward, threatening to cut her throat, with such wild gestures and hysterical shrieks that we both sorrowed that material so promising was lost to the ranks of the Suffragettes. When promises of settlement were made, she was induced to seat herself sulkily on a corner of her royal brother's mat in token of his protection. Very shortly her lawful owner (wisely, to my mind) resigned all claim to this female hooligan for the consideration of four pounds sterling, the price originally paid for her; and universal amiability was restored, except that the Sariki could by no means conceal his contempt for her new choice.

Night was made hideous by a party of merry-makers who, doubtless imagining we liked it, perambulated the town, drumming and singing, from compound to compound; and a little black cow, bereaved of her calf, took up her stand just outside the veranda and wailed her loss plaintively and ceaselessly. The next morning, therefore, we were relieved to find ourselves marching away out into the deep, cool kola-forests, where the precious trees are in their thousands, yielding the Sariki of Ikarre an annual income approaching four figures. He, wise man, not content with reaping the harvest of his grandfather's industry, diligently plants young trees in all directions beside the trickling streams and on the slopes of rich black soil.

We climbed up and up, with glimpses of a magnificent sea of forest-country, till we reached a tiny village which we call the Crystal Palace, for the clay of the houses is full of tiny bits of mica, and the little, thatched huts twinkle and glitter most gorgeously in the morning sun. Here, also, the one bread-fruit tree I have seen in Northern

Nigeria spreads broad shade in the market-place. Then downwards to our camping-place, where there are more curious carvings, also two most unfortunate alligators in captivity. These had been caught when quite young by the father of the present Sariki in a strange little pond in the forest, afterwards shown to us. We were told that this pond is swarming with alligators—a curious fact, as it must be quite fifty miles from the Niger, with no visible communication. Now that the old Sariki is dead, the wretched alligators have grown formidable, their wooden trough is broken, and no one apparently proposes to replace it. We found the captives in a small open space enclosed by a circular wall, gasping on the dry earth without shade or water. When we begged for their release or execution, grave heads were shaken. 'We cannot do anything at all with them; you see, they belonged to the old Sariki. We give them meat every day,' with conscious virtue. We had the alligators well drenched with water, and insisted on a new trough being provided without delay.

On the next day's road our faces were turned towards civilisation. The native traders, padding wearily along under monster loads of palm-oil, showed that the untrodden ways were left behind, and we were travelling to where the long arm of commercial enterprise has already reached.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER II.—HOW THE NAME OF LAURISTON STOOD HIGH.

T was only when they were trudging across Castle Bear Common and nearing the comfortable red-roofed house which nestled among the trees on the crest of the hill that Etienne asked of Charles the not unnatural question, 'Do you tell, *mon ami*, that we broke the bounds and ran after the soldiers?' For his grandfather's very last weighty word to him, as he was setting out with John Sax to visit the Lauristons in their country home, was, 'Your very best behaviour now, *mon garçon*, or you and I will have accounts to settle later on. Don't get into any mischief or lead the others into it. Remember, you are a Montessonne, and not among your own people. I shall question Mademoiselle Lauriston about you when I see her.' The old gentleman knew better than any one else, you see, the mingling of hot, loose strains that had gone to the making of Etienne, and the capriciousness of training that had done little to control their occasional outcroppings.

And to the French boy's anxious questioning, the English boy replied with British brusquerie, 'Of course! We broke bounds, and we own up. My, that horse was a beauty! But holsters are beastly uncomfortable things to sit on!' And a sudden twinge in his left leg set him to prompt examination of the mordant bite of the buckle.

'But why say anything to madame and mademoiselle?' persisted Etienne, in further effort to avert possible consequences.

'Pooh! we always own up.—Don't we, Jack?'

'M—yes. Nearly always,' said John Sax soberly.

'Quite always,' interjected Mavie, ''cept when it's such a little, teeny thing that it doesn't matter.'

'*Eh bien!* it was surely a very small affair that we ran across a field to see the soldiers—and such fine soldiers!' Oh diplomatic Etienne! 'Unless one were made of wood one could not help running to see them.'

'They're pretty sure to ask what we've been doing,' said Charles philosophically. 'Besides, we're all over mud, and those beastly dogs bit a hole in Mavie's arm.'

'*Mon dieu!* I did not know. The evil beasts! Is it bad?' and he looked anxiously at Mavie's unconcerned face.

'I didn't feel it till John Sax nearly sucked me to death. I believe he bit me, too,' said Mavie, feeling her arm tenderly.

'No, I didn't. I only sucked it to get the poison out,' said John Sax doggedly.

'We will get Mrs Hepsy to see to it, and then we could clean ourselves, and no one need know,' suggested Etienne.

'Oh, don't worry! They'll only scold at most, and that doesn't hurt,' said Charles in a tone of one who had suffered direr tribulations in his time.

'My grandfather, he will ask mademoiselle how I have behaved; and she will say, "Etienne was bad. He led the rest away." Then'——

'I'll say it was all my fault. I wanted to see the soldiers more than any of you. And, anyway, I was the only one that rode. That was a horse! When I go into the army I'll have a horse just like that, and a cap with a plume!' And he revelled again in the remembrance of it all.

Notwithstanding their determination against any attempt at evasion, there was no need to walk straight in on Aunt Charlotte, who was of a capricious humour at times, and might only laugh or might proceed to extremities, you could never tell which. So they made discreetly through the shrubberies for the stables, where there was the chance of a preliminary brush-down before venturing inside, purely out of consideration, of course, for the indwellers, who regarded mud as out of place in halls and rooms.

'Hech, sirs, but there's been het wark the day!' came a voice from the cheerful obscurity of the harness-room. 'Hoo mony o' the red deevils did ye mak' away wi' the day, General? They foucht sair hard, I can see. Have ye ony skelps?'

'No scalps at all, Jerry,' said Mavie.

'D'ye say? No skelps!' in sympathetic condolence with such poor luck.

'We want a bit of a brush before we go in, Jerry. We're a bit dirty.'

'My stars, ye are that! Come awa', then!' and reaching down a stiff brush, he set to work, turning her round and round with a professional hissing which gave quite a realistic touch to the proceedings.

'An' never a skelp for a' that dirt!' said he as the dust rose. 'An' ye tore yer frock,' he said sympathisingly. 'But ye're aye tearin' yer clothes, ye wee tatter-wallops.'

'It was a dog did that. They were after a fox, and it ran across the plank, and we threw it into the water.'

'The fox was it, or the dog?'

'The plank, you old silly!—to stop the dogs going after it. And one of them bit me.'

'Bit ye! Show me, then;' and he turned up the little sleeve quickly, and pinched his brows at sight of the big discoloration.

'It wasn't the dog did that,' said Mavie. 'It was John Sax's sucking made all that. It wasn't half as bad before.'

'Ye suckit it weel?' And John Sax nodded. 'Ye've got some rumgumption aboot ye, John Sax, like yer father had. Ye did weel. Hepsy'll wash it an' bind it up, an' it'll heal a' richt.—Why'd ye let her get bit? Was ony o' ye bit?' looking round at the boys.

'We didn't know she was bitten. She didn't know herself till John Sax found it out,' said Charles; and then, with gusto, 'And we saw some soldiers, Jerry; and one of them took me up on his horse in front of him. He was an officer'——

'Ay! in the meadows were they, noo?'

'No; in the road by the church. Such horses, Jerry'——

'Then ye bruk bounds again, ye young limmers!'

'Great big gray horses, Jerry,' continued Charles.

'Ay!' with sudden accession of interest.

'And the men had red coats and head-dresses with plumes.'

''Deed an' ye micht weel run efter them. 'Twould be the old regiment, I'm thinkin', or a bit o' it mebbe. How many was there, noo?'

'Oh, hundreds and hundreds!' cried Mavie, delighted at his diversion.

'Between one hundred and fifty and one hundred and sixty,' said John Sax in his matter-of-fact way.

'Ay, jist a squadron. Yer father's old regiment! He'd no' blame ye overmuch, I wis, though ye did break yer bounds. 'Twould be in yer blood, an' ye couldna help it.—Now, missy, ye're as clean as I can mak' ye, an' that's none too clean efter a'.—You laddies can clean ane anither. An' ye saw the old regiment? Weel, weel! An' where was they goin'?' And he sat down on a three-legged stool and began to fill his pipe.

'Over Harrow way. I asked the officer if they were going to the wars, and he said, "Yes, if the chance comes," and he promised to look out for me when I go into the army.'

'Aweel, there'll be time eneuch for him to get killed twa-three times afore then mebbe.'

'Oh Jerry, I do hope he won't get killed! He was such a nice man,' said Mavie plaintively.

'Ay, ay, it's jist them 'at gets killed first,' said Jerry musingly from the slow, blue curls of smoke. 'The guid aye die young, ye ken.'

'Oh Jerry! do they always? Must they? Why must they? It doesn't seem fair,' protested Mavie.

'Aweel, there's aye exceptions to a' rules, missy, so dinna fash yersel'. Ye'll live just as long as the Lord sees guid for ye. Luk at me!'

'I think you can't have been very good when you were young, Jerry, for you're a very, very old man now,' said Mavie, regarding him critically from this novel point of view.

'I was ane o' the exceptions, an' yer father was anither. But nigh eneuch we bin to it at times, both in America an' 'gainst the Frenchmen.—Yer father, noo,' he said, nodding gravely at John Sax, 'he was ane o' them that had to go, an' he went in place o' Master Charles. Ay, John Sax was a man, though they couldna mak' a bank-clerk oot o' him. If they had, it's widdys an' orphans we'd a' been here this day withoot a doot, an' but a puir kind o' clerk they'd have had at the bank.'

'And we're never going to forget it,' said Charles, laying his arm across John Sax's shoulder. 'Jack's coming into the army with me, and when we've had enough fighting he's coming into the bank with me. I wish to goodness Mavie'd been a boy!'

'And I wish to goodness I had!'

'Then she could have taken on the wretched old bank, and we could have been soldiers all our lives.'

'Aweel, there's mony a ane would be glad to tak' on Lauriston's Bank,' chuckled old Jerry; 'an' ye can get a' the soldiers ye want by payin' for 'em. But there must aye be a Lauriston in the bank, ye ken, or folks wouldna have the confidence in it. There's no better name than Lauriston in a' London City, an' there's no city in a' the world comes up to London, an' so ye may tak' it there's no better name than Lauriston in a' the world. 'Second to None" it is—same as the old regiment. I have seen men go doon, an' I have seen banks go doon, but I havena met the man yet that had an ill word to say against the name o' Lauriston. An' when I do meet him he'll be wishin' he hadna been born, or that he'd been born so unco guid that he'd died in his airly youth.'

'Jerry, you're an old dear,' said Mavie, 'and I take back what I said. You're one of the 'ceptions to the rule too, like father and John Sax's father.'

'Aweel—mebbe!' chuckled the old man. 'An' so I said. But noo, my doo, you'd better run in an' preen the rest o' yer feathers, an' get Hepsy to see to that airm before yer awnt sees ye, or she'll mebbe have somethin' to say. There's some o' that dirt won't come off yet awhile. Better ask Hepsy to pit it afore the fire to dry. Fegs! ye're catched red-

handed noo!' and Jerry smothered his pipe with a gouge of his little finger, and lost himself in the quite unnecessary polishing of the silver boss of a headpiece.

Hasty steps came over the cobbles, and a sharp voice cried, 'Jere'——

'Miah MacClootie,' squeaked Jerry in so close an imitation of the speaker that the children broke into a shout of laughter. 'I thocht it was yer awnt,' he said, with a warning wink that prepared them for the approaching conflict with the new-comer.

'An' what will Mistress Jezebel Honeybone be wantin' wi' Mr Jeremiah MacClootie?' he asked with a vinegary suavity which sufficiently expressed his feelings.

If there was one thing old Jerry detested more than all others, it was the name bestowed upon the deserted scrap of humanity, sixty-odd years before, by the Lowland farmer into whose haystack, and upon whose care, his tinker parents had lightly cast their responsibilities and passed on their way. 'Jeremiah he shall be, because his life is like to be not free from lamentation,' said the pawky owner of the haystack. 'An' MacClootie he is withoot a doot, for it's a wunner the draigglin' deevils didna set the stacks ableeze.'

And Jeremiah, son of the Evil One, he had been all his life, and all his life had set himself strenuously to prove that though you may give a dog an ill name in his youth it may not be absolutely necessary to hang him, since he did not choose it himself and may not deserve it. By long and faithful service he had worked out the venom from his undeserved patronymic. To every one in the household he was 'Jerry'—both in name and nature—with the one exception of Mistress Isabella Honeybun, Miss Lauriston's maid.

Miss Honeybun was a young person of some five-and-fifty autumns and winters, with whose sharp nose and tight mouth and frosty aspect it was difficult to associate any ideas of springs or summers, or any of the little amenities of life whatsoever. According to her somewhat dim and distorted lights she served her mistress faithfully, and kept her very fully informed of the sayings and doings of all about her, whereby Miss Lauriston acquired much curious information and Miss Honeybun an ill reputation as tale-bearer and trouble-maker.

Unkind gossips said that Miss Honeybun had at one time set her severely prim cap at Mr Jerry, and would have been quite willing to overlook even the disability of his unfortunate name. But Jerry's stout old heart had gone elsewhere. He turned a cold face to Miss Honeybun, and married Hephzibah Mowatt, a very different kind of person. It was an undoubted fact that after a certain time in her life Miss Honeybun's lips tightened, the frosty sharpness of her nose grew more pronounced, and she never addressed Jerry save as Jeremiah MacClootie, with a very full and scornful accent on both penultimates, and he retorted always with Mistress Jezebel, or Mistress Honeybone, to which latter piece of irony the maiden's bodily angularities lent peculiarly toothsome flavour. In a word, they were both devoted servants of their own sides of the house, and detested one another most cordially.

'An' what will Mistress Jezebel Honeybone be wantin' wi' Mr Jeremiah MacClootie?'

'You're to have the carriage ready for my mistress at four o'clock. We go to town for the master's grand dinner, and return to-morrow. You've been smoking, I see.'

'Ah, ha! the eyes o' um, an' the nose o' um!' growled Jerry, with a look of appreciation at that disdainfully sniffing organ. Then he coolly produced his pipe and flint-and-steel, and proceeded to light up again.

'You'll set the place on fire some day with your dirty tobacco-smoking.'

'Ye'll smell it in guid time, my dear, an' be able to tell some ane a' aboot it.'

'And you children, wherever have you been? You're mud from head to feet! Come into the house at once and get cleaned up. You know your mamma does not like your playing about the stables and learning evil habits—smoking, and the like.'

'Mother says Jerry's a treasure,' said Mavie boldly. 'And he's a dear old thing, and he hasn't got any evil habits.'

'There's for ye, Mistress Jezebel,' grinned Jerry.

'Come in at once, I say, and get cleaned up.'

'Let go my arm, Honeybun, or I'll—I'll bite you,' cried the struggling Mavie. 'Your fingers are like the pinchers the Red Indians tear off their prisoners' flesh with.'

'Haw, haw, haw!' laughed Jerry in huge delight.

'Such-like things to teach the poor innocents!' scathed Honeybun, who knew whence the children got all their Indian lore. 'You'll please to remember—four o'clock!' as she turned to go.

'I'll be ready, an' I'll no' forget my pishtols this time. Ye'd better carry a blunderbush yersel', Mistress Jezebel. Then if'——

'Why, are the footpads out again?' asked Miss Honeybun, turning with a startled face and releasing Mavie's arm.

'Oh ay, they're oot richt eneuch. The Windsor coach was stopped last nicht, an' a' the passengers cleaned oot to their last bodle. But ye jist gi'e them ae glint o' yer nose, Mistress Jezebel, an' we'se be a' richt. Jist keek oot the window an' gi'e them a broadside o' yer very worst language, an' they'll turn an' awa' for a' they're worth.'

Miss Honeybun turned and went into the house with knitted brows, undecided whether to impart this particular piece of information to her mistress or not. Her dread of footpads and highwaymen was fully equal to her mistress's. On the other hand, Grosvenor Place and the gaieties of town appealed to her very much more than did the more serene pleasures of the country-side. She was still pondering the matter when the children slipped past her, in Indian file of course, in search of Hepsy MacClootie.

*(To be continued.)*

# VAGARIES OF A FLUCTUATING CURRENCY.

WHEN the large amount of British capital invested in South America—estimated, at least, at two hundred million pounds for Argentina and Brazil alone—is taken into account, it is not to be wondered at that the British investor should feel interested in the financial policy of the various South American Governments. A bulky and instructive volume could be written on this subject; in an article like the present, however, it is impossible to do more than mention a few of the more salient points of South American finance.

In many respects South America is a country pre-eminently favoured by nature. Nearly half of the continent may be said to possess a temperate and healthy climate, a still greater part is blessed with a fertile soil, while thousands of miles of navigable waterways afford access to the very heart of the continent in several directions. It is true they have revolutions; but in the writer's experience an ordinary South American revolution is productive of less loss and inconvenience than the great strikes now so prevalent in England and her colonies. Strikes on a large scale are comparatively scarce in South America; there is no socialistic or anti-capitalist legislation to speak of; of trades-union influence there is little; and the labour vote—so powerful in some Anglo-Saxon countries, notably Australia—is here an insignificant factor in political life. No wonder, therefore, that many an English capitalist, disappointed at the results of his investments in other parts of the world, turns with a hopeful eye to South America, for here the relations between capital and labour are in many respects less strained.

But South America has its drawbacks. There are few of the Latin-American countries which can be said to enjoy the blessing of good government, no matter how much they talk about 'republican freedom,' &c. Corruption is rife in political circles, politics (as we understand the term) are replaced by sordid intrigues which permeate every branch of social and commercial life, an election without fraud or violence is a rarity, and the finances of these republics are the laughing-stock of the civilised world.

It is true, some of the South American republics, such as Argentina and Brazil, have followed a sounder financial policy of late, and the 'boom' which these two countries have enjoyed may be attributed in no small measure to this fact. But there are others whose finances may be described as a hopeless wreck; and the experience of these countries, if it does not 'adorn a tale,' ought certainly to 'point a moral.'

The matter is of much greater importance than the stay-at-home Englishman might imagine. Let us suppose that in England, instead of gold and silver, the circulating medium and legal tender consisted of a fluctuating paper currency, the value of which, reckoned in gold, varied from day to day. Let us go still further, and suppose that it was impossible to buy gold or silver at any price, and that none of the banks would sell drafts on foreign countries or drafts of any kind payable in gold. It may be maintained that such a situation is ridiculous and impossible. But such a situation has prevailed more than once in the smaller South American republics, such as Paraguay, where it is the actual situation at the time of writing this article. A friend of the writer in Paraguay several months ago realised all his available assets, with the intention of leaving the country. On arriving at Asuncion, the capital, to take out his passage, he found that gold was unobtainable at any price, and neither of the two local banks would sell drafts on any foreign country. As he could obtain no gold, and as it was useless to take with him the fluctuating paper notes which formed the circulating medium of the country, which are almost valueless and unsaleable abroad, he had to give up the idea of emigration and wait until better times came round. In the meantime he had suffered no small inconvenience and loss.

A situation such as this is easily explained. The circulating medium in Paraguay is a fluctuating paper currency which has been falling in value for many years past. When the Government requires more money it simply issues more notes, and with every fresh issue of notes—which are not convertible into gold as our bank-notes are—the whole of those in circulation depreciate in value. At present the Government of Paraguay is buying all the available gold and gold-drafts in the market. Whether this is with the intention of meeting its foreign obligations the writer is unable to state with certainty; but it is a fact. How is this gold paid for? It is to be presumed that the usual expedient has been resorted to—the issue of fresh paper money. This would account for the recent rapid depreciation of the local paper money—more than 20 per cent. in a few weeks; it would also account for the scarcity of gold in the market and the absence of drafts, as the local banks, having a comparatively small capital, can only draw up to the amount of their cover or credit, and presumably that limit has already been reached. But the Government of Paraguay for years has published no balance-sheet of income and expenditure, and one can only draw general conclusions. The whole matter gives a most unpleasant aspect of South American finance.

In Argentina a somewhat similar state of affairs prevailed at one time; but a few years ago, under the government of President Pelligrini, the currency—at that time a fluctuating paper one—was re-converted to a gold basis at its then existing actual value of forty-four cents gold to the paper dollar. As the ratio of value has never altered since, the currency of Argentina may now be considered

permanently established on a gold basis. This method of conversion is so simple and inexpensive that it is a matter of surprise that other countries which are now floundering about in a sea of inconvertible paper currency do not adopt it; but South American statesmen seem to give preference to visionary and impracticable schemes. It may be taken as an axiom, speaking of Latin-American countries, that the smaller the republic the greater is the financial folly of its Ministers. Smaller republics, also, are more liable to sudden revolutions than large ones, and this political instability is another disturbing factor.

In Brazil, also, financial matters have improved of late years, and the value of the milreis has been comparatively stationary in the neighbourhood of fifteenpence; it was formerly much lower. The Government of Brazil has on former occasions laid itself open to the charge of empiricism in its financial methods. To give a case in point. Some years ago, when the writer was living in Brazil, the Government bank (Banco da Republica) had an idea that they could raise the rate of exchange by a species of jugglery. With this object, when the other banks quoted the rate of exchange—that is, the value of the milreis—at tenpence, this bank would quote elevenpence or more. But as they could only sell drafts at this price at a loss, they avoided, under various pretexts, the sale of exchange at any such rate, which was a purely fictitious one, and soon became the laughing-stock of Rio de Janeiro. About this time the writer received from his London bankers a draft on Rio de Janeiro (in pounds sterling), payable in local currency (milreis), 'at the rate of exchange of the day.' The parties on whom the draft was made offered to cash it at the 'official' rate of the Banco da Republica, which of course would have entailed a heavy loss. On the writer protesting against the exchange at this fictitious rate, they offered somewhat better terms, but still the draft was cashed at a heavy loss. And here it may be pointed out that the words embodied in drafts 'payable at the exchange of the day' are in many cases a delusion and a snare. In Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Ayres, for example, there was, and probably is yet, no fixed rate for the *purchase* of drafts on London; the rates advertised and exhibited every day by the banks are those at which they *sell* drafts on London; and the customer himself is apt to be 'sold' if he imagines they will cash drafts at the same rate. In such a case he is at the mercy of the local bank or firm on whom the draft is made, who are practically free to name their own rate of exchange. A draft on London is much preferable to one made on a local bank, as the former is negotiable anywhere, and if the holder is not offered a fair rate by one firm he can take it to another.

The depreciation of the currency in Latin-American countries sometimes gives rise to queer situations, and many humorous stories may be told in this connection. When the writer was travelling in the United States some twenty years ago the Mexican dollar was worth about eighty-five cents United States gold. On the Rio Grande the American town of El Paso stands facing the Mexican town of Paso del Norte on the other side of the river. Drinks at the bars in either town cost fifteen cents local currency. One morning, as the story goes, a cute Yankee, after ordering liquid refreshment in an El Paso saloon, tendered in payment an American dollar, and received for change a Mexican dollar, value eighty-five cents. He then crossed to the Mexican side of the river and repeated the operation, giving in payment this time the Mexican dollar he had received, for which he got as change an American dollar, value eighty-five cents local currency. And so he continued until a late hour in the day, when, after having indulged in a certain number of 'gin fizzes' and 'cocktails,' he finished with the same dollar he had commenced with in the morning. This is the story as it went the round of the papers at the time. Unfortunately for the veracity of the American reporter, though it is quite true that the Mexican dollar was worth only eighty-five cents United States gold at the time, the converse was not the case; the United States dollar has always been at a premium in Mexico. The state of things related by the reporter is practically impossible.

The complications caused by a fluctuating currency are numerous. The rate of interest on deposits in some South American countries is 12 per cent. or more. This seems to be a good rate of interest; but if the account is kept in local paper currency the result may be far from satisfactory. Let us suppose that a depositor recently arrived from England converts his available cash (say one hundred pounds gold) into local currency, and deposits it in a bank at 12 per cent. interest. At the end of a year he withdraws the principal, plus 12 per cent. interest. But as the local paper has depreciated in value to the extent of 25 per cent. (nothing unusual) in that time, he has in reality not only lost his interest but a part of his capital as well. Book-keeping in England is a simple matter in comparison to what it is in those countries which have a fluctuating currency. In the case of a wholesale house, for example, as all imported articles have to be paid for in gold, merchants generally find it convenient to sell such articles also for gold; while articles of local production are bought and sold in local paper currency. This involves the keeping of a double set of accounts for nearly every customer. Accounts payable in gold, however, are seldom paid in coin, but in paper currency at the exchange of the day; so that continual conversions have to be made from the gold account into paper, and *vice versâ*, at a rate of exchange which is continually changing. This question of exchange gives rise to constant disputes, annoyance, and lawsuits.

In countries with a fluctuating currency every commercial transaction partakes more or less of the nature of a speculation. The retailer, for example,

buys from the importer in gold, and gives his note to pay in gold—that is, in paper at the exchange of the day, for there is little real gold in circulation—four months later. But he has to sell to his own customers in local paper currency, which is the only legal form of tender, and he cannot tell what the rate of exchange will be four months hence when his bills fall due. The gold premium has by that time perhaps increased 30 per cent., and if he has sold his goods at 25 per cent. over cost price he has really lost instead of gaining anything.

The matter is still further complicated sometimes by vexatious legislation. So much is this the case that a clause is frequently inserted in promissory notes to the effect that the holder will be indemnified by the acceptor for any loss which the former may sustain through unforeseen legislative enactments—a law making payment in gold illegal, for example. Anything is possible in South American finance.

When the writer lived in Venezuela, some years ago, that country had perhaps the best monetary system in South America. He is not aware that there has been any change since, though in that turbulent republic there is little guarantee for the permanence of anything. In that country there was no paper money of any kind in circulation. The basis of the currency was the bolivar or franc (exactly of the same value as the French franc), and gold and silver coins of the principal European countries and of the United States circulated as legal tender at their full value. The English sovereign, for example, had a legal value of twenty-five and a quarter bolivars or twenty-five and a quarter francs.

In Uruguay also the currency is on a sound basis; the Uruguayan gold dollar is worth even more than the United States dollar, and there is no depreciated paper currency.

What is wanted just now in South America is a school in which politicians will be taught the elements of political economy and political finance. Nor is this want altogether confined to South America.

# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.

## CHAPTER II.

They have hoistit sayle and left the land
All in the Nor'land Sea.

IT was Sunday. The bells proclaimed the glaringly obvious, their voices in the still morning carrying far inland over green champaigns, over the brigades of pines, over the links where the bloom of the gorse had laid its magic hand, and waste places shone with golden tapestries. He who makes the Heavens rejoice and the Earth be glad had set the drab town under an arch of summer sky beside the enchantment of a silver sea; but it was Sunday, and the inhabitants had pulled down their blinds. The singular and deadening error that the seventh day is the direct heir-of-line of the Jewish Sabbath flourished there. The swings on the common were locked, for the bairns might use them rather than befog their poor little brains by trying to commit to memory mysterious, unfathomable paragraphs from the Shorter Catechism that their fathers and mothers had wept over, forgotten, and never understood. Truly, Scots Presbyterianism, especially on fine Sunday afternoons, has been watered by a nation's tears! The Free Library, too, was closed. Idlers might have wished to read there instead of sitting smoking, exchanging sculduddery jests, and dangling lazy legs over the pier-head. In the houses, behind the blinds, people were furtively clothing themselves in depressing Sunday garments. A dead hush lay on the place, broken only by the bells, the screams of the gulls, or the howl of healthy, cheerful babies not yet introduced to 'predestination' and the rest of the joyous jousts of the creeds. To them Sundays were as other days.

The skipper was about to sail. He had sent the bairns to the kirk, and he and Jean were alone. Like her husband, she was from the fishing-class, trained in the narrow, half-Hebraic village outlook, cradled in an atmosphere of sectarian bickerings, where kirks were weapons of offence, families divided, professing Christians sincerely at each other's throats, yet serene and complacent in their belief that their own particular temple was the True Avenue. Hugh and his wife were no worse, indeed rather less limited, rather more charitable, than their neighbours.

'It's a peety ye maun sail this mornin', an' it the Sabbath-day,' said Jean. This was her way of heralding a good-bye.

'It's a wark o' necessity, my lass—a wark o' necessity,' quoted the skipper. 'Forby, it's a sodger's breeze an' a fine, canny sea.' He omitted to mention that to catch the tide meant more profit to his owners and commission to himself. 'We should be abeam o' the Naze o' Norway in twa days.'

'Ye'll be gangin' tae the kirk when ye're awa', Hughie?' said the goodwife.

'Whiles,' was the honest reply. 'I doot if it's muckle odds when ye dinna understand the language. I can warstle wi' Danish an' Swedish, but Finnish fair wanders me. To be sure, the tunes in some o' the kirks up the Baltic are awfu' like some o' oor ain. There's ane for a' the warl' like "Kilmarnock." I whiles shut my e'en when I hear it an' think I'm at hame.' He hummed a

stave in a sabbatical and lugubrious quaver. In his heart of hearts the Scot believes that the grave, sweet melodies like 'Kilmarnock' and 'Balerno' shall be raised in Paradise; and indeed there might be worse. There is nothing tawdry about them.

'No' that I haud wi' some o' the foreign kirks,' he went on, 'Protestant, mind ye, an' a' that; but there's pictures in some o' them worth thoosan's o' pounds, an' great lang candles.'

'Preserve 's!' said Jean, 'they micht as weel be Papists,' using the correct term with an implication of reproach, as many ill-informed Protestants do. 'They'll ha'e prayers for the deid, nae doot, an' images o' the Virgin Mary.'

'I wadna gang that length,' said Hugh judicially. 'No, I wadna mind the pictures, although I dinna like to see sic bonny things in a church; but as for prayin' for the deid, it's jist contrary to the Word! Still, they're no' as bad as the releegions in some places I've sailed to. When we were loadin' fruit in Spain at the back-end o' last year ye wad see processions o' them wi' flags, an' incense, an' images, an' fiddles, an' sic-like, an' the hale jing-bang o' them singin' as crouse as if they were as shure o' their reckonin' as oorsel's! Ay, it's a queer warl'.'

'Losh, Hugh, that's awfu'!' ejaculated Jean.

From the harbour the 'girn' of the *Covesea's* winch came up the quiet street. The skipper rose.

'Weel, Jean, I maun be awa'! Ye'll mind an' pit some mair sticks amang the sweet-peas.' He glanced round cautiously to see if any one was looking, and then kissed his wife good-bye. The Scot is a passionate lover, but as shy as a schoolboy of vulgarising his emotions. He dislikes and distrusts public displays of feeling. While many a good fellow says his prayers on his knees at home in secret, nothing will induce him to do this in the kirk before the 'neeburs.' He keeps his finer emotions on ice. Sometimes, alas! they die of cold.

When the skipper reached his ship he found Westwater below in his cabin, busy unpacking. The tide was flowing. The wind carried the pungent smell of the good, fresh seaweed in it. Groups of sailors, smoking after breakfast, stood in knots on the quay watching the *Covesea* cast off. The big, warm sails of the late home-coming fishing-boats shone red in the sun against the snowy breast of the Firth. Wheeling seabirds on silent wings swung ponderously round the vessel's spars. A sentinel gray-backed gull stood poised on one foot on a ship's truck. A herring was tossed carelessly over a fishing-boat's side; down swooped the watchful sentry with a bo's'n's pipe to his mates, and in an instant the air was full of clamour, light-hearted dissonance, and the twinkle of a hundred wings, white and gray. The boats in the harbour jostled one another good-naturedly in the gentle lift of the waves as the rising water gurgled along the wharves, creaming brown eddies whirling round the *Covesea*, throwing sparkles to each other as they danced, a high carol of sounds leaping into the morning air; and through it all a canorous diapason lent by the incoming tide drawing a breath at each of the worn harbour-steps as it mounted them slowly, on sure foot.

Hugh went on to the bridge, a fisherman-pilot beside him. There was a shouted order or two, a hurry and bustle of her moorings being cast off; three long blares from the siren, a *ting-ting* from the engine-room telegraph; a pulse-beat from below, another, and another, and the *Covesea* began to creep cautiously out. She passed through the pier-heads, and lifted to the sea as the Firth welcomed her with a friendly splash across her bows. Soon the pilot was dropped, and in an hour Findburgh was a brown blur far astern.

The *Covesea* was a good, safe, sea-going tramp, with no pretentions to speed, jogging along comfortably at nine knots. The light of the Naze of Norway in due time waved her the signal of an old comrade. Hugh Flett knew the North Sea and the Baltic as well as he knew Union Street in canny Aberdeen, and the *Covesea* slid up the Skager Rack and round the Skaw ahead of her time. Soon she left the Trindlen and Anholt lightships behind; passed the Kullen lighthouse, Elsinore bathed in sunlight from the gray clock-tower of the castle to the spray below Lloyd's signal-station on the beach; the toy island of Vheen, with its trim Noah's Ark fields, village, and spire; the splendid gleaming front of beautiful and light-hearted Copenhagen, Fœsterbo lightship on the port quarter, and the *Covesea's* sturdy bows headed up the busy highway of the Baltic.

The geologist-purser was a model passenger. He did not shoot poor, hungry, questing gulls. He did not drive the chief-engineer demented by fifty questions a day. He did not ask why when 'port' was the course wanted the order given was 'starboard.' He did not grumble. He did not fuss. On the contrary, he lounged comfortably, basking in the sunshine, contentedly reading in a deck-chair. He smoked excellent cigars, giving them away freely; and though he was not a talker, his quiet interest in everything, and his friendly nod and smile, soon made him a favourite, from the dour first-mate to the grimy, sweating firemen.

The skipper and he were pacing the deck aft, around them the surprising and mystical white radiance of a summer night in the Far North. The sun had held his long northern court, dying slowly, splendidly, loath to desert even for an hour the fair sky and sea. Companionable sails and trails of smoke showed white and black on the wide floor of the ocean. Familiar voyagers of the Baltic passed and repassed. Here a dainty, dancing white butterfly of a yacht; farther out, a battered veteran, with the 'Norwegian house-flag'—a windmill pump between the main and mizzen; well-handled Swedish coasters; grimy, lumbering coal-boats; a smart Helsingfors passenger-steamer, gold-laced officers on her bridge, near enough to throw a tinkle of music from her deck to the *Covesea* on the quiet evening; a Parrot Liner, green-hulled,

red-funnelled, her engine-beats singing 'In a hurry! in a hurry!' steaming steadily onward; deck-laden timber-tramps, with heavy lists, like tired old woodmen trudging along bent under their loads of sticks; a gray, furtive 'destroyer' stole swiftly ahead; finest sight of all, a full-rigged sailing-ship spanking joyously along like a roe, every snowy sail set, grace, speed, strength in her yards and tall spars, the water curling in green and white feathers from her cutwater, a delight against the rose gleam of the sunset.

A bright churned track, the long, straight path of a well-steered ship, stretched in the wake of the *Covesea*, changing terraces of colour thrown on it as the sun's last few rays touched the sea. The two men leaned over the taffrail in a long silence under the spell of the white, shadowless northern evening.

'"And only man is vile,"' quoted Westwater.

'Ay! that's oot o' a hymn,' quoth the skipper after a pause. 'No' that I hold wi' human hymns, nor yet wi' the paraphrases. Forby that they're forbidden, hymns are owre pleasant for the kirk. They belong to the vanities that perish. Gin a body has a bit o' an ear for music ye canna keep your mind on the words an' awa' frae the singin' o' the tune.'

The other man smiled. 'I'm afraid you're as human as the hymns, skipper,' said he.

'Maybe; but the less the better, I'm thinkin', for a man maun ha'e ither rules than human for his keepin'. We've got the chart, an' there's no excuse for gettin' lost or off the coorse, except, ye ken, the act o' God, the Queen's enemies, fire, an' the other things ye read aboot in the bills o' ladin'.'

'That's rather what sportsmen call a good mixed bag. Suggests perhaps to some minds that the Queen's enemies, fire, and the rest of the bills of lading exceptions came of their own pleasure, and not the Almighty's, eh?'

The skipper's wits moved slowly. He gave a non-committal grunt.

'"The Lord giveth an' the Lord taketh away,"' said he. It was not very original nor very relevant, but there was a vague comfort in a text.

Westwater paused for a moment, and waved his hand at the moving dots of the shipping on the darkening horizon. 'Look at the sails,' he said. 'Do you know what they always remind me of on a wide sea like this? "All sorts and conditions." You follow me?'

The skipper shook his head.

'Human souls,' he went on musingly. 'Some serene, steady, well-handled, to sail always on, never losing a spar; others doomed to drift, hopeless, pitiful derelicts, a curse to themselves and to every one, to leave their bleached bones on a lee shore, or to grope blindly in heart-shaking fogs to yelling breakers, and—darkness. Faugh! I'm talking cheap Adelphi padding.' He paused. 'Isn't the sea cruel, like life—a jest, a handicap, a lottery?' He was staring over the wide waters. He might have been hardly conscious of the other's presence. '"Do we move ourselves, or are we moved by an Unseen Hand at a game?"'

The quotation was far off the skipper's 'beat.' Philosophy, cowardly or otherwise, was to him an unplumbed depth. A vague irritation touched him. 'I dinna ken. Like enough it's beyond me,' he said abruptly, and stopped, groping mentally, when the very bright gleam of a deep-sea light suddenly stabbed the gathering dark. The skipper saw it, straightened himself, and the needle of his mental compass steadied. 'There!' He pointed a big brown forefinger at the clear light. 'Green pastures or the great waters, a man has plain lichts to steer by. Man, gin I spend my time in a swither wonderin' which licht was which, or seekin' short-cuts for the *Covesea*'—he laid a hand on the ship as on some faithful animal—'roon' corners to save a tide, I'd pile her up, an' like as no' gang wi' her to the bottom, an' serve me richt. A man's deep-sea lichts for his life's cruise are as plain as port an' starboard. No shorts-cuts for me.'

'True! The devil's best-dressed fly,' murmured the other.

The skipper was instantly all attention. 'What's that aboot a weel-dressed fly?' he asked. He threw as pretty a cast for sea-trout in his native river as most men.

'Short-cuts. The palm without the dust; gold without sweat. I mean that a short-cut to happiness is the devil's best-dressed fly for us poor gudgeons,' said Westwater in his deliberate, musical bass, staring intently seaward into vacancy. Then suddenly he turned and asked, 'Do you find it easy to be honest?'

A gust of amazement and vexation shook the skipper. Had he not just delivered what he thought was a moral disquisition on guiding-lights—guiding-lights for every one? But of course any reference to potential sinners ought obviously to be taken to refer to his neighbours, not to himself, Hugh Flett, elder, master-mariner, who had just labelled so neatly the finger-posts of rectitude. With all his liking for Westwater, he nearly snorted at the thought. 'Gold without sweat!' 'Us poor gudgeons!' And then to be asked point-blank did he, Hugh Flett, find it easy to be honest!

'Me!—me! Have I no' jist been tellin' ye that—that'——

'Among other things, that short-cuts are temptations,' cut in Westwater, 'and I thoroughly agreed.'

'Honest! As for bein' honest,' growled the ruffled captain, 'the order fair hits ye atween the e'en. I found it easy to obey a straicht order, an' I always wull: "Thou shalt not steal!"'

A chill night air stole over the water. Westwater shivered slightly. There was a jarring silence for a minute or two.

The skipper looked at the log, and went forward. He grunted a sudden word or two to the man at the wheel, causing that startled functionary to keep his eye on the compass as one mesmerised. Then he stared for a moment at the hands. He shouted

an order, and addressed his men in a gloomy crescendo. Where were seamen, good thorough seamen, nowadays? he asked, with black and bitter emphasis. He would tell them, he added lugubriously. They were under the sod. Under the sod! There were none left. None left, did they hear? None who could tie a granny knot. All the hands were fit for was the carrying of a Sunday school trip from Buckie to Lossiemouth—that is, if it happened to be a fine day and they had a captain who could do without sleep. Heavens! did they think the owners paid them to be able to chew tobacco and whistle at one and the same time? for that and the Sunday school trip was about all they were any use for. He supposed it was no good trying them to get a 'move on.' Chasing snails off garden walks—that was what they were fit for. And so on, until the dolorous mechanism of his jeremiad ran down, and he turned aft, a little breathless, but relieved.

'Old man's got his dander up aboot somethin',' said the second-mate to the steward. 'Fairly up! Gi'e him a top-hole breakfast to-morrow mornin', my son o' Aberdeen, or your name's Mud!'

The steward winked. 'He'll be a' richt in ten meenits. It's me that kens,' he said with complacence. 'I've sailed wi' him for nine year come Martinmas. I dinna mind him ravin' at lairge. He's worse when he throws texts at ye, or says naethin', an' jist glowers at ye like a hoolit. But he'll be a' richt in ten meenits. Ay! it's me that kens. Ye micht sail under worse.'

'Cold, captain. I think I'll turn in,' said Westwater, an added touch of friendliness in his good-natured voice, when Flett came back. 'Good-night.' He held out his hand. 'We are not really disagreeing about anything, are we? And we'll keep the buttons on the foils.'

The steward spoke sooth out of his nine years' experience of the big captain. Already his letting off steam had smoothed his vanity. The two men shook hands. The skipper put more into his grip than his spoken 'Good-night,' and the ghost of his ruffled temper vanished over the side. Westwater went below, and Flett continued his quarterdeck walk, his little volcanic molehill of righteousness crowned by the red twinkle of an excellent but smuggled cigar. Above, in the darkening, a gull laughed suddenly.

Early next morning a soft, ribbed pencilling on the horizon marked the land to sailors' eyes. The pencilling resolved itself into a score of dots, inconsiderable as a string of wild-fowl in the distance, growing gradually to a cluster of barren islets, the outposts of a labyrinthine army of half-covered, treacherous rocks in the Gulf of Bothnia. Here and there a larger isle lifted a brown shoulder out of the water. From behind one of them a tiny, hurrying sail slid out, and a smiling Finnish pilot, smoking the inevitable light-brown little cigarette, climbed nimbly up the side. The ship crawled cautiously along at 'dead slow,' threading her way round the buoys and beacons marking a rock-strewn, narrow channel. Pilots were changed twice. The islets grew in size and beauty as the channel widened, dense woods covering them down to the clear water's edge, here and there a beacon-tower rising white among the trees, red-roofed Finnish hay-barns warm points of colour against their green. Few sounds came from the shore as the steamer picked her way alongside. Wood-pigeons called, bright-eyed and curious, from the still woods. Wild-duck arose and fled clamouring, ripples in their wake, their long necks outstretched, the *whir* of their short, strong wings steadying into a faint hum in the distance. Save for such sounds, no life-beat came from the land, no smoke rose, no houses beckoned. The islets are seldom touched at except by wandering sportsmen in the short summer and autumn, for the long northern winter takes them in his slow, cold arms, covers them with snow, holds them and their waterways for dark, lonely months helpless, white, silent, in a dead sleep. No wonder that the Finlander, more than most men, loves the sun, colour, and flowers.

The yellow funnel of the *Covesea* crept steadily north far off the beaten track, the pulse-beat of her engines strangely loud in the summer hush, until, rounding a birch-clad, rocky spit, her anchor was let go alongside a rude timber-wharf, flanked by tumbled granite blocks; above her, near the crest of the isle, the red gash of a quarry rending the cool Lincoln green of welcome woods.

*(To be continued.)*

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# PLUNDER.

By F. D. M'MILLAN.

THAT interesting Anglo-Norman scribe William of Malmesbury gives the following passage in a general description of the state of perfection to which the laws of England were brought under Alfred the Great, and the way in which they were administered: 'So exact was the general police that Alfred hung up, by way of bravado, golden bracelets near the highways, and no man dared to touch them.' The incident is described no further, unfortunately, and, although presented as a historical fact, will not perhaps bear strict examination. One wonders what would have happened to the perfectly honest passer-by who might have considered it to be his duty to discover the owner of the bracelets, and removed them for that purpose. In any event, we might have been advised if a police-

trap was set, and how long they were left hanging in position.

It is instructive, nevertheless, to consider by way of contrast an occurrence witnessed recently within a hundred yards of St Paul's Cathedral, London. On a certain Saturday evening a man smashed a pane of glass in a jeweller's window, pulled out a large tray of rings, and, after grabbing a handful and scattering the remainder over the pavement, dashed off. There promptly ensued a wild scramble on the part, so it is said, of practically the whole of the persons passing, both sexes taking part in it, and then promptly making off, the evening being somewhat foggy. The almost incredible upshot of the affair was that not a single ring found its way back to the jeweller, nor was one person apprehended. It is presumptuous to moralise in the face of this instantaneous and apparently unanimous decision to plunder; but it is a sad fact that robberies, with and without violence, and thefts of all kinds, have been continually increasing for some years.

Considering the valuable nature of their stock, jewellers have comparatively few losses from attempts of this nature. In London, for some unfathomable reason, opticians suffer most from the singular type of thief who will hazard all upon a sudden smash, a few seconds of pillage, and for the rest trusts to speed and his knowledge of adjacent byways to enable him to escape. The explanation may lie in the curious tendency that thieves show to specialise in different classes of property; in which case jewellers and silversmiths may be looked upon by the fraternity as the peculiar preserve of the swell cracksman with scientific methods of his own.

It is to the contents of safes and strong-rooms that the really expert mechanic-thief directs his attention, and there is probably no safe in existence which he could not break open, given sufficient time and the proper implements. The makers of safes would appear to recognise this in having adopted the term '*burglar-resisting*' rather than '*burglar-proof*.' Ordinary small safes offer practically no resistance whatever. In one case, not long ago, a safe three feet by two was carried from a post-office to a piece of waste land and actually forced by means of a garden spade and a coke-hammer.

In dealing with thief-resisting safes it is only infrequently that burglars attempt to tamper with the face. A safe is no stronger than its weakest part, and this is usually at the back, or the base, or especially along the line of juncture of the two halves of the outer casing. Great trouble may be taken, therefore, to wrench fastenings away, and if the safe is partially embedded in masonry of poor quality the first attack may even be made on that. To render them thoroughly secure, safes should be built strongly into the fabric of buildings, or so otherwise fixed as to present the almost impregnable front only. Unsecured safes are often carried away bodily.

Burglars probably fear burglar-alarms more than they fear the police. These are fitted invisibly under floorings and to doors and windows, and ring loudly in the street, or in a bedroom where an alarm will be raised. To gain access to the shop from the back room of a jeweller's premises burglars have been known to bore a hole through a brick wall rather than open a door which was merely latched. The expert cracksman, however, who plans and executes immense hauls of jewellery or forces chilled-steel burglar-resisting safes in a search for cash is a rare bird, and the doings of his humbler brother of the housetop and the false key are probably of more interest to the majority of readers.

The tendency to specialise in the selection of property which is so often remarked was curiously shown in the following case. A lady's bedroom was entered, and a Gladstone-bag procured from under the bed. On the dressing-table was the usual silver: tray, mirrors, brushes, scent-bottles, and powder-pots. These articles remained untouched, while the bag was packed with lace handkerchiefs, blouses, silk dresses, and costumes. The thieves probably had a ready market for articles of clothing and wearing apparel, but no means of melting or disposing of the silver, which was of far greater value.

It is most unwise to leave a house unoccupied at certain hours day after day. This is frequently done where a daily girl who works in the mornings only is employed, the mistress regularly spending her afternoons in visiting and shopping. In almost every large town there are numerous gangs of thieves who practise more or less elaborate systems of espionage in order to break into private dwellings in the daytime. For this reason, houses facing or backing on to commons, parks, or other open spaces receive a disproportionate share of these unpleasant visits. Such premises stand open to the closest inspection from early morning till late at night, and the habits of the various occupants can easily be subjected to continual scrutiny by persons whose movements need not excite the slightest suspicion.

The following are some of the methods of these daylight thieves: (1) Calling at houses on various pretexts to ascertain if any one is in. (2) Watching the habits of tenants for some days, and noting how many persons reside in the marked house, and how much time is likely to be available when the opportunity for entry offers. (3) Causing a disturbance in another street near to distract the attention of the police. (4) Calling to clean windows, as 'the regular man is ill.' (5) Gaining entrance to halls or reception-rooms on false pretences or by tricking servants.

The following clever example of the last may be given: Messrs Rose & Thorn's delivery-van called at Lady A.'s to leave a box containing twenty pounds' worth of what we may call frippery. A few minutes later a man knocked loudly at the

door, and, on its being opened, asked quickly and showing signs of much haste, 'Has Messrs Rose and Thorn's van been?' He was informed that it had. 'What a pity! I hoped to get here first. There has been a stupid mistake, and the wrong box left.' As he was displaying another box of the same firm's, he was allowed to leave by the unsuspecting maid, with a box under each arm. The police attributed three similar thefts to the one man that same afternoon, without, however, catching him.

An even more daring *coup* of a different class was carried out by two men, one tall and the other short. A house left temporarily uninhabited having evidently been carefully selected, the short man knocked at the door, while the tall man remained at the gate. No answer being received to the first knock, a second louder one was given, the tall man meanwhile strolling slowly up to the door, where his bulk hid the smaller man from observation. Two moments later the door opened, and, after politely raising their hats, the men entered, closed the door behind them, and proceeded to ransack the house. When they left an hour or so later each carried a loaded portmanteau. This happened in the bright sunshine of a summer afternoon, in full view of persons sitting at the windows of opposite houses. The screened man, of course, had cleverly and quickly forced open the front door after the second knock. The remaining details were subsequently supplied by the unsuspecting witnesses from across the road.

In giving instances of occurrences of this nature one suffers from *embarras de richesses*. They are innumerable, and nearly all possess features of much interest.

The police in some districts have of recent years been confronted with another aspect of this difficult problem—namely, housebreaking by women, and even young girls, often of perfectly respectable appearance. Such persons can watch a house for days without attracting attention, and frequently get away by advancing ingenious excuses even when actually caught upon premises where they have no right to be. Brazen impudence, altogether above the head of the mere male burglar, carries them through. The police usually have little difficulty, after a burglary, in determining the sex of the delinquents. The fact that ladies' clothes have formed the bulk of the booty is almost negligible, because, as we have seen, there are male 'clothes-burglars' who confine their attention to female wearing apparel. Typical female burglars hunt in couples. Entry to the marked house is usually obtained by means of a false key. The simplest form of false key is manufactured from an ordinary button-hook such as every woman possesses, merely by hammering the hook out straight and at right angles to the handle. These 'burglars' rarely damage property; they have an unerring eye for secret hiding-places, however, and usually cover up all traces of their depredations as they go along. In one instance the fact that female thieves had been in a house was not discovered until some weeks after the family had returned from holiday, the contents of two secret drawers of a jewel-box and a valuable fur coat being the only property missing.

The ordinary burglar frequently does serious damage, which may be classified as follows: (1) Damage consequent either upon breaking into the premises through internal doors or in the search for booty. (2) Wanton damage done for no apparent reason, but sometimes attributable to disgusting superstitions. (3) Malicious damage due to dissatisfaction with haul. The first class must be considered inevitable. It is more difficult, however, to bear with fortitude losses which are consequent upon the second and third classes.

No account of burglars and their methods would be complete without reference to London flat-robbers. The London flat is usually given flimsy Swedish doors, with leaded-glass panels. A caretaker is sometimes engaged for duty in the main hall; but having little to do, he usually manages to do less, and is rarely in evidence. It has been cleverly said that 'the proof that a hall-porter is engaged is that he cannot be found. If a man is loitering about who might be the hall-porter, the odds are that he is a burglar.'

In the west and north-west of London there are thousands of flats, and their construction and the mode of life of many of their tenants are largely responsible for hosts of flat-thieves. The district known as Maida Vale is notorious. Having to call at a ground-floor flat in a block containing perhaps three hundred persons, the writer learnt that not only had that flat been broken into during the previous month, but that every ground-floor flat in both directions, and many of the upper flats, had been forcibly entered at least once within the previous eighteen months or two years, some of them two or three times.

Two flats at the top of a block were both left unoccupied one afternoon. The tenant of one was a nervous old lady, who, however, lived alone. She had had a special lock with seven bolts fitted to her door. The tenant of the other was Madame S. W., a professional singer. On the afternoon in question both ladies were out, the latter having taken her servant to go shopping, and left a pug-dog at home on guard. It was afterwards calculated that it took three men less than half-an-hour to ransack those flats. One, by the way, did nothing but stand about the hall, where he was seen by other tenants on their way out. Meanwhile the other two forced the doors, went into every room, spread the contents of chests of drawers upon the beds, and littered the sitting-rooms from end to end. Madame S. W. returned to her rifled home, to find herself poorer to the extent of about one hundred pounds' worth of jewellery and silver; her household gods were scattered far and wide, but the pug-dog slept serenely on the couch.

Speed and daring are the chief characteristics

of the work of the expert flat-breaker. Two 'specialists' will force a door, force the drawers of a sideboard, proceed to the bedroom and break open wardrobes and the drawers of dressing-tables or chests of drawers which might be supposed to contain valuables, leave the flat with a stolen portmanteau stuffed with silver, jewellery, and furs, and be safely out of the block well within the space of twenty minutes. Nothing appears to be too much trouble, if it can be speedily done. If a drawer in a wardrobe is strongly locked, the whole wardrobe may be swung round so that the light will fall upon its back, and first the back itself be smashed in, and then the back of the locked drawer.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that entry to some of these London flats is so easy that any one of half-a-dozen ways may be employed to suit different circumstances. Thus, if time is no object, what more simple than quietly to tap out one of the leaded lights of the front door? It is then only necessary to insert the hand in order to pull back the catch, and the door is open. The doors are so flimsy, however, that it is nearly as simple to force them. Then, again, the windows often offer a ready means of admittance. Goods-lifts as well as passenger-lifts are also made free use of.

One other class of thief must be referred to: the class which brings a pantechnicon van and removes the whole contents of a house. Such occurrences are by no means so rare in very large towns as is generally supposed. From their nature, of course, they are infrequent, necessitating as they do the use of a trade pantechnicon van, slow work of some hours' duration in broad daylight, and the subsequent disposal of the huge quantity of stolen property, to say nothing of the van and the horses. Episodes of this nature are not always chronicled in the newspapers; but three such cases have come to the knowledge of the writer within the last twelve months.

## CROCODILE REMINISCENCES.

By A. CAVENDISH.

FISH and dog stories we all know, and are accustomed to swallow with 'salt to taste;' but it is only given to those whose path lies off the beaten track to hear, first-hand and in the vernacular, the inevitable crocodile-stories with which the river-dweller of the Eastern tropics loves to regale his white guest, sitting smoking long native *rokos* in the semi-darkness, during the hour between the evening meal and bedtime.

What the fish and dog story is to us, so is the croc.-story to the jungleman. He even goes further. He ascribes to the crocodile supernatural powers; he surrounds him with a halo of romance; he propitiates him with periodical offerings; and when diplomacy fails, he declares war to the death—war lasting perhaps for years, till some trifling occurrence is construed into a sign of surrender on the part of the crocodile, and all is peace again.

Wonderful indeed, and hard to believe, are some of these native stories; but the majority of them are true for all that, though the fascination and glamour of them fades when the smooth, musical Malay tongue is changed for matter-of-fact English, and the flickering glimmer of the *damar* torch on palm-leaf walls is replaced by the lamp and writing-table of civilisation. For these reasons I have confined myself to recounting a few of my own personal experiences, in which, I fear, the crocodile figures, not as the native reads him, but as I have found him—savage, crafty, and loathsome to the last degree.

But to begin at the beginning. My first experience of the 'river king' was many years ago, when circumstances compelled me to travel for several hours, in an extremely rickety and dilapidated dug-out, along a tortuous and stagnant, mangrove-lined creek. I had not been long in the tropics, and my great wish was to see—and, if possible, to shoot—my first croc. In the dug-out with me were my Chinese 'boy' and the ancient owner of the craft—who, by the way, supplied the motive-power with a paddle, while all my energies were directed towards keeping my balance and postponing the catastrophe of an upset, which each moment appeared more imminent. After an hour or so, when familiarity had bred contempt, and I was at length emboldened to stretch my cramped limbs and find a new and more comfortable position, I inquired of my venerable Charon whether there were any crocodiles in the creek. The old man, going as near to a chuckle as a Malay will allow himself to do, replied that I need not be afraid; that there *were* crocodiles, but that they were kindly beasts who never interfered with human beings. Feeling somewhat hurt at my inmost thoughts being thus probed, I relapsed into silence and a cheroot, and was momentarily growing more drowsy, when a remark from the old native brought my thoughts back to earth with a start. '*Itu dia*, there's one,' he quietly said, pointing with his mouth, in the native fashion, towards a tangle of mangrove-roots and rotting vegetation, while his paddle rose and fell with unaltered speed. 'There's one.' I looked, I gazed and peered among the mottled shadows, but nothing could I see that in any way resembled my idea of a crocodile. 'Where?' I asked; and then it happened. My Chinese 'boy,' ever anxious to please, had grabbed a piece of wood that was floating by, and hurled it violently at the spot indicated by the native. The next half-minute was chaos. In my anxiety to see

the crocodile I had raised myself up, and the lurch caused by the rash act of my servant in throwing the piece of wood made me lose my balance. I collapsed (luckily into the boat), some gallons of water came in over the side, and the old man at the stern, steadying the canoe with the quiet, instinctive movement of one who knows his business, muttered the one word, '*Bodoh!*' ('Idiot!'). As I struggled once more to a sitting posture I saw a long black object, which I had taken to be a log, glide noiselessly into the creek, hardly raising a ripple as it vanished, and I caught a glimpse of two beady, cruel eyes, which seemed to look greedily at me as they disappeared below the slimy water. I had seen my first crocodile; but whether the old man's last muttered comment was directed towards me or my servant I have never discovered, nor did I then feel inclined to ask. In either case it was richly deserved. This was many years ago; and though since that day some dozens of the loathsome reptiles have fallen to my rifle, I have never forgotten the look of malignant hatred and concentrated evil that was shot at me from those two yellowish-green eyes.

From past to present is but a step for the memory, and it is only a few months since the incident happened that I am about to relate. My work took me on a visit up a river to one of those timber-cutting camps where are felled and rafted the great hardwood logs so valued in the Chinese market. G., the white man in charge, was a characteristic old 'hard case,' who had started life before the mast in a sailing-ship, and drifted in a beach-combing fashion to our colony, where he had been given, almost in charity, a subordinate billet in one of the large timber companies. Arriving in my boat at the little jetty or landing-stage, I was astonished to find G. lying on a rattan couch within a few yards of the bank, with a heavy express rifle across his knees, gazing intently at a rough *pagar* or fence erected in the stream. Hanging from this fence, and a few feet above the water, were the corpses of a monkey and several pariah dogs; while half-a-dozen ducks, each tied to the fence by the leg with a long string, flapped about on the water and quacked dismally in their efforts to escape. I was just wondering whether the whisky-bottle or too much solitude accounted for this state of affairs, when I noticed that G.'s leg was swathed in rough bandages from knee to ankle. Throwing myself down near him in the welcome shade, I learned the following story: Two nights before, G. was sleeping peacefully in his little palm-leaf house, in a clearing about twenty yards from the river-bank, when his dog began to growl and refused to be silenced. G. turned out and walked round the hut to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, but seeing nothing, addressed himself to the dog in his usual lurid and picturesque sailing-ship language and retired to bed again. Five minutes later he was once more aroused by a yelp from the dog; and, this time really annoyed, he seized a stick and sallied forth to inflict dire punishment on the disturber of his dreams. Suddenly a dark form glided swiftly from the shadows, and G. felt himself seized by the right knee as in a vice. Stooping to free himself, he found he was in the grip of a large crocodile, whose teeth were firmly embedded in flesh and bone. Backwards and forwards the struggle swayed—the crocodile striving to pull its destined victim to the water's edge, and G., hampered as he was by his imprisoned leg, fighting for his life to reach higher ground. At last the beast, hurling its victim to the ground with a shake of its powerful head, began to drag him swiftly towards the water. Poor G., feeling, as he expressed it, that it was 'all over bar the shoutin',' determined to make one last effort for his life; and, taking advantage of a momentary halt as the brute was steering past a tree-stump, he sat up and succeeded in getting both his thumbs into the reptile's eye-sockets—the only vulnerable part of a crocodile's head. The rest of the story is perhaps best told in G.'s own words, or as nearly as circumstances (and the Editor) will permit: 'So soon as I gets my thumbs made fast in 'is eyes, 'e opens 'is mouth to shout, an' lets go my leg. Then, first thing next mornin', the coolies lays 'is breakfast for 'im, as you see, an' I gets into this chair, an' 'ere I stays, if it's a month.' Vainly I tried to persuade G. to come away with me to the next station and see a doctor. I argued with him, I implored him, but it was absolutely useless. He refused to move from that chair till he had bagged his crocodile; and I was at last obliged to leave him, having dressed his leg, and exhausted every known means of persuasion short of brute force. I met him again a week later lying in a hospital bed, suffering severely, but quite happy in the knowledge that the bones of that croc. were bleaching in the sun outside his house. Poor old G.! Only a few weeks afterwards the habit of clearing creepers from his path in the jungle with the butt-end of his loaded and cocked rifle proved fatal to him.

Perhaps the most firmly engrained superstition in connection with the crocodile—if superstition it be—is the belief that the washing of a mosquito-curtain in a river will be followed, within a week, by the death of some person in the village on its banks at the jaws of a crocodile. So implicitly is this believed that many villagers take their curtains to some jungle pool or spring rather than even use water drawn from the river—this though the same persons will bathe and wash their garments actually in the river itself! The offender is usually some travelling Chinese trader; and, curiously, no less than four cases have come to my personal knowledge in which the washing of a mosquito-net in a river has within a week been followed by the taking of a villager by a crocodile. In one case nobody had been taken in the river for over a year; and in another case the wretched Chinaman was arrested by the zealous local policeman, himself a native of the district,

and sent under custody to the nearest European magistrate, solemnly charged with causing death 'by a rash and negligent act, thereby committing an offence punishable under the penal code.'

An account appeared some years ago in the local papers of Singapore relating how the native hunting-dogs in that part of the world were so clever that, being desirous of crossing a river, they would first congregate on the bank and bark loudly to attract the crocodiles, and then run swiftly upstream and cross at another place. The tale was greeted with much editorial sarcasm, and commented on as 'something new in dog-stories.' A month or two later some incident recalled the story to my mind as I sat late one evening discussing the day's deer-hunting with an old chief, who himself owned the premier pack of pariahs in the district. I repeated it, as nearly as I could remember, to the assembled village, who with one accord sat silent, waiting for the words of wisdom to fall from the old chief. For some minutes he chewed his quid of betel-nut in a meditating way, and then broke out with the following explanation, which I give in his own picturesque phraseology: 'Wherever there is smoke one must seek the fire. This is a true story that has passed through many mouths. The way of it is this. It is not the cleverness of the dogs, but of the owners. The men of my people, when chasing a deer on foot with dogs, are always careful in crossing a river, for the yelping of the dogs calls together the crocodiles. The dogs, therefore, are trained to stop at the bank and bark loud and long. The hunters then cross at a place some distance away, calling their dogs, who follow in their masters' footsteps. This is truly how the story began; but it has altered in the telling, and is now like a child's fable.'

The very next day I had an opportunity of confirming this explanation, for a deer put up by my own dogs during my evening stroll made straight for a stagnant backwater of the river and plunged in, closely followed by my three yelping terriers, who swam round and round him, snapping at his back and sides as opportunity offered. Some village dogs, attracted by the din, came rushing up and joined in the chorus, but without attempting to enter the water. Standing on the bank, I was whistling vainly to my dogs, when the deer gave an agonised scream and disappeared below the slimy surface of the pool, pulled down by some unseen force, never to reappear, though I waited for a good ten minutes. When I left there was not a bubble nor a ripple to show what had taken place. But no explanation was needed as far as I was concerned; and my three terriers, following, cowed and shivering, at my heels, had learnt a lesson that they remembered for a long time; though two of them eventually fell victims to a similar fate.

I have discussed the habits and customs of the *buoia* or crocodile with many natives, and their solemnly delivered opinions would certainly open the eyes of any naturalist. The majority are firmly convinced that the beast has the power of fascination similar to that generally accorded to the snake, and they also believe that the crocodiles in any given river will not molest man unless man has first molested them. When recently being paddled up a small river for the first time, I was about to fire at a young crocodile lying on an exposed mud-flat. 'Don't, sir—don't!' cried the four paddlers as one man. I lowered my rifle and asked their objection. It appeared that in this particular river, though it swarmed with crocodiles, and the villagers habitually bathed there, nobody had ever been taken; while in the next river, debouching at almost the same spot on the coast, there was continual and bloody strife between the natives and the crocodiles. This was corroborated by other villagers on the river, who ascribed their immunity to the fact that they had never killed a crocodile there, and in return the crocodiles had never done them any harm. Whether or not this can be accounted for by the theory that a crocodile 'turns man-eater,' like a tiger, is an interesting problem.

## WHEN WE'RE GROWN-UP.

NURSE says it 's just a year ago
Since I came down to earth; and though
I'm not quite sure what she can mean,
I never let this fact be seen.

Another thing which puzzles me
Is, how it is that people see
How like to some one I have grown—
Some one I've never even known!

'How like his aunt in France!' they say.
'He gets more like her every day;
Her very eyes, her wavy hair,
Her saucy nose, too, I declare.'

I shut my eyes and try to seem
As if they've waked me from a dream;
Till by-and-by I hear them say,
'He's tired! Well, nurse, we mustn't stay.'

I learnt this very simple plan
From Mary Jane, the niece of Ann,
Who wheels me out, rain, hail, or snow,
And never asks me, 'Will you go?'

We've both agreed, Miss Jane and I,
When we're grown-up, at least we'll try
When we meet babies in the parks
To show some sense in our remarks.

The phrase 'How like!' we'll never use,
We'll only kiss them when they choose;
We'll never talk in silly words—
'Puff-puff' for trains, 'tweet-tweet' for birds.

The babies then, I know, will say,
'Of all the folks we meet each day,
Just two we'd like to see again—
Boy Blue' (that's me) 'and Mary Jane.'

EDITH L. ELIAS.

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# SOME NEW PEN-PORTRAITS OF CARLYLE.

By A. STODART WALKER.

THE almost simultaneous publication of *The Life of W. E. H. Lecky, The Letters of John Stuart Blackie to his Wife*, and *Memories of Fifty Years*, by Lady St Helier (Mary Jeune), supplies us, amongst other peeps into the characters and doings of many of those who count, with some graphic sketches of that leviathan in morals and dogmatic utterance, Thomas Carlyle. The Chelsea prophet was an intimate friend of both Lecky and Blackie, and it is interesting to observe that the two men, very dissimilar in the presentation of character, paint the shaggy old warrior in fairly similar colours. The portraits are doubly interesting as being the work of men with the gift of sympathetic utterance. The Irishman is probably the more enthusiastic, perhaps because he was the more patient; which seems a paradoxical statement to make when comparing him with a Scotsman. But neither Blackie nor Lecky was at all what may be called a representative man as far as nationality is concerned. It would be as idle to speak of the latter as a typical Irishman as to use the misleading journalese applied to John Stuart Blackie as a typical Scot. Indeed, there was more of the Scot in Lecky than in Blackie. Lecky was typical, indeed, in many ways of the hard-headed, clear-visioned Lowlander; Blackie was only typical of himself.

But however much Carlyle differed and disagreed with the two men, he served throughout the craftsmanship of his days as a sturdy friend to them both. Their visits were uniform and uninterrupted, in the heat of the day as well as in the cool of the evening, down, indeed, to those days when, as Lecky wrote, 'he is very weak and very melancholy, exceedingly tired of life.' Blackie's friendship extended over half a century, and, despite their battles, they never came near to a quarrel. For though Carlyle was generally one-sided, dogmatic, and fond of bringing under the lash those with whom he disagreed, he showed in his working days little of bitterness. The bitterness only peeped out in his later years when hope had failed and life had become a weariness to the flesh. However much he tore his opponent into metaphorical rags, it was always done with an unfailing good humour, probably on the scriptural principle of reproving and chastening those he loved. But as the shadows fell Carlyle seemed to have lost this genial spirit, which is an excellent discount to criticism. 'I took a cast down to Chelsea,' wrote Blackie, 'to see the old prophet. He was in a very grumpy humour, and said little either to please or edify; his old negative dogmatism without the agreeable flavour of good humour.'

Literature affords many characteristic examples of the tyrannical dogmatist who, in his own heart, possesses a gentleness of sympathy that attracts. Samuel Johnson was a portentous wielder of the verbal sledge-hammer, pounding his friends or his enemies without padding his club; yet was there ever a man so beloved of his fellows? Robert Buchanan was another of the species, though gifted with more imagination and a more playful sense of humour. Carlyle and Ruskin stand together, not only in their moral ideals, but in their glory in laying down the law without much consideration for a strict adherence to the simple facts of the case. In a letter to Miss Gladstone, John Stuart Blackie sums up the two: 'Carlyle was mighty to rouse, but useless to guide. He saw great truths with an instinctive glance of spiritual perspicuity; but no sooner had he seen them than, by a fevered habit of exaggeration, his sublime became ridiculous, and his great truth half a lie. Ruskin is another unsound genius of the same kind; only Carlyle is a giant and wields a club, Ruskin a nimble mortal with a bright rapier, the glamour of whose flash is more potent than the weight of its stroke. But,' adds Blackie, 'Carlyle will stand, (1) because he is the most picturesque of historical portrait-painters; and (2) because he is a hard worker, and never built his architecture with slight materials.' In a letter to his wife, Blackie again summarises Carlyle from


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this point of view: 'Then I knocked up Carlyle, a strange mixture of gray, weather-beaten solemnity and hilarity; full of sweeping denunciations as usual, but not at all bitter. He is strong to arouse by a tremendous moral force, and to startle by vivid and striking pictures; but he has neither wisdom to guide those whom he has aroused nor sobriety to tone his pictures to reality. He is always talking about veracity, but he habitually revels in exaggeration and one-sided presentation, which is more than a lie. But we fraternised in a brotherly way, and embraced on parting.'

Mrs Lecky informs us, in the biography of her husband, that 'Lecky admired Carlyle as a genius and a moral force, but that he was in no way a disciple of his, and any one who did not reflect Carlyle's views never wholly escaped his criticism.' 'He talked much eloquent and exasperating nonsense,' wrote Lecky after one of his visits. 'As usual,' wrote Blackie, 'Carlyle laid about him all round with a bland, sweeping intolerance which appears to be the very reverse of wisdom. However, we managed to get on, as he was willing to take all the talk to himself, and I little solicitous to controvert.' In fact, we gather from all authorities that it was Carlyle's joy to talk and not to be talked to. The rugged old genius sat on his throne, crowned Sir Oracle, and poured forth his flood. 'His talking,' says Mr Lecky, 'was never more wonderful than when walking alone with one companion, for whom he certainly made no effort of display, whom indeed he seemed almost to forget. His conversation was mainly monologue and, in a greater degree than any other talker, soliloquy.' His very eloquence, overpowering and sweeping, must have been terrible at close quarters, and, indeed, punctuated that amusing criticism of him which John Stuart Blackie wrote to his wife in 1848: 'Yesterday I spent an evening with Thomas Carlyle. He is really a notable monster, and to be respected for the many noble thoughts he has elaborated and for the words of wisdom which he has flung abroad to bear divine fruit among foolish-hearted men; but I can't help thinking, face to face in a small parlour, he is rather terrible, and I fancy prophets are best exhibited in the pulpit or in the wilderness. A few grand moral instincts burn so intensely in the hearts of these men that they have no room for anything else; they rush out from their smoking sanctuary with a flaming sword in their hand, and whoever follows them not and fights is accounted a heretic. Scottish and English Universities, British Houses of Parliament, orthodox theologies, railroads, and free-trade were all shaken out and sifted under the category of sham; while Oliver Cromwell and his Ironsides and the old Covenanters who sang psalms and handled pikes on Dunse Moor were held up to admiration as the only heroes in this country for the last two hundred years.' John Stuart Blackie was, of course, the last man in the world to take Carlyle's 'gigantic one-sidedness,' as he describes it, lying down. 'I had an hour with stout old Carlyle, who is flashing about him in the same one-sided, magnificently unreasonable way that you know. Of course, I protested against that style of thing *in toto*, and ended by putting myself under the wing of Aristotle, who, if not a greater genius, is certainly a much wiser man than Carlyle.' At another time he wrote: 'After lunch I went by special desire to see Carlyle again, and found the shaggy old prophet exceedingly cheerful in his chronic despotism. He kept me two or three hours, rattling and slashing and splashing on in a perfect whirlpool of denunciations and negations. At last I jumped up, and, shaking him by the shoulder, cried, "You are the incarnation of the everlasting No."'

But in spite of this magnificent intolerance, this superb egoism and uncompromising tyranny of one-sidedness, both Blackie and Lecky could not but be impressed by the unique spectacle which Carlyle presented as one of the few great talkers of the century. Mr Lecky has drawn a picture of the Hero as Talker which, proceeding from such a source, must be taken as carefully considered and judiciously balanced, and he does not speak in the language of half-praise: 'Carlyle's conversation was certainly, of its kind, immeasurably the most beautiful, singular, and impressive I have ever known. One of its charms was a singularly musical voice, a voice particularly fitted for pathos, and this tone quite took away anything grotesque in the very strong Scotch accent. It also gave it a softness and a charm which is wanting in his writings. . . . It was never for an instant commonplace. The whole diction was always original and intensely vivid, and it was more saturated and interlaced with metaphor than any other conversation I have ever heard. It was a conversation which was peculiarly difficult to report, for it was not epigrammatic, but continuous, and very much of the charm lay in the extraordinary felicities of his expression, in the vividness of his epithets, in his unrivalled power of etching out a subject by a few words so as to make it stand in prominent relief. He was the very greatest of word-painters. . . . His conversation was not slow enough to be wearisome or to give any sense of effort, yet so fully and perfectly articulated that every sentence seemed to tell. It streamed out by the hour in a clear, low voice, glittering with metaphor and picturesque epithets and turns of phrases of the truest eloquence.'

Though, as we have indicated, the conversation of Carlyle was mostly monologue or soliloquy, yet it was always backed up by a power to meet his critical opponent with quickness and dexterity of argumentative repartee, a skill to find in a flash a weakness in his challenger's armour, and of warming to the fray under the interruption. 'Never was such a master of invective, welling and surging up in an irresistible geyser of opposition.' But his talk was not all fire and fury, not all thundering

against the walls with hot words and fiery syllable. 'He was also,' says Mr Lecky, 'the most pathetic of talkers; indeed, the only talker I have ever heard who was really pathetic. Pictures of his early life and of the sorrows of those he had known, or scenes from history, were related in a tone and with a manner that drew tears to the eyes. On religious matters his language had a sublimity and an air of inspiration which always reminded me of what a Hebrew prophet must have been; and sometimes, when very earnest, he had a solemnly strange way of turning and looking full in the hearer's face before speaking, which added extraordinarily to the impressiveness of what he said. I have never seen this in any one else, and it always reminds me of Luke xx. 17.'

Lady St Helier's pen-portraits of the author of *Sartor Resartus* are touched with grace, insight, and sympathy. 'The tall, attenuated figure, dressed in a loose wrapper, seated beside the fire smoking his long pipe, the fine head with its masses of gray hair, the stern face with its almost youthful colouring, his keen eyes with their expression of great sadness, his occasional grunt of acquiescence, or a violent outburst of opposition, as the conversation changed or varied, made up an impression ever associated with him.' 'He was either agreeable or argumentative, according to the condition of his health and the mood he was in. He was most often contradictory; but if he were allowed to continue his argument—or rather, I should say, deliver his opinions uncontradicted—he very often broke off at the end with a laugh, which was in a way apologetic for the duration of his discourse, to which we all had listened most patiently.' Lady St Helier tells us that in the matter of this volubility in monologue even Queen Victoria's claims to have a word in edgewise were not considered, for on being presented to Her Majesty, Carlyle squatted himself down without waiting to be asked, and rattled on in the same characteristic fashion with which he was accustomed to treat his friends. When a woman likens a man to one of her sex the similitude is worth repeating. 'Mr Carlyle's peculiarities,' says Lady St Helier, 'were very like those of a woman, for he was uncertain, irritable, and capricious; and while he tolerated many people who paid court to him, he regarded them from quite a different intellectual standpoint, and the short descriptions and nicknames with which he designated some of them were irresistibly funny and appropriate.'

It is interesting to observe in all those who are gigantically one-sided that, though they may be men of great erudition and wide reading, yet it is invariably found that there are gaps in their knowledge that one would not expect *a priori* to discover in the philosopher *per se*, the rôle assumed so brilliantly by Carlyle. 'His knowledge and memory were very great,' wrote Lecky, 'but of a peculiar kind, and his mind was like the electric light, which throws out both strong light and deep shadows. There were large tracts of subjects, well-known books, and large interests of which he was utterly ignorant, much more so than most educated men, and these were not always the subjects on which he was least dogmatic.' 'But,' added Lecky later, when he was pleading eloquently, but in vain, for some memorial to the passionate teacher, 'whatever diversity of opinion there may be about some of his teaching, there can be no reasonable doubt that he has been one of the three or four greatest men of letters of the reign of Victoria, that during a singularly honourable and laborious literary life he has been one of the great "seminal intellects" and perhaps the strongest moral force in English literature.' However Carlyle may have sinned in his teachings and methods, he sinned, as Blackie says, 'with the sin of great minds—that is, playing the despot with the grand idea. Great ideas are necessary to do great things in the world, but they can no more do such things alone than a paper plan by a Michelangelo can raise a dome of St Peter's without lime and stone.' Carlyle was, of all things, an honourable man, and, as has been said, a tremendous moral force, and it was this combination in his own personality that attracted him to the noble moral nature of John Stuart Blackie, of whom he wrote: 'A man of wide speculation and acquirement, very fearless, very kindly, without ill-humour, and without guile.'

The life of Thomas Carlyle had no golden sunset. As he weakened he fretted and craved for the release, but we are told that, as he sat alone by his fireside preparing to face the eternities, he said to Lecky, 'The two things I think of most are the stars and the little children.' And the last picture which Mr Lecky draws for us of the old prophet is infinitely pathetic: 'I used to dine with him regularly once a week, chiefly to light his pipe and lift to his lips a tonic which he had to take, as he could do neither himself, and he used to sink into long unbroken silences. He was still, however, able to take in a little reading, and just before his last illness I read to him some of Burns's letters, the last book, I think, he tried to read.'

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER III.—HOW THE SAXES CAME INTO THE MATTER.

JERRY had manifested his native shrewdness when he closed his eyes to Miss Honeybun's advances, and chose instead Mrs Lauriston's woman, Hephzibah Mowatt.

Hepsy had been an under-maid at Craigielee when Mary Hamilton was born. When Mary developed into the beauty who turned the heads of all Edinburgh, old and young, soft and hard, Hepsy enjoyed her young mistress's triumph, as she enjoyed her confidence, to the full. When Mary Hamilton married Captain Lauriston—a love-match if ever there was one, for at that time Captain Charles was only second son, though the portion of even a second son of old Lauriston the banker was not to be despised—Hepsy went with her to London, and had never left her since.

And what Hepsy had been to her mistress, Jerry MacClootie had been to his master ever since he became his orderly in the American war. When George Lauriston died, and Charles perforce had to give up soldiering and take his place in the bank, Jerry and Hepsy cemented a long acquaintance with a closer relationship still, and Hepsy became Mrs MacClootie, in spite of the ill sound of the name.

She was a small, plain person, with the largest heart and the softest voice imaginable—a heart that overflowed with sympathy for every human being, except perhaps Miss Honeybun, for whom, despite many efforts, she had been quite unable to cultivate even a liking; a voice of such tender tones and inflections that it was at all times sheer delight to listen to it, while to hear it employed sympathetically on one's own behalf was like the pouring of balm on open wounds.

The children adored her. All the active part of their mothering had been hers, for after Mavie's birth Mrs Lauriston had had a long and trying illness; and her keen anxiety for her husband, who had accompanied the Duke of York on his unsuccessful expedition against Dunkirk, had militated against recovery and permanently affected her health. In all their childish troubles, then, the children had always sought Hepsy, and Hepsy never failed them. They would no more have thought of going to Aunt Charlotte for sympathy and assistance than of going to her maid Honeybun, with whom they waged open and perpetual warfare.

Neither Miss Lauriston nor Honeybun was exactly a sympathetic personage to young adventurers whose manifold activities were always leading them into scrapes, from which at times it took all Hepsy's gentle skill to deliver them unharmed. Not that their escapades were as a rule of a very sinister cast; but Miss Honeybun's one and only idea of discipline, derived from her own early experience, was the rod; and Aunt Charlotte's placid self-sufficiency sought only its own perpetuation on the lines of least resistance. If anything or anybody interfered with Aunt Charlotte's scheme of existence, her simple placid wish was for its removal and the cessation of its disturbance.

It was very shortly after the troubles of the year 1745 that George Lauriston transferred himself and his banking business to London, with one clear aim in view—the one clear aim attaching proverbially to his countrymen in their migrations to the South. He came to the Metropolis to get on, and in pursuance of that laudable and national ambition presently married Lady Jane Scarlett, only daughter and heiress of the personal estate of the lately deceased Earl of Rediton.

Lady Jane was some years older than her husband, and was possessed of many of the characteristics of the Scarlett family in addition to its wealth. In its own country the whole race was commonly accounted 'daft;' which expression, while conveying no definite implication of lack of brain-power, undoubtedly suggested doubts as to the proper utilisation of what it had. The family fortunes had notoriously been built up by successful marriages. Possibly Lady Jane recognised a fellow-feeling in George Lauriston, and was quite willing to assist his laudable ambitions. In any case, her money was useful. It was settled on herself and her issue, indeed, but it was in the bank, and Lauriston turned it to account. She bore him one daughter, Charlotte, and died, leaving him by no means inconsolable, and many steps up the golden ladder.

Lauriston's baronetcy was conferred on him by the king in 1758 for services of a financial character rendered to his allies in the Seven Years' War; and two years later he married again, this time regardless of his pocket, for he was now a wealthy man. Of this marriage he had issue two sons—George, who in due course took his place in the bank; and Charles, who chose a military career, saw service in America and the Low Countries, married Mary Hamilton of Craigielee, and became the father of our young friends Charles and Mavie.

Captain Lauriston's service, however, was brought to an abrupt termination by the sudden death of his brother George, which necessitated his filling the vacant place at the bank. Sir George, though wonderfully hale and hearty, was getting on in years, and had of late been aging somewhat rapidly. He was close on seventy-five, and there must be a Lauriston ready to take his place when his call came.

So Captain Charles sold out perforce, and to his

own great disappointment, just when the trend of events on the Continent seemed to hold out prospects of more than usually active service, and so of rapid advancement, for he was a general favourite, a man whom men would follow to the death, and who stood well at headquarters.

The one palliation of his regret was his wife's joy at having him safely with her at home. Her heart was bound up in him, and after the long illness which followed little Mavie's birth she had suffered agonies of separation and poignant fear while he was away on service with the Duke—fears which were justified, as it turned out, for the expedition ended disastrously, and Captain Charles's bones had rested in Dunkirk sands but for the devotion of his friend John Sax, who took the lance-thrust intended for his master, and died in Charles's arms after the latter had settled the lancer's account by cleaving him to the chin.

And that brings us to the Sax family.

The name of Sax was almost as much an institution at the bank as that of Lauriston itself. Old John Sax had taken service with George Lauriston when first he came up to London, and had served him from that day with a personal devotion that had known no limits, and a fidelity that all the money in the world could not have purchased. John Sax had simply lived in and for 'Lauriston's.' Many a time his wife had smilingly said that his life began with an L and ended with an N. And she was not far wrong. John Sax looked out on life from the windows of the bank. No event in the City, or in the world at large, but was considered by him in its bearing, direct or indirect, on 'Lauriston's,' and only from that point of view was it of consequence.

Lauriston had always been his own manager, and kept the reins in his own hands; but if he was the head of everything, John Sax was his right hand, trusted implicitly, and as fully conversant with all the ins and outs of the business as the chief himself. A man of consequence, therefore, and held in highest esteem throughout the City, and not only for his business acumen and his unswerving fidelity; he was known to be a man of blameless life, and a regular and devout church-goer in an age when such were none too common.

Twice every Sunday, wet or fine, he walked from his house in Queen Street, Westminster, through St James's Park, past the end of Carlton House, and up through Leicester Square and Crown Street, to Tottenham Court Road; and from the time he was six till he was turned eight, little Jack, his grandson, could have found the way blindfold, for every Sunday he trotted along by his grandfather's side and stood the preaching valiantly for the sake of the adventurous walk.

Mr Sax's pew in Whitefield's New Tabernacle had known him, since the day the place was opened, as intimately as the pulpit had known the great preacher himself, and Mr Whitefield's death had made no difference in John Sax's attendance, though he missed him sorely.

And he was charitable according to his means, visiting the sick and forlorn, and assisting as he was able, and all this without the slightest ostentation, rather under modest cover of an acceptance of such matters as simply right and proper and calling for no comment. His mother had been a Whitefieldite, and she had done great things for him.

Perhaps he was a trifle narrow in his views and overstrict in the enforcement of them, for his son —also John Sax, and the father of our little John, the sucker of possibly poisoned wounds—grew restive under the restraints of the bank, where he had a position as clerk, and of the strait-laced home, kicked over the traces, married into an unknown family, and when his wife died, leaving little John upon his hands, transferred the small burden to his father and mother, and enlisted.

It was a grievous sorrow to the old folks, but in due time the wound was roughly opened again by his death before Dunkirk, and salved and healed for ever by the manner of his dying.

Captain Charles, when he came home, went straight to the little house in Queen Street, and what he had to tell made them proud of their prodigal again, and wiped out all the past.

And, as Charlie said to old Jerry in the harness-room, with his arm round John Sax's neck, the Lauristons were never going to forget it.

*(To be continued.)*

## NOTES ON FLYING-FISH.

OST of us have heard the story of the sailor who described to his mother the wonderful things he had seen during his travels in the West Indies. She listened in credulous silence to his accounts of mountains of solid sugar and rivers of pure rum; but when he came to mention that he had seen fish with wings which flew through the air like birds she thought he was carrying things a trifle far. 'No, no,' she exclaimed. 'I can believe in your mountains of sugar and rivers of rum, but not in your flying-fish.' This old lady was by no means a solitary example of the saying that truth is stranger than fiction. The writer knows a lady who has made a return-journey from Europe to South America, passing twice through the entire breadth of the tropics, during which time she saw countless numbers of flying-fish. Yet to this day she scoffs at the idea that flying-fish exist. On their being pointed out to her on the trip,

she stoutly maintained that they were sea-birds, for which, indeed, they might easily be mistaken when seen at a little distance. Stranger still, she ate one of them, but even this failed to convince her. Unfortunately the wings had been cut off before it was brought to the table. Even the old saying that 'seeing is believing' does not always hold good.

Although flying-fish are common in the tropics, they occasionally stray as far north as the English Channel, and one was even killed a few years ago in the river Medway at Rochester. A man, noticing a fish leap from the water and fly along the surface, struck at it with his walking-stick, with the result that he was able to capture it. It proved to be a fine specimen of the *Exocœtus robustus*, measuring fifteen inches in length. This capture was effected after a long spell of hot weather, which had evidently betrayed the fish into swimming into strange water. (*Echo*, London, September 26, 1898.)

In travelling southward through the Atlantic Ocean, one may note occasional flying-fish in the latitude of the Canaries, or even farther northward, but it is usually only within the tropics that they are plentiful. In the Southern Hemisphere they seem to range to a higher latitude, and have been plentifully observed in latitude forty-five degrees south or thereabout, between Australia and New Zealand. The flying-fish found here is a different species, however, from that commonly observed in the North Atlantic, and more solitary in its habits, as it is generally to be seen flying singly, while its congener of the North Atlantic usually flies in shoals.

Flying-fish are fine eating, in taste somewhat resembling a herring. The writer has several times eaten them on board ship, and also on shore in the Canary Islands and in Barbados, in which latter island they frequently appear on the menu of local hotels. Mr Aflalo the naturalist has also tasted fried flying-fish in Barbados, and is enthusiastic in his praise of it. The West Indian negroes catch them at night by holding a light over the side of a boat. The light attracts them, and in flying towards it they are caught by nets spread out for the purpose, or even by the sail of the boat, against which they strike and then fall to the bottom, in which position they are quite helpless, for this fish, once it is stranded on any solid surface, is unable to rise; in fact, it becomes just as helpless as any other fish.

The theory that the flying-fish glides through the air like an aeroplane, propelled by the tail and guided by the pectoral fins (wings), is disproved by another naturalist, Lieutenant-Colonel C. D. Durnford. He finds that an average flight begins with a jump into the air, the fish being propelled by the tail and aided by the wing-like fins; that it is continued by a laboured and exceedingly rapid movement of the seemingly motionless wings (which at times slow down so that the vibration becomes visible); and that it ceases either with a sudden stoppage or gradual slowing down of the wings before the fish reaches the water.

There are many popular misconceptions regarding the flight of this fish. A number of people imagine that it can fly for a great distance or at a great height, like a bird, and the writer has seen an old print which represented them flying high above the masts of a vessel. This, of course, is altogether erroneous. The fish can only fly for a short distance, generally not more than fifty yards, and never rise more than a few feet above the water. Once the initial impetus is expended they are unable to continue their flight or to deviate in their course to any great extent, as is proved by the fact that they frequently fall on the decks of passing vessels.

The writer was once sleeping in his cabin, passing through the tropics, when he was awakened by a loud, fluttering noise, as of a bird struggling on the floor. Rising and striking a light, he found that it was a flying-fish which had entered through the open porthole and fallen to the floor. It was handed over to the ship's cook, and duly made its appearance on the breakfast-table next morning. Before it was handed to the cook the wings were cut off. One of these was much longer than the other. They were spread out, moistened, and mounted on cardboard, and were then posted to friends in England, to remove any lingering doubts as to the existence of flying-fish. The wings were of delicate, gauze-like texture, for all the world like those of a fly, except that they were six inches long. When not expanded in flight they closed automatically like a fan and pressed against the fish's side. These wings are simply an abnormal development of the pectoral fins, and the flight of the fish was probably evolved in the course of ages in its constant leaps out of the water to escape its foes, especially the dolphins or bonitoes which prey on it; though sometimes it appears to dart out of the water in mere exuberance of spirits, like troutlets leaping in a pool. It is a case of leaping out of the frying-pan into the fire, for in leaving the water to escape pursuing enemies the fish often fall victims to albatrosses and other birds which poise in wait for them in the upper element.

A Portland (Maine) sea-captain tells of his sailing in southern seas where flying-fish abound. They would sometimes in their flight during the night come aboard the ship and drop on the deck. He had three cats on board, and although apparently lying asleep below, they would hear the sound whenever a fish struck the deck, and rush up to get it. They distinguished this from all other sounds. The crew sometimes tried to imitate it in various ways, but could not deceive the felines.

Humboldt in his great work describes the flying-fish which he encountered during his trip to South America. They commenced to be numerous in latitude twenty-two degrees, or shortly after the tropics

were entered. He calculates the extreme height of their flight at eighteen feet, and mentions the enormous size of their natatory bladder, which in a fish of six and a half inches is three and a half inches long, three-quarters of an inch broad, and contains about three and a half cubic inches of air. As this bladder occupies more than half the body of the fish, it is probable that it contributes to its lightness. He also confirms the fact that the animal beats the air with its wings during its leap —that is, alternately extends and closes its pectoral fins. The cabin-boys amuse themselves by cutting off a part of the wings, and they assert that these grow afresh, like lizards' tails.

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# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.

## CHAPTER III.

**Marl'd seas, and a thousand isles.**

SUMMER races to Finland in a royal avalanche of colour and foliage.

Short weeks before, these plumed woodlands were cowering under snows, shrouded in a silence, tense and continuous, imaginably of Death: gray frozen ridges gripping the shores with callous manacles; out and beyond them the sea, impotent and deserted, a steel-blue, trackless floor of ice; the white beleaguered world lanterned fitfully, in a daunting antithesis, by haggard and half-hearted noons, by the splendid pallor, the unearthly searchlights of the Aurora Borealis.

But nearer sound the faint, far-off pipes of spring —still nearer. At the unheard melody the heart of the world beats quicker. Waiting instincts raise exultant heads. The days lengthen; the virgin snows are wrought in delicate traceries, in gossamer films of lace athwart the trees. There is a stirring of sap, a movement of tender life under the snows; bright eyes gleam; wild, shy calls are heard in the forest life. Here there is no approach on tiptoe, finger on lip, no gentle bourgeoning, as in the slow, sweet tide of an English spring. With triumphant swiftness land and sea awaken. Bright flowering heralds suddenly raise their daring pennants, crimson, blue, golden, to the sun. The trees blossom with the magic of Tannhäuser's staff. The passionate northern summer-god woos at white-heat, and the isles, transmuted, fly a joyous tricolour of silver and green and lilac—silver in the filigree of lakes, in glittering belts buckling together the woods; green in the forests down to their mirror's edge, splashed by great billows of shining lilac.

Here, in the heart of these nameless isles, the *Covesea* lay moored at a wharf, the apex of a little V-shaped bay, all around the crowding trees and tangles of undergrowth, rising upwards on gentle slopes to a couple of hundred feet. The riband of a cart-track, white and dusty in the sun, wound through the trees towards the quarry. Granite underlay the isle. Boulders of it pushed their great shoulders through the undergrowth. Of granite, too, was the crest, where, looking down, one saw the gracious vista of a hundred islands, a string of emeralds studding the white floor of the sea. A Swedish brigantine curtsied lazily at her moorings in the offing, the complexities of her spars and rigging picked out clean against a cloudless sky.

Huddled together near the wharf were a score or so of little boats, a few of them drawn up on the beach. They belonged to the islanders who had come to work at the loading of the *Covesea*. Some of the men rowed or sailed home in the evening. Others slept contentedly the sound sleep of labour, on spruce-branches, through the warm summer night. Gangs of workmen had sweated all day in the glare of the sun. There were pure Finlanders, with the high cheekbones and the hint of almond eyes, a suggestion of atavism from their misty Magyar forebears; big-featured Swedes, tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, with frank, pleasant faces, and clear, wide, seagoing eyes begotten of life in the open and the looking into far distances, showing regular white teeth in their smiles and laughter; some of them wearing the pointed wooden Finnish shoes, all of them carrying the sheathed Finnish knife at their waists, and smoking the ubiquitous little light-brown cigarette. Snatches of Swedish, soft-vowelled Finnish, or Danish were tossed to and fro among them; more laughter than in an English or Scotch gang at the same hard work; terse orders now and then to the crew working the winch shouted by the mate in broad Morayshire; a careless bar or two of a song from a group of men and women waiting ashore.

For days the *Covesea* had trembled to the thud of huge granite blocks being lowered into her sturdy hold. The tumbled heaps on shore had grown gradually less; and but for the coming of Saint John's Eve the captain might have counted on having up anchor and heading south in another thirty-six hours. Flett, however, knew the North, and knew that no more work could be got out of the Finlanders on that day or the next, for Midsummer's Eve, in the full heart-beat of the northern summer, is their great festival.

As under the snows there lie forces of life hidden, aspiring, invincible, so under the surface-cold northern nature there beckons a gleaming Arcady of romance and imagination, a mystical undercurrent running through this virile, highly strung race, finding partial expression in old songs, old customs, the ghosts of thanksgivings for life handed down from the dead centuries. Wisely, the early Church conserved

the nature-worship woven into the heart of humanity, and the optimism of long-forgotten ages is still insistently voiced in eternal emotions older than laws, older than the faiths, as old as the ribs of the world. Wherefore mating-time and harvest, celebrated long ago in joyous rites, now honour Saint Valentine and Saint Barnabas. Chivalry, courage, purity, and kindred qualities are linked to other holy names, and with this northern people, cradled in dark winters, the jewelled virtue of gratitude, of thanks to the sun, the wonder-working summer god, is symbolised in festivals and merry-makings, in singing songs handed down by the runo-singers from lost centuries; in lighting the Kokko fires, the descendants of the ancient flames of Baal, first raised by groping pagans, and kindled to-day, such is the amazing irony of the years, by Christian peoples on the eve of the gentle Saint John.

All work is stopped for this holiday. Greenery adorns the Finlanders' world. The sacred birch-tree festoons the buildings, the town mansion-houses, the city streets crowded with shops, the little wooden cabins hidden away in lonely firths. The carriages and country carts are embowered in branches, and every mast round the coast and in the harbours shows birch-branches from the main-truck to the bowsprit. Sons and daughters from the towns, white-capped students from Helsingfors, sailors from their ships, hurry home for Midsummer's Day. Families reunite. Holiday-makers desert the towns, and laughter rings in the network of lakes, where all manner of *fêtes champêtres*, dancing, bathing, and yachting parties chase each other. The joy of being alive finds its apotheosis on Midsummer's Eve.

The skipper was standing watching the workmen putting on their coats. The growl of the chains and the rumble of the granite blocks had suddenly ceased. Round the point came racing a couple of boats rowed by Finnish girls, with shining flaxen hair, brightly coloured kerchiefs on their heads. They rowed well, even for Finland, where every man, woman, and child can row and swim. The little crowd shouted laughing encouragements to them as they neared the beach, and soon the girls were ashore, smiling and chattering. Then came hand-shaking and much merriment. They were there, these comely lasses, to help in the festivities, to see the bonfire lit on the crest, to watch the sports, to dance in the woods, to play the kantala, and sing their beloved songs of Finland.

'Joseph and Marie!' said one of them, her complexion like her native Finnish strawberries and cream, 'of all the days in the year this is the finest, Pervo! It is all arranged! We shall first picnic in the woods, and then—then to dance; ah, to dance till morning!'

'We shall all be ready in half-an-hour, Brita,' said the man addressed. 'Then we sail round to the west of the island.' He gave an order or two to the men, and the little crowd gladly dispersed, soon to return arrayed for the holiday.

'We'll get no work oot o' them for a day or twa,' said the skipper gloomily to the mate. 'They're neither to haud nor to bind when Midsummer's Eve comes roon'.'

'I doot no',' grunted the mate. 'Them and their capers wi' birk-branches an' sic-like. I wonder they canna tak' their holiday aboot the New Year time, like sensible folk.' He was thinking of the whisky and currant-buns of the sensible folk of his native land. No artistic fêtes for him.

'Canna be helped,' said the skipper. 'They work weel when they're at it, I'll say that for them;' and he waved a hand in response to a shouted goodbye from the last boat rounding the point.

Then he went below to write up his log. This done—the pen in his hand and the mood on him—he wrote to his wife, his one and only exercise in correspondence other than an occasional telegram to his owners. They had arrived all safe (under Providence), he said, and had fine weather, no illness on board (thanks be!), and everything going smooth alow and aloft, in a manner of speaking. He had been kept back by some holiday cantrips on the part of the men about there, but hoped to sail for London on the twenty-seventh. They would be spoken (if they were spared) at Lloyd's station at Elsinore, and reported, and she would no doubt see it in the *Aberdeen Journal*. He hoped she was well and the bairns were biddable. And any letters were to be sent to him at the Baltic Hotel. So no more at this time from her affectionate husband, Hugh Flett. There was a postscript that Mr Westwater was 'out from morning till night, and no doubt enjoying himself, though he is not a great talker; but he looks very tired when he comes back to the ship at night.' He also counselled her not to forget the sticks for the sweet-peas, and closed the letter hurriedly, as he felt inclined towards an expression of sentiment.

The steady afternoon sunshine was drinking the surface of the sea, and a faint heat-haze trembled in the distance, blurring the lines of the islands. Not a cat's-paw flawed the glass of the ocean. Not the faintest wash tinkled against the ship's sides. The flaming sword of the sun passed steadily overhead. Everything was hot to the touch. The decks sweated pitch in their seams and wrinkles. Two or three sea-birds stood as motionless as though carved out of their rocky perches. There was a tense silence abroad, stirred, hardly broken by the faint drums and pipes of the myriad insect life in the woods. The world was drowsy in the clutch of the sun.

Westwater was lying aft, in a deck-chair under an awning, muscles, limbs, and neck lax, in the sound sleep that comes to the tired in body. His deep, regular breathing was the only sound aboard. The captain was below wrinkling his brows over the ship's accounts, stumbling among differences between Finnish and English currency. Some of the crew were asleep forward, or ashore at the junketings, ignorant of the speech of the Finns

but proficient as their maidens in the Esperanto of the eyes, an ancient language, and one easily learned.

Westwater awoke, and stood up, throwing a swift, curious animal glance behind him. There was no one on deck. A dead hush hung over the ship. He had been dreaming. He yawned softly and stretched himself, a suggestion of a lithe, handsome cat in his pose. Then he looked at his watch and gave a look around. It was between three and four o'clock. He lifted his gun and a knapsack lying near, and walked lightly, quickly across the gangway ashore, where, just at the outskirts of the wood, the second-mate was coming back to the ship in a leisurely saunter.

"Afternoon, Scott!' said Westwater. 'If you're going aboard will you tell the captain that I'm off again on one of my expeditions? Like the man in the song, I won't be home till morning.'

'Very good, sir,' said the second-mate. 'Are ye gettin' many speciments, sir?' indicating the knapsack with a nod.

'Oh, geological? Yes. I'm nearly satisfied,' replied the other, and waved him good-afternoon as he disappeared among the trees.

Westwater's way lay for a couple of miles across the isle through the woods. The heat had lessened, and in the colonnade of pines there was a welcome shade. He walked with hungry strides suggestive to any one watching him closely of either the pursued or the pursuing, and soon emerged on the other side of the isle at the edge of a tiny creek, where a small sailing-boat was pulled up on the shore. He looked round with the same animal swiftness, took off his blue spectacles, launched the boat, and got in. He took the oars, for there was not enough wind to set thistledown a-sailing. He rowed steadily for an hour well within himself, without haste, without rest, until a cat's-paw of wind ruffled the dead calm. Then he ran up the sail.

A puff of wind came, then another. The sail began to draw as he unshipped the oars and took the tiller, steering with a practised hand. The boat slid along, a swift panorama of islands unrolling, some green and inviting, with brisk, moving human figures, the resonance of voices from them carrying over the waters; others mere brown, dripping rocks, bald-crowned, edged with gray incrustations where the water lapped and rustled. The boat and its solitary occupant passed them, heading for a brown blot, leagues clear of the labyrinth of isles. Westwater scanned the mark again and again through his binocular, never taking his eyes off it in the intervals.

The brown blot stood alone, an outpost. As the man in the boat drew nearer, its blurred lineaments hardened into definiteness. Its height, greater than that of the other islets, gained by its aloofness from the little archipelago that it sentinelled. A grim sea-wall a hundred and fifty feet high, straight, insurmountable, ran for three-quarters of its circumference. On the side nearest the boat terraces of rocks rose gradually from a strip of wholesome-looking shingle to the crest, fringed by forlorn trees, where they stopped suddenly at the edge of a deep chasm five or six yards wide, its jaws narrowing like a wedge at the bottom. It was as though some titanic axe had nearly cleft the island in twain. Its configuration offered a dozen random similitudes to the beholder: a great stricken ship settling down by the head; the letter **M** badly set up; the tips of a drowning giant's fingers; most of all, and heightened by the hog-mane of dwarf trees that prolonged their uneasy climb to the edge of the cleft, that of the head of a sinking, gaping sea-monster. This was the isle called by the Finlanders the Forgotten Rock.

Here and there stunted birches clung gallantly to dizzy footholds; dishevelled alders sulked in damp corners; crouching granite blocks met the sea's dull splash. One glance told the spectator, shouted to him, that this was no human habitation. Indeed, to the eye there seemed scarcely a living for a wild goat on its desolate sides. It was roadless, naked, empty; no quick life visible, save in the snowdrifts of multitudes of sea-fowl on its stark cliffs; the isle vocal only in their scared gabble as the boat drew near, and they rose bleating in aimless convolutions, like wind-thrown spume against the dark sea-wall, or hovered high up, tattered smoke-clouds in the light airs. The isle stood solitary as a sentry. With the empty expanse of sea stretching away behind it and the other isles neighbouring each other in clusters fifteen miles distant, it mutely suggested a sense of loneliness, even of ostracism, vague and indescribable in its silence, in its broken lines, in its complete and surprising isolation.

The boat skimmed nearer to within fifty yards of the shingle. Then she was put twice slowly round the isle, Westwater steadily spying through the glass. This done, he headed for the shore, lowered the sail, and pulled cautiously down a rock-bordered avenue, the rowlocks clanking a loud monotony in the solitude. Rounding a bend, the keel grated on the shingle of a cove hidden by a curtain of rock. He stood up in the stern for a moment, listening, a secrecy in the poise of his head incongruous in the enveloping solitude. Then he jumped out, moored the boat, and, crouching behind a rock, swept the sea with his binocular. The only sails were far, far out in the fairway. Westwater slung the knapsack over his shoulder, took up the gun, and started off, subdued excitement in his eye, in his touch of heightened colour.

He walked silently, with a vigilant eye, along the tumbled rocks fringing the shore for half-an-hour, came back to the creek, and took up a coil of thick rope lying in the bows of the boat. Striking inland, walking in a narrowing circle, he came to the edge of the mane of trees running up the humped ridge to the summit. He looked round again. Manifestly he was alone on the rock. No

living soul was there. He stepped into the narrow wood, and faced the climb.

There was no pathway. The rocks were smooth and slippery, and he ascended slowly, with infinite difficulty, sometimes on his hands and knees over the more difficult stretches. The gun and coil of rope impeded him when a straight wall of rock had to be clambered over or circumvented; but he was making headway, every now and then pausing for a breath and giving a cast of his swift animal glance sideways and behind. In the intermissions of the little wood he went quickly, choosing soft footholds, his steps falling as stealthily as a panther's paws. At last he came out on a ledge some fifty yards below the crest. He looked up at it, and rapped out a sudden oath, staring, pale with anger, at a mound of cut wood and undergrowth piled up near it. Frowning and cursing, he came forward and examined it. It was a bonfire ready to be lit, a tar-barrel perched clumsily on its top—palpably some of the islanders' work. He looked at his watch. It was close on half-past six, and (he remembered) Midsummer's Eve. They might—they would—soon return to light it. They might be on the way now. He must hurry. He ranged the sea again feverishly with the glass and drew a breath of relief. Even assuming that any of the craft were heading for the isle, there was nothing within a couple of hours' sail of him. He might light the bonfire himself after—afterwards. It would be a good joke. Yes. He smiled, and climbed up to the edge of the cleft, hesitated a moment, and then lay down and peered over, his heart beating, staring intently down into the cleft for a minute or two into the semi-darkness below. He shifted his position along the ridge a dozen times, straining his eyes into the depths. Nothing!

Suddenly he stood up. He was very pale, and wiped a clammy forehead with a trembling hand. He lay down again. Something! Far down he caught a glimpse of a dull, whitish streak. It might be a shrub; it might be a sea-bird's nest. It might be—— He jumped up, and carried the rope towards a stout little pine near the edge, tied a stone to one end, and fastened the other securely round the tree-trunk. He lowered the stone over the edge, the rope running out rapidly and stopping with a jerk. He pulled it up a few yards, and heard its faint knock far down as it touched the bottom again. Then he tested the tree by a heavy haul on the rope. The stout pine-trunk never gave a tremor.

'All right! But I wish this wasn't a one man job!' he muttered, as he swung himself clear over the edge.

A piece of rock on the ledge loosened just a hair's-breadth under the rope's pressure, and slowly, inquisitively, craned over an inch or two as he disappeared. He went down steadily, using his feet against the uneven face of the rock. A couple of rock-pigeons flew out close to his head, and he gave a momentary startled clutch to the rope as he ducked.

Under the sudden jerk of the rope, the craning rock at the ledge moved another two or three inches over, and looked at him.

At last he reached the bottom. He braced himself for an instant and looked down, with a catch in his breath, for there, close to him, at his shaking knee, was what he had come so far to see, the skeleton of a man. The thing sat, its bleached head and spine against the face of the rock, its long arms thrown open—it seemed to the trembling living man beside it—in a mocking attitude of welcome, its jaws set in a dreadful travesty of a smile, a few wisps of faded blue rags still hanging round it, and the rotting, rat-gnawed remains of a pair of shoes at its feet.

Westwater looked at it. 'Dick!' he said in a crackling whisper.

His eyes were drawn to its blank sockets. In the half-light it almost seemed a commonplace living thing, with an easy gibe on its lips, and even as he looked it moved slowly, very slowly, leaning towards him, with a scrape and a rattle of its ribs on the rock. The cause was simple. His weight had shaken the ground and the bones with it, yet at the thing's uncanny lurch his hair literally rose, and he sprang back hastily. He recovered himself, after a shudder, and tried to look past the daunting sockets. But, seek to avoid them as he might, the hollow counterfeits followed him. He shut his eyes and still he saw them. When he opened them, there they were, staring at him, over the dreadful confident smile. It seemed to say to him, 'Look! Some day you shall be even as I am.' He hesitated, then suddenly flung his handkerchief over its face. Ah, that was better!

He breathed more freely. He was alone now. Bending down, he seized with a shaking hand the belt that hung limply round the ribs. The rotten strap came away easily, and with feverish haste he ran his fingers along the belt. There was something there, something he had come so far to touch. He seemed about to open it. No. He would wait till he got to daylight, away from the neighbourhood of the thing that had once been Dick.

The peering, inquisitive rock upon the ledge above craned over still another couple of inches.

Westwater straightened himself, took out an oil-skin belt from his pocket, thrust the other one inside it, tied it up securely, and buckled it round his waist. He looked down at his feet once again.

'Good-bye, old man! I must hurry. Good-bye!' he said softly. He put out his hand to remove the handkerchief, hesitated, and left it over the eyes and the dreadful smile, then seized the rope, and, hand over hand, using his foot's leverage now and then on the rock's projections, climbed slowly upwards. Near the top, where a merry evening wind was beginning to sing, and the bright world awaited him, he paused for a moment resting on one foot, felt the belt around him, and looked up at the

riband of sky above him. 'At last!' he whispered, and, even as he spoke, Destiny knocked at the door. His foot slipped on a stone. He swung in the air for an instant, then steadied himself, sending a quiver up the rope to the craning rock on the ledge overhead. A warning pebble struck his arm. He gave one swift, hopeless glance upwards at the careening rock, and almost on the instant it crashed down on his head, man and stone striking the wall of the cleft as they fell together.

There was a faint, muffled sound. The rope swayed; trembled; hung inert. An echo of crashing stones and a single cry, humming for an instant along the funnel of the rock, trailed off into silence.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF DIGESTION.

'Is life worth living?' 'That depends on the liver.' The quip is too well worn to require amplification. The philosophy of the Western world, closely bound up as it is with bodily well-being, cannot dissociate the spiritual from the fleshly needs. It is otherwise in the East, where existence is regarded as the greatest misfortune, and the flesh a thing to be borne with patience. The Western life is too strenuous to admit of the gentle pessimism of the East. We have to live, and in the narrow compass of our lives we strive to include as many agreeable sensations as possible. The ascetic and the dreamer are regarded askance, or pushed aside to make way for the man of affairs. The vegetarian is scoffed at as a faddist; the temperance agitator is tolerated as a reformer who is striving to rid society of the drones of drink and the wastrels of the whisky-bottle.

Respectability, with a very big 'R,' is the highest aim of our civilisation, and we do not stop to think whether it is gained at the expense of happiness or no. If we give a thought to happiness at all, it is simply with regard to the bodily capacity of this or that individual for the enjoyment of his earthly prosperity. We commiserate with the millionaire whose health has broken down in his strenuous efforts to secure an undue proportion of this world's goods; but we pass by unnoticed the humble son of the soil who sings contentedly at his labour on a wage of eighteen shillings a week. Yet if we took the trouble to analyse the feelings of both we might learn something of the vanity of riches and the blessings of a good digestion.

Of the abnormal influence which the body exercises over our mental condition, let any one who chances to awake in the early hours of the morning judge for himself by the cold light of day. The letter of trivial importance left unanswered loomed as a vast dereliction of duty; the petty annoyances of the day before assumed proportions altogether out of keeping with their true significance; the word spoken in haste rose up to condemn; the lapse of some simple duty in the daily round took the aspect of a breach of faith. In the broad light of day we laugh at the mental exaggerations of the pitiless dawn, and attribute them, rightly enough, to the low vitality of the body; and we are not ashamed to do so, though thereby we confess to the domination of the flesh.

Being above all things a practical people, we set ourselves to discover how to obviate, as far as possible, the discomforts which the sustenance of the body imposes. We recognise that the laws of cause and effect operate with unerring precision in matters dietary, and we learn by experience what things to avoid and what may be safely assimilated; and if we cannot discover these internal truths for ourselves, there are scientific men at hand who are prepared to instruct us. They have compiled tables of comparative digestibility, headed by boiled tripe and grilled venison—delicacies which can be digested within the hour—and continuing throughout the entire range of edibles consumed by the omnivorous human race down to old salted beef, jam, crabs, and alcohol, which are beyond the six hours' time-limit.

The perusal of such a table is instructive and not without interest. It will be seen that cooking affects our food in various ways; generally speaking, by softening the texture and producing chemical changes, it renders the food more digestible, but there are exceptions where cooking prolongs the period of digestion. There are few things more easily digested than a raw whipped egg; but when it is hard-boiled four hours are necessary for digestion. On the other hand, milk is rendered more digestible by boiling, and a baked apple shares the honours with tripe and venison at the head of the list.

Bread, the staple food of a vast proportion of the Western world, is by no means easily assimilated in a new state. It is timed at three and a half hours. There are people who tell us that wholemeal and brown bread are more easily digested; and there are others to warn us that they produce deleterious effects on the stomach, and are less nourishing in consequence. The preference for one kind of bread over another would seem to be largely a question of individual constitution.

Fish, excluding eels and shellfish, is very easily digested when boiled, but less so when fried. An hour and a half disposes of the former, three hours of the latter. A century or two ago it was not so popular in Scotland as it is now, and the reason is not far to seek. There were no nets at the mouths of the rivers, and salmon were plentiful and easily captured in the upper reaches. Salmon-fishing in

those days was not regarded as exclusively the luxury of the rich. The salmon in the river belonged to the laird, and were a valuable source of food-supply to his dependants. There are in existence agreements in writing between masters and servants in which it is stipulated that the latter are not to be fed on salmon oftener than twice a week! So in some parts of England salmon used to prove tiresome in the seventeenth century. Selden in his *Table Talk* records that servants taken 'into that part of England where salmon is plenty' soon grow weary of it and wish for beef again.

It may be a source of comfort to parents at Christmas-time and the New Year to know that both turkeys and geese are easily digested—much more so than the commonplace fowl of the barn-door type. Whilst two and a half hours account for the roasted goose or turkey, the 'fowl'—even when called by the more euphemistic name of 'chicken'—treated in the same way will sit heavy upon us for four hours.

Beef and mutton stand much on the same mark as regards digestibility—three to three and a half hours, according to the cut and mode of preparation, with a warning against old salted beef, as already mentioned. Roasted or grilled, the flesh of the calf will remain unabsorbed for five hours, and fat pork for five and a quarter, though the latter becomes more amenable to digestion when salted or smoked. That 'bag of mystery' the sausage lingers between three and a half and five hours, according to its unguaranteed analysis and culinary treatment.

Of vegetables, asparagus and boiled celery are among the most digestible, requiring only an hour and a half for the process. Potatoes and beans take an hour longer, and onions and uncooked salad yet another hour or so.

Game is all classed together and reckoned at four hours and a quarter; but pigeon is not mentioned in the list. There would seem to be conflicting opinions as to the digestibility of this bird. On the one hand, it is sometimes recommended to invalids as a tasty morsel, when more formidable diet is forbidden; on the other, there is the story of the wager laid that a man would not eat fourteen pigeons in as many days. The bet was taken, and the man who was prepared to back his digestion against the bird began his diet of one pigeon daily. He was forced to abandon it in a week, the accumulation of undigested pigeon in his stomach making it impossible to continue.

The perusal of this table of comparative digestibility gives pause for thought beyond the scope of its purely material interest. The time-table for the stomach is an innovation which was unknown to our ancestors, and has only become necessary owing to the impaired physical condition of the race. It appears that we have to pay highly, perhaps too highly, for our ultra-civilisation. The development of the mental faculties and the arts of peace has been accompanied by a steady physical deterioration. In stature we may be superior to the knights of the Middle Ages—it is a fact that the average modern man cannot get into the armour of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; but it is equally true of the average modern man that he could not wield the great two-handed swords of his ancestors, nor support throughout the livelong day the weight of the armour which is too small for his bulkier limbs. We have only to look at the teeth of the African savage and compare them with the lamentable stumps of decayed ivory which do duty as grinders in our own country to realise the necessity for tables of comparative digestibility, peptonised foods, dental surgeons, wholesale druggists, and a host of modern innovations undreamt of by our worthy ancestors, for whom the barber and chirurgeon performed all that was necessary for soundness in tooth and limb. We profess to be appalled at the feats of gluttony recorded of men of gastronomic mark a few generations ago. We read with disgust how this or that man sat down to a meal of a sirloin of beef or a quarter of mutton and did not rise from the table until it was finished. But is not our disgust tempered with envy? Who in these dyspeptic days would dream of such a carnivorous orgy or hope to survive it? We blame the 'two bottle' men for many of our bodily discomforts and defects. It is convenient to make scapegoats of our ancestors for the indignity of a bald head or an emblazoned visage; but we ignore the judgment which posterity will pass upon us. A toothless and anæmic generation will rise up and condemn us for our tables of comparative digestibility, our peptonised foods, our digestive tablets, and all the artificial aids by which we seek to bolster up our failing constitutions.

The fact is that the farther we depart from nature and the more we lean upon science the more hopeless our case becomes physically. Modern discoveries are rapidly usurping the prerogatives of our bodily functions. The more advanced men of science are for abolishing with the knife those organs of our anatomy which have become or are becoming atrophied from disuse; they are for simplifying the mechanism of the human body by a process of attrition which in time will reduce its internal organism to the level of an oyster's or a star-fish's. Meanwhile we are in a transition stage, and our digestive system, no longer able to cope with the strenuous fare of our ancestors, is compelled to fall back upon science for relief. Hence these tables of comparative digestibility.

# CAPTAIN REYNIER OF THE VOLTIGEURS.

By W. D. Gray.

IT was, I suppose, between ten and eleven at night. I sat upon a truss of straw by a small bivouac-fire, wrapped up in my cloak, for this first day of December 1805 had been incredibly cold. All around, in every direction, the lights of hundreds of other fires shone strongly in the darkness. And about thirty yards away I could see the black, recumbent figure of the man who had insulted me. He lay there, taking his ease and joking with some officers of the Hussars who were visiting our camping-ground. This smooth-faced scoundrel had called me coward —I who had been fighting when he was in his cradle, who had carried a musket at Valmy, who had been made sergeant in the Italian campaign, lieutenant in Egypt, and captain after Marengo. And this fellow of four years' service had jeered at me, had mocked me, had doubted my courage. I had flung myself upon him, and if three of our officers had not torn us apart I believe I should have killed him. But my colonel had reminded us of the Emperor's orders, that any officer convicted of duelling during the campaign would be court-martialled and shot. 'You will obey those orders,' said the good colonel. 'Afterwards, when we return to France, it is another matter.' I remembered his words as I sat there in the firelight. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'if you live after to-morrow's battle, my good Morlaine, you have still to face me. You laugh over there with your friends, but you may find me more dangerous than the Russians.'

I was still thinking of all this, my eyes fixed upon my enemy, when there came a sudden stir and movement from the grenadiers at the neighbouring bivouac. Men started up and waved their arms, bearskins rose upon the musket-barrels, I heard loud shouts and acclamations, and then there strode into the light our little man in the gray coat, whom I had first seen at Lodi directing the artillery. I sprang to my feet, and snatching up some straw, twisted it into a torch and thrust it in the fire. 'Voltigeurs,' I cried, 'salute your Emperor!' Instantly the hundred men of my company followed my example, some of them lighting two torches. The rest of the regiment took it up, then the brigade, the division, and finally the whole army. The enemy, looking down from their positions, must have seen an amazing spectacle. On every side the lines of fire sprang up from eighty thousand torch-bearers; from all around rose the great roar, '*Vive l'Empereur!*' the drums beat; the trumpets sounded. The Emperor passed through our camp smiling and saluting, followed by his staff. As he reached his quarters the illumination died down, the cheering ceased, and the men returned to their shelters. The whole affair had not lasted five minutes, but that night before Austerlitz is a thing never to be forgotten. For my part, I rolled myself up in my cloak and lay down again on the straw. I forgot Morlaine in thinking of the Emperor. After all, did it greatly matter that this young fool had spoken ill of me? The Emperor, I said to myself, knows me better. He knows whether his old servant, who has served him since the beginning, is a coward. All the same, I swore that Morlaine should answer for his words. We had quarrelled that morning about the veriest trifle, but I had always disliked the man. Something about him set me on edge; there was something wrong with him, something about his features and the look of his black eyes which made me distrust him. But for the present I forgot him, and was still thinking of the Emperor and the morrow's battle when I fell asleep.

We were all aroused in the gray dawn by the trumpets sounding the réveille. It was bitter cold, and a thick fog hung over the ground like a pall, but the men sprang up briskly from their bivouacs, and prepared for the great battle which we knew was coming. My regiment, the Fifty-seventh of the line, belonged to Drouot's division, and we were in reserve behind Soult and Bernadotte. We stood to our arms as the light strengthened. The fog was as thick as ever. It was very strange to stare into the thickness and hear men marching on either side and yet see nothing. Presently, however, it grew less dense and began to break apart, until the sun struck through it and seemed to drink it up. And then what a sight! There stood our whole army, the thick lines of blue and white and gold, the thousands of sabres and bayonets glittering, the breastplates of the cuirassiers blazing like great mirrors, the cannon sparkling and glowing as though on fire. And what men they were that the sun of Austerlitz shone down upon! The product of ten years of campaigning, young and eager, yet most of them veterans in warfare, with the greatest General in the world to set them in their places! As I stood there by my Voltigeurs, for all my lined face and grizzled moustache, I waved my sword in the air and shouted like the youngest sub-lieutenant.

As to the battle itself, we were, as I said, in reserve, and did not really come into action until the thing was decided. But we could see our comrades in the centre attacking the Pratzenburg Hill, and hear the terrible combat on the right where Davoût was holding back the Austrians. They defended themselves well, those Russians and Austrians, there is no denying that. Nearly opposite to us, on the slope of the hill, was the Russian Imperial Guard, gigantic men with great red plumes upstanding from their shakos. They fought like heroes, flinging

back Oudinot's grenadiers and then scattering the light cavalry. The noise was tremendous, and in the clouds of smoke and dust we could not see what was happening. But at last the Emperor let loose upon them the heavy cavalry of the Guard under General Bessières. They thundered by us upon their black horses, the picked men of eighty thousand, the fine flower of a glorious army. They finished the work, for the Russians gave way before them in all directions, and the allied army was split in two.

Now came our turn; and, my faith! it was time. Our division advanced upon Kutusoff's shattered columns. We ran forward all together, the hundreds of feet pattering upon the frozen ground, the bayonets gleaming in the sunlight, the men shouting, the drums beating the charge. The Fifty-seventh was on the right, in column of companies; in front was a Russian battalion striving bravely to stand its ground and cross bayonets with us. But I could see that they had had enough. Their ranks were ragged and uneven, and the ground behind them was thick with their stragglers. We went into them with a cheer, and almost instantly our leading companies were all mingled together in one furious mass. Suddenly, just near by, I noticed Morlaine, pale and evil-looking, pointing forward with his sword. I sprang before him, thinking to show him whether I was a coward or no. A few yards away I saw a tall Russian officer holding up the flag of his regiment and trying to rally his beaten men round it. I sprang at him, my sword in my hand. He saw me coming, and in his turn rushed at me like a bull. *Parbleu!* that was a fight. We stamped round each other, thrusting and slashing, tripping over the dead and wounded. He was a strong fencer, this young Russian, though the flag hampered him. At last I got past his guard and my sword was through him. He pitched over upon his back, dropping the standard as he fell. I snatched it up and waved it in the air. '*Vive l'Empereur!*' I cried triumphantly; '*Vive l'Empereur!*' And then, as I stood there with the flag in my hand, a pistol-ball fired from behind hit me in the shoulder, and with a thud I fell forward on my knees.

For a few moments I knelt there almost unconscious. The pain was sharp and agonising, but it was the knowledge that I must have been fired upon by one of our men which made my brain reel and the slope of the hill sway up and down like the waves of the sea. Meanwhile the regiment was rushing past me in pursuit of the Russians, who were now thoroughly beaten. The air was full of shrieks and cries, the loud reports of muskets, and the dull sound of blows. But presently, as they still pressed the enemy back, I was left alone. I struggled to rise to my feet, but, tripping over the flag-pole, fell down again, the blood pulsing from my wound. Suddenly an officer disengaged himself from the ranks of our men and ran back to me. It was Morlaine, and when I saw him I knew instinctively that it was he who had shot me down. As is the case with some few men, the hand-to-hand fighting had turned him into a devil. His face was deathly pale, his eyes burned in his head, and his lips were twitching. I tried to gain my feet again, but he thrust me back savagely.

'You are here, then?' he snarled, showing his teeth. 'I thought you were finished with. Give me that flag, you dog!'

'You villain!' I gasped. 'You miserable villain! It was you who shot me!'

'Was it?' he said with a laugh. 'Well, you had better give me that flag unless you wish to die once and for all.'

I looked anxiously about me to see if any help was at hand. The regiment was now some way off, and all around were none but the dead and wounded and the litter of the fight. But behind, at a little distance, I saw a small body of horsemen who were approaching at a quick trot. Morlaine saw them too, and with an oath snatched at the flag. I tried to keep hold of it, but I was so weak from loss of blood that he twisted it from me as if I were a child.

'You understand,' he cried mockingly as he ran to regain the regiment, 'I took this in the charge?' As I understood his meaning, with a supreme effort I staggered to my feet and walked forward a few paces. But it was no good. The whole field of battle went round me in a great circle, the noise of the fighting seemed to increase a hundredfold, and with a groan I fell, swooning, upon my face. Just before I became unconscious I heard the noise of horses' hoofs from the party of riders I had seen in the rear, and looking feebly up, I saw, as in a vision, the Emperor ride past, followed by his staff. It seemed as though he gazed in my direction and motioned with his hand. But at that there came a great roaring in my ears, everything went black, and I fainted away.

I cannot say clearly when I regained consciousness. There was a curious half-stage when I seemed to know what was happening, and yet was unable to see anything. It was then that I felt myself raised up by two men and carried carefully down the slope. Afterwards I felt myself being placed on a stretcher and taken a long distance over level ground. When my bearers set me down suddenly I must have swooned again, for I remembered nothing until I opened my eyes and found myself lying on some straw in a hut in Austerlitz, with the setting sun streaming through the little window. Another wounded officer was lying near by, and an army surgeon was bending over me, holding a flask of brandy to my lips. Afterwards he dressed my wound, which was more painful than serious, though he told me it would prevent me from using my left arm for some weeks. When he had attended to the other officer he left us in a great hurry, saying that with fifteen thousand wounded in the two armies he could spare us no more time.

Ah, that terrible night! It was not that the hut was very cold, that my companion talked to himself

in his broken slumber, that my wound burned and throbbed. It was the thought of Morlaine and his horrible treachery. It was the knowledge that he would reap the credit while I lay helpless, that I should be sent away to hospital, that no one would believe me when I returned to the regiment and tried to tell the truth. For I imagined that no one in the terrific confusion of the fighting had seen me actually take the standard; and who, I asked myself, had seen him tear it from my grasp while I lay there helpless? I wept with despair at the thought of it all—I, Louis Reynier, the man of eleven campaigns. At last, between two and three in the morning, I fell into a troubled sleep.

When I awoke it was full day and still extremely cold. The officer who had been lying near me was gone. He had been taken away in the early morning, and I never knew his name or whether he lived or died. The same surgeon who had attended to me before was standing in the doorway of the hut looking at me. When he saw my eyes open he came forward and dressed my wound again, afterwards ordering some food to be brought in.

'Well, captain,' he said when I had eaten, 'how do you feel this morning? Better, I hope?'

'Yes, monsieur,' I answered, 'thank you, I feel better.'

'That is good,' he said; 'but do you feel stronger? Do you think you could walk?'

'Why, yes, if it is necessary,' I replied, a little irritably. 'Thousand thunders! this scratch is nothing; it is not the first wound I have received.'

'I suppose not,' he said with a laugh. 'But as you feel so well, I can let you obey the Emperor's orders without fear of the consequences.'

'The Emperor's orders!' I cried, thunder-struck.

'Why, yes, captain. He has sent for you. His officer is waiting to conduct you to headquarters.'

As he spoke a tall, young lieutenant with a light moustache came into the room. I rose painfully to my feet and saluted him.

'Monsieur,' I said eagerly, 'is it true? Does the Emperor wish to see me?'

'Certainly,' he said—'that is, if you are Captain Reynier of the Fifty-seventh of the line.'

'Yes, I am he,' I answered, overwhelmed.

'Then it is quite right. Come with me, monsieur; and take my arm, for you appear weak.'

I was glad to do as he asked, for I did indeed feel weak and unnerved. We stepped into the open air, and he supported me slowly up the village street. The place was full of supply-wagons and men of the military train, and I saw long columns of Russian and Austrian prisoners being marched away under escort. But I took little notice of all the movement. I was thinking over this summons from the Emperor. Was it possible that he knew what I had done and what I had suffered? I remembered how he had seemed to come riding by just before I fainted.

'Do you know,' I asked my companion in a trembling voice, 'why the Emperor wishes to see me?'

'Yes, I know,' he said; 'but I am sorry I cannot tell you. I was ordered to say nothing if you questioned me.'

'You cannot tell me!' I repeated. 'Do you mean, monsieur, that the Emperor is angry with me?'

He broke into a laugh. 'Angry!' he cried. '*Parbleu!* the Emperor is not angry with *you*. I may say so much as that I think you are a very fortunate man, and I would give a good deal to be in your position.'

My heart beat quickly. It seemed, then, the Emperor knew something of what had occurred. But how *much* did he know? If he knew a little, would he believe the whole story if I could tell it to him?

'He has his headquarters at the old castle in the village here,' resumed the lieutenant. 'We shall be there in a moment. That was a great day yesterday, captain, was it not? I never saw such a battle. We have taken twenty thousand prisoners, a hundred and fifty cannon, a score of standards'——

'Standards!' I interrupted in a quavering voice. 'I—I took a standard yesterday, monsieur!'

He looked at me keenly. 'Ah, yes,' he said slowly; 'to be sure, to be sure. But here we are, captain. Keep hold of my arm, I beg.'

We passed through a door leading to a dark passage, which suddenly opened out into a large hall with a very lofty roof. A great circle of officers in brilliant uniforms stood around the walls, and in the centre, dominating them all, I saw the Emperor. He was talking to an old sergeant who stood at attention before him. He did not seem to notice our entrance. My companion twitched my sleeve and motioned me to remain where I was, behind two officers of the personal staff.

'You are to stay hidden for the present,' he whispered, 'and not to show yourself. The Emperor will call your name when he wishes to see you.'

I stood there in my soiled uniform, my wounded shoulder aching and my head in a whirl. I heard a number of names being called out one after the other, and saw men of all ranks step up to the Emperor. He would ask the length of their service, speak a few words of praise, and then decorate them or promote them. It was evident that he was conferring rewards for brave deeds performed in the battle.

All at once I heard an officer call out, 'Captain Morlaine!'

I started violently, and only saved myself from falling by clutching at the wall. My enemy came forward, his face calm, his bearing erect and confident.

'Captain Morlaine,' said the Emperor in a loud voice, 'I am told that you captured a Russian standard yesterday during the charge of Drouot's division. Is that so?'

'Yes, sire,' answered Morlaine.

The Emperor looked at him with a strange smile. 'Yours was a gallant act,' he said. 'It shall be suitably rewarded.'

He turned round in my direction. 'Captain Reynier,' he cried sharply.

I sprang between the two officers in front of me and saluted. Morlaine started back, and I heard him draw in his breath with a hiss. Napoleon looked at me with those wonderful eyes which seemed to search into your very soul.

'You command the Voltigeur company of the Fifty-seventh Regiment?' he said.

'Yes, sire,' I replied in a weak voice.

'I believe you also took a Russian standard yesterday?'

'Yes, sire.'

'And where is it?' asked the Emperor.

'It was taken from me, sire.'

'By whom?'

'By Captain Morlaine, sire. He tore it from my hands as I lay wounded and helpless.'

A loud, angry murmur broke from the whole circle of onlookers. The Emperor turned to Morlaine.

'Well,' he said, 'what do you say to this?'

The other's face was gray, but he spoke with a good voice. 'Captain Reynier is mistaken, sire,' he answered earnestly. 'He was wounded, and probably delirious. He does not know what happened, and imagines that he saw me do this thing. Your Majesty cannot believe that I should be guilty of such a crime!'

The Emperor made a quick step forward and raised his silver-mounted riding-switch as though to slash the other across the face. 'Listen, *coglione!*' he cried in a strident voice. 'I ordered Drouot's division to attack the enemy yesterday. I was behind your regiment when they made their charge. I watched the fight closely through my glasses. I saw this officer capture a flag; I saw you raise your pistol and shoot him down; I saw you tear the standard from him. Afterwards I had him taken to Austerlitz by two of my staff-officers. Do you understand me? I saw all this with my own eyes.'

Again the angry mutterings came from the officers behind me. Morlaine shrank back from the steely eyes and that terrible voice which seemed to sear him like a hot iron. The Emperor stretched out his hand.

'Your sword!' he said.

Morlaine presented it, trembling violently.

Napoleon took it, and with a quick gesture broke it across his knee. He threw the pieces to the floor.

'Captain of the Guard,' he ordered in a quiet, cold voice, 'you will arrest this officer. In an hour's time you will take a firing-party and have him shot outside the camping-ground.'

Morlaine uttered a half-strangled cry and tried to speak.

'Not a word, sir!' broke in the Emperor. 'I give you a man's death; it is more than you deserve. You, an officer in my army—bah! Out of my sight; you poison the air!'

He was led away by two grenadiers, reeling like a drunken man. In spite of all the evil I had received at his hands, I felt for the moment as if I could pity him.

The Emperor beckoned me to come nearer. 'Well, old friend,' he said with a smile, putting his hands upon my shoulders, 'I hope you are satisfied with my little plot? You must get your wound healed as soon as possible, Major Reynier, for one of the battalions of the Guard requires a new commander. When I find a man like you I wish to have him near me, for I feel that he compensates me for many villains.'

I suppose it was because I was weak and wounded, but at these words I became suddenly unmanned. I fell upon my knees, the hot tears falling. 'My Emperor!' I murmured in a broken voice. 'My Emperor!'

## TRANSPLANTED.

Last night I fell a-dhreamin' I was back in Cappoquin,
The hawthorns they wor' white wid flowers, the gold was on the whin,
The larks abow were singin', an' the clover at my feet
Was fillin' all the air around wid honey-scent most sweet;
An' in the uplan' meadow, a little piece away,
The lad I loved was workin' hard among the new-mown hay.

Och, here there 's full an' plenty; there 's gold, they say, galore;
My boys has both done grandly—what heart can wish for more?
I 've a girl to wait upon me, I wear a fine silk gown,
For Pat 's a wealthy gentleman that 's ownin' half a town;
An' Kate has pearls an' diamonds, an' Molly's only son
Will own a million dollars the day he 's twenty-one.

So they wouldn't rest contínted till I came acrase the say,
An' shared the luck that followed them, the four I sent away
Wid bitter pain an' sorrow, an' many a scaldin' tear,
An' prayers that followed afther them for many a lonesome year.
So I left my graves behind me, an' a weary way I came,
To find rich men an' women, but my childer just the same.

Ochone! but I 'm ungrateful, as Father John would say,
But in my dhreams I see them—the green hills far away;
The meadow where Pat courted me—ah, fifty year ago!—
The peaceful little graveyard where my darlin' man lies low;
An' little Nancy lies there too—the child I loved the best.
If I could sleep between them it 's sweetly I could rest,
Wid the larks above us singin', an' the gold upon the whin,
An' God's blessed sunshine fallin' on the hills o' Cappoquin!

Florence C. Armstrong.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

ONE never abandons entirely the sentiment of the good resolution; but surely it is the case that the older one becomes, and the farther one passes on in the experience of life, the more is seen of the futility of all such resolutions the less inclination is there to attach any importance to them. It is more difficult to make new starting-points as the time of life goes on; and it is better realised that what cannot be done in the ordinary way by character and effort is hardly to be achieved as the result of a somewhat fanciful, and maybe unwilling, determination with nothing more to justify it than its attachment to a date. However, there are men and women in their thousands and tens of thousands who will continue to resolve with great heartiness and a sublime peace of mind, arising from a past that is conceived to be dead and buried, when each New Year comes along, as now. Their time will come when, looking back down the long vista of the dead years, they see the bones of all those broken resolutions, and, realising the pitifulness and the tragedy of it all, they will resolve to resolve no more. But for the present they will resolve. They may feel that they have had the most excellent examples set them. One of the foremost of London business men, who had risen from nothing to affluence, was once asked if he had any special suggestions that he could make in the way of New Year resolutions, and he answered by giving a list of thirty-six of them, the adoption of which in their entirety he heartily recommended. It embraced a very complete code of morals and conduct, but one that would be ultra ideal to most men and quite impracticable. The first article of this New Year code was, 'To be very careful not to do anything to injure my health;' and the last one was, 'To be true to myself;' while in between there were clauses for the strict prohibition of all intoxicants, tobacco, betting, losing of temper, quarrelling, the keeping of irregular hours, and, in fact, all those evils and weaknesses to which frail humanity is ever liable. One fears that in the matter of resolutions there is little safety or satisfaction in numbers and generalities; and a preference may be awarded to the specialist like Mr Will Crooks, the Labour leader, who, when asked to recommend a New Year resolution, said solemnly, 'See to it that the House of Lords is abolished as a legislative assembly.' To the average mind there are not many New Year sentiments that are better recommended than those expressed by Thackeray when he said, 'Who is there so good in mind, body, or estate but bettering won't still be good for him? Oh unknown Fate, presiding over next year, if you will give me better health, a better appetite, a better digestion, a better income, a better temper in '62 than you have bestowed in '61, I think your servant will be the better for the changes.'

* * *

It so happens that in this year of 1910 the leading show of the exhibition order, the display which has come to be a settled annual event—one in which not only London but the country takes some particular interest—is to deal with Japanese matters. We shall be given some close views of Japan as she is at home, how she lives and does her work, and the great variety of her modern interests and her wonderful activities. It goes without saying that the feeling of sympathy on the part of Britain for Japan has been very strong for some years past. The sentiment was at its height at about the time of the war with Russia and for a little while afterwards; whether it is quite so strong at the present time as it was then is a debatable point. Even though we might take the Japanese view in the recent threatened difficulties with the United States, which happily passed off without any unpleasant realisation, yet affairs of this sort tend to bring us to different thoughts on Japan from those which we entertained some ten years ago. She is no longer the plucky little nation fighting bravely for her rights, with enemies



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all about her who, as opportunity offers, will bully her with their superior strength. There are strong and powerful nations with fine instincts who like at such times to extend their kind patronage and sympathy to the little one, and are constantly enthusiastic in their admiration for her. But Japan has long since passed the stage when she welcomes any patronage; and the world in general, while regarding her with good feeling, has, for the most part, come to regard her as a very likely danger of the future—one, indeed, that is almost inevitable, though it may not be her own fault. In London people feel less disposed to go out of their way in these days to display any strong emotions of affection for our Eastern friends, because we see so much of them. It is not long since the Japanese man and woman were curiosities in the streets of the Metropolis; but the influx of these keen, yellow people during the past three or four years has been very marked. Now there are the Japanese everywhere. It very seldom happens that a glance round any of the carriages on the tube railways, in the busy hours when people are going to and returning from the City, will fail to result in the discovery of at least one young Japanese man, always attired in the most conventional English costume and generally studying some work of technical instruction. So we, the natives, have come to realise that these Japanese are swarming into our country for the obvious and undisguised purpose of learning all that they can of our ways and methods of work and manufacture, and then returning to their native land with the view to doing these things as well or better than ourselves, and then, most likely, cutting us out in the markets of the world. That is just the view that the simple Briton takes when he sees the young Japanese sitting opposite to him in the railway carriage, thinking hard over the points that are set before him in the book that he has under examination. However, no great harm is being done, nor will be. Sentiment of a somewhat undiscerning kind has given way to common-sense and a realisation of essential circumstances, and there must be more general satisfaction in such a state.

* * *

But what it is desired specially to point out at this moment is that, by a curious coincidence, there has certainly been a strong wave of sympathy with and interest in all things Russian passing over the town. It is perhaps the first time that such a feeling has been exhibited within living memory, and it is not easy to account for it. That it has existed in reality, and is not merely something of the fancy which has been described at length by some interested persons and bodies in order that what they hoped for might perchance thus be brought into being, there can be no doubt. These waves of sympathy with different foreign countries and people are no new things. There is usually one in every year, and most of the nations have their turn with us. There is no evidence, however, that there has been any artificial creation of our interest in Russia. It has been displayed in many ways. There have been inquiries concerning matters of Russian art and literature, and Russian 'turns' at the better class of places of variety amusement have been numerous and successful; and it is even to be noted that some favour has been extended to Russian dishes that have been served at the restaurants. One fears, however, that there is too great a disparity between ours and the state of Russian advancement and her tastes in general to permit of any considerable assimilation of them by us; and, indeed, almost the only thing Russian—save the beauty of some of the Russian women—to which we can extend any permanent and sincere admiration is Russian music, and of that there is only a little. What we have specially to say, however, is that just when the Russian 'boom' that we have been speaking of became most conspicuous the Russian music held such a place of favouritism in the leading concert-halls as never before. It was actually the case that on one Sunday afternoon, at the concerts that have become such an established and popular feature of life in the Metropolis, the same piece—perhaps the finest of all the Russian classics, Tschaikowsky's sombre and gloomy '1812'—was performed at three different halls, in two cases by orchestra and in the other by violin. We have also had Tschaikowsky concerts, made up of nothing other than music by this composer; and there has been a considerable disposition on the part of the musical public to read up the circumstances of the life of this one and others, such as Glozonoff and Glinka. Much of this Russian music makes a strong appeal to people of Western Europe, accustomed to over-elaboration, by reason of its strength, its simplicity, and its rough grandeur. A touch of the semi-barbaric is splendid in music, as it is not in most other arts. Mentioning the matter kindly, even appreciatively, it has still to be said that Russia is strongly barbaric in comparison with the other nations of Europe. Here and there, from out of the rough mass of Russian humanity, there has occasionally emerged a genius; but according to Western standards, Russia until lately had little in art and literature that appealed to the Western world. In all the circumstances of the case, it is a little puzzling to find out the cause of this wave of sympathy to which reference has been made. It may have originated through the music, or it may be that, with so much evidence about us that we are suffering keenly from the effects of over-civilisation, there is some pleasure and satisfaction in contemplating a European nation that many people regard as more under-civilised than over, and showing some acts of friendliness towards it.

* * *

It was very noticeable that, during the last series of autumnal gatherings of representatives of religious bodies of all kinds and strengths, a leading place was given in the discussions to matters concerning

the state and prospects of our marriage laws, and particularly those relating to divorce. Generally, these discussions were pervaded by a very evident apprehension that changes were pending which, from the religious point of view, would be anything but well, and that even at the present time there were grave evils which needed all the powers of the Christian Churches to counteract them. No sooner have these meetings broken up and the delegates returned to their several homes than there comes the announcement that forthwith a new Royal Commission is appointed, which will sit in consideration on the law of divorce and its administration. It is a very strong Commission; none better qualified to give calm and effective contemplation to such a gravely serious subject as this has ever been appointed. There is the feeling abroad that in the future the marriage tie will inevitably be slacker than it has been in the past, that the state of marriage will be regarded as much less impossible of dissolution, that the facilities for divorce will become much more numerous and easy of application. How far these are desirable ends, and how far otherwise, it is not easy for any impartial observer to determine. One must have a great sympathy with the attitude of the Churches, born of their fear that the sanctity of marriage is being disregarded and soon will be so completely. When the wedded state is recognised as being merely a legal arrangement, however necessary in the interests of the State, the way will be clear for all manner of changes. When marriage is stripped of religious sentiment, and personal attachment of the parties to each other has ceased, it is little enough of a bond that is left. The Churches in their wisdom, and showing fight to the forces that are brought against them, are pleading for the maintenance and the protection of the British home. Their view is simply that those whom God has joined should not be put asunder, and, further, that divorced persons should not be permitted to remarry. It is a question upon which religious and secular feeling is likely to be more sharply divided than any other, and one gathers that there is every probability of its assuming a far more important and public place among the questions of the day in the near future than it has done. Most of those who sympathise very strongly with the Churches' view have yet to realise that just as the hold of the Churches on the great masses of the public, particularly in the large towns, is not so tenacious as it used to be, so also there is an increasing feeling of dissatisfaction at the state of our marriage laws, which, as against the Churches' view, are held to be too strict and unfair and to defeat their own objects. It is sad that it is so, but it is certainly true that—in the large centres of population, at any rate—home-life counts for less, far less, than was once the case. Married life spent in flats and hotels, and the increasing disposition of women (upon which so much comment has been made) towards gaieties and luxuries rather than the fulfilment of more natural obligations, show plainly how this advancement of civilisation, as we call it, is against the home-life and the cultivation of the married state in its best form; and this is proved again by seeing how, in the lonelier country districts, the home-life is so much sounder and the prevailing feeling is so much more in favour of the tightening of the marriage knot rather than of relaxing it.

However, as apart from one view or the other, there are certain facts to which the Commission will give its most serious attention, showing that everything is certainly not well with the laws of marriage in the country where, for all the talk of divorce facilities, it is more difficult to get divorce than in any other. At the present time, unless abject poverty is pleaded, it is not to be got for an expenditure of less than fifty pounds; so that it is beyond the poor person, and one of the duties of the Commission will be to see how far powers may be granted to the County Courts to give it. The really great question, however, is whether it would or would not be better to grant complete divorce in many of those cases where now only an order for separation is allowed. There is something about the separation-order that fails to satisfy any class of persons, whatever may be the general view. It seems to be wrong in principle and in practice; and yet these separation-orders, with all the cruelties and injustices that they inflict, are being granted with the utmost freedom because it is not known what else to do in the circumstances. The Churches are naturally more for the separation-order than the divorce; but it is easy to show that the former is far more conducive to a bad state of things morally. This question is just one more in which the old tenets, the old views, and the old customs that have satisfied the people for generations and centuries are brought up for revision. It is not enough to say to the iconoclasts of the period that what was good enough for our forefathers should be good enough for us. With the times, the manners and views of the people change. Marriage hitherto has been judged chiefly from the points of view of religion and sentiment; there are not wanting those who predict that henceforth there will be an increasing tendency, soon to become an overwhelming one, for it to be judged from the point of view of what is called common-sense and expediency. Did not George Meredith predict, with strong conviction, that at one not far-distant day the conditions of marriage would be entirely changed in the direction of its being allowed for a period —say ten years? It is difficult to contemplate the possibility of such a change with equanimity; but are the tendencies of the time leaning towards it?

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER IV.—HOW AUNT CHARLOTTE CAME TO BE HERSELF.

AUNT CHARLOTTE added little to the comfort of family life, and by the younger members was regarded with distinct disfavour. She was, perhaps, in view of her maternal descent and her upbringing, no more than might have been expected; but she was undoubtedly at times a trial to those about her, and more especially and at all times to the younger folk.

Her mother died when she was five. Her father was immersed in his widening business affairs. Her step-mother would have taken the place of her own mother to her if the child would have permitted. But little Charlotte was unresponsive—self-sufficient even at that age, a characteristic which increased with her years, and which doubtless came in part from the Lauriston blood in her.

The coming of the boys drew her out of herself for a time, and into the family life; but by the time they were five and six, and she twelve, the quarrels among them became so constant that there was nothing for it but school for Charlotte, and at boarding-school she remained until she was eighteen.

The atmosphere in which she lived at school—the fulsome adulation and shameless toadying to the wealthy heiress, who had more money than she knew what to do with, and knew how to get her own way in most things—was enough to turn any girl's head, and Charlotte's case had presented no difficulties.

Charlotte, 'finished' at eighteen—that is, turned out with a certain acquaintance with the polite accomplishments, a modicum of knowledge, and a very large opinion of her own importance—was Charlotte spoiled for life.

Her step-mother was dead. Her half-brothers, George and Charles, were still in the unlicked stage which expresses its likes, and more especially its dislikes, with uncompromising outspokenness. Her father had little time to give to her, and she manifested no particular desire for a larger share of it.

She came out under the chaperonage of her aunt, the Countess of Berrymead, was presented at Court, and soon found that a young lady of fortune was not like to lack suitors while younger sons abounded.

At nineteen she had had half-a-dozen offers of marriage, and from among them chose for her future husband the Hon. James Moyle, second son of the Earl of Molesey. Then Lord Henry Peto came along. There were only three lives between him and the dukedom, and to the everlasting disappointment of his old creditors and the enragement of his new ones, the Hon. James found himself out in the cold.

But presently he was chuckling over Miss Charlotte's own discomfiture. For Lord Henry meted out to her exactly equal treatment by marrying half a million in cash and a large and increasing income from a brewery, and, incidentally, the young person to whom these things appertained.

Charlotte, smarting under the rebuff, withdrew from society, and gradually settled down to a life of single blessedness, or otherwise, travelling occasionally on the Continent with her maid Honeybun, and living when in London at her father's great house in Grosvenor Place, where she had her own apartments and could do pretty much as she pleased.

When Charles married Mary Hamilton, Sir George insisted on the young people living there also. There Charles and Mavie were born, and there they and their mother lived very happily with the old man while Captain Charles was away with his regiment in Holland and elsewhere.

Mary Hamilton, as I have said, was a notable beauty, but her face was not the only or most beautiful thing about her. She had a sweet, strong nature, and a sympathetic charm of manner that captivated even Aunt Charlotte. As for Sir George and brother George, they simply worshipped her.

It was only after her long illness that Captain Charles bought the house on Castle Bear Hill, at Ealing, in the hope that the country air and quiet might help her back to health. And there, for the past three years, she had spent seven months out of the twelve, returning to Grosvenor Place only when the long, dark nights made the closer society of town preferable to the loneliness of the country.

Captain Lauriston spent his Sundays there without fail, and rode over as frequently as possible between times, sometimes every day in the week; and, so far, being always well armed and known as a fighting-man, he had suffered no molestation from the footpads and highwaymen who infested the outskirts of the City and the suburbs. Sir George came down from time to time, and Aunt Charlotte, under the mistaken belief that her presence was a comfort and assistance to her sister-in-law, came over also and stopped for weeks at a time, greatly to the dispiritment of the younger folk, who detested her most cordially—all except Etienne, and for that exception in her favour there was good and ample reason.

## CHAPTER V.—HOW THE MARQUIS CAME TO QUEEN STREET.

UST five years before, there walked into Lauriston's bank one cold morning an elderly French gentleman of short stature, thin, clean-shaven face, immaculate clothing which had seen better days, and most elegant manners. He was accompanied by a peaky-faced boy of seven, whose large black eyes still held the scare of unwonted sights.

Would monsieur the head of the bureau have the extreme kindness to procure for monsieur an interview with Sir George Lauriston?

'What name, sir?' asked old John Sax, who had been casting them up in his mind.

'The Marquis de Montessonne—from Paris.' And John Sax was back in a moment, begging the marquis to follow him into Sir George's private office.

'You are from Paris, M. le Marquis?' said the banker, eying his visitor keenly from under his bushy gray penthouses.

'We left there three days ago, monsieur. It is all over,' said the old gentleman quietly with an inimitable gesture of finality in the flicker of his white hands.

'You saw it?'

'With my own eyes. May the good God, whom they deny, requite it to them to the last drop!'

'We had the news, but could not credit it. Where are you getting to over there? What is to be the end?'

'They are no longer men; they are wild beasts—devils. Before long they will turn and rend one another. Then we others shall come to our own again. Their bodies will make the soil fruitful.'

'And the Queen?'

As to the Queen, M. le Marquis could only raise his arms and drop them in unutterable expression.

'And yourself, M. le Marquis?'

'I shall wait here. There is no safety but in England. What little I saved from the wreckage has gone for the cause, all but some jewels. They may suffice. It cannot be long.'

The banker nodded. In view of the monstrous past, the future was beyond any man's forecasting.

'And this—is?' and he looked at the peaky-faced boy with the scared black eyes.

'My grandson. His father died at Jemappes.'

'You will permit me to do what I can for you while you are here?' At which M. le Marquis bowed very elegantly. 'Have you fixed on a residence?'

'We arrived only an hour ago. Can you advise? It must be not too costly. In fact'——

'John Sax can help us there.' And John Sax, summoned, suggested, after deliberation, that if the marquis would partake of the hospitality of his house in Queen Street, Westminster, for a few days it would afford him time to look about him.

And the marquis and his grandson had lived with the Saxes ever since. After the terrible times of upsetting through which they had passed, the quiet sanctuary in Queen Street was grateful to them.

Before the proceeds of the trifling salvage of his fortunes were exhausted, M. le Marquis bestirred himself to find pupils in the French language; and his standing, and the elegance of his manners, procured him a sufficiency of engagements to keep himself and the boy in simple comfort. They paid for their rooms and their living, though it is not likely that the price they paid would have procured them equal comfort and consideration anywhere else within a radius of twenty miles.

Sir George, who had met the marquis on one occasion at the French Court when across there on business, would have assisted him in money matters. But the old gentleman, with a delicate sense of the doubt which must attach to his future fortunes in all minds but his own, declined all such help, and occupied the higher position among his new friends in consequence.

Sir George exerted himself to procure him pupils, and invariably invited him to the grand dinners he gave from time to time at his house in Grosvenor Place, and on such occasions the marquis justified his friend by the quiet elegance of his attire—which was invariably black, tastefully relieved by priceless lace, however—and by the grave dignity of his deportment and conversation.

The City and financial magnates, and even His Majesty's Ministers, who at times graced the banker's board, found endless entertainment in the old courtier's vivid and terrible accounts of life in France before and during the catastrophe. He came to be well known and highly esteemed for the quiet grace with which he confronted the evil times. His circle of acquaintance extended. He might, if he would, have dined out every night in the week, and sometimes did so, for he loved society, and the courtesies extended to him palliated to some extent the grievous misfortunes under which he suffered.

Whether at home or abroad, in the simple ménage in Queen Street, or with patient long-suffering imparting to dull heads and bungling tongues the niceties of his beloved language, or mixing as an equal in the gay *salons* of the wealthy, he was always the same—quiet, suave, polished, with a grace of manner and ease of deportment which the Prince himself could not excel, reserved if anything, but genial and easy to converse with when such was desired of him, and at times cynically bitter regarding the parodies of humanity who paraded before the eyes of an astonished world as the representatives of the *grande nation*.

True to the pledge he had given on Dunkirk sands, Captain Lauriston had insisted on under-

taking the education of little John Sax. Charlie Lauriston and he were the same age within a week, Charlie's birthday being the 18th of June and Jack's the 25th. They commenced their school career at the academy of Mr Wrather, in Little Chapel Street, on the same day, and were inseparable chums—except, indeed, in their classes, for there Charles went ahead like the proverbial hare, while Jack, the tortoise, plodded stolidly in the rear; what he learned, however, he learned very thoroughly and knew it for life, and by dint of honest hard work attained fair positions in his classes, of which Charlie was generally the head.

When Etienne came to live in Queen Street, his grandfather, determined he should make the best use of his time, came to an arrangement with Mr Wrather which gave his grandson the advantages of the school and the school the advantages of tuition in French by the Marquis de Montessonne—an arrangement which, in its preliminary stages, caused Etienne no little discomfort.

But that soon wore down under the tactful management of M. de Montessonne. He succeeded in the almost impossible task of winning the boys' regard by his genial courtesy and an occasional dip into recent history across Channel, as seen by an eye-witness at risk of his life. The lads came to esteem him for what he had gone through and his manner of bearing it, and their liking for the old man sufficed at times almost to cover the discrepancies of Etienne.

Charlie Lauriston and John Sax stood by the peaky-faced one manfully as one of themselves; but their loyalty suffered cracking strain at times by reason of the French boy's whimsicalities of behaviour and outlook. His training at home had been purely priestly, and the influence of the priest never yet made for those niceties of schoolboy honour which flourish in the British boy's heart so much more lustily than does, as a rule, the desire for learning.

Etienne doubtless had his own code of morals and his own point of view. But they were not precisely of the English pattern, and he had many a bad quarter of an hour.

Charlie and Jack stood up for him when they could; but at times, and when occasion seemed to justify it, Charlie would say, 'He must just take his licking. It'll do him good. What queer beggars Frenchmen are!' And it was no easy matter to explain to Etienne why they would fight for him one day and not another, the minute ethical differences in his conduct being hidden from him by his nature and training. As he got more into English ways, however, and by dint of very many thrashings, his mental obliquities began to straighten out, and life became somewhat less ignominious and forlorn for him.

It was through the constant association with Etienne and M. de Montessonne at home that John Sax acquired that knowledge of French, and the still more difficult faculty of speaking it not like an Englishman and not altogether unlike a Frenchman, which in due time was to stand him in such good stead and to make so mightily for his happiness and increase.

Mavie had not yet begun schooling. So far her mother and Hepsy, and an unusually bright and active mind, had sufficed her. She assimilated knowledge from all about her as a plant drinks in the air and sunshine and transforms them into things of visible beauty. Old Jerry was her very special crony, and from him she drew vast stores of information of a most remarkable kind. For Jerry had seen and done much in his wandering life, and the simple facts were enough to fill the small girl's mind to overflowing, without any embroidery of imagination, of which both he and she possessed full share.

The boys were out of school for a time by reason of a most propitious and delectable outbreak of measles, at the importation of which into the monotonous curriculum of the middle of a working term they and Mavie rejoiced exceedingly, and ceased not to invoke blessings on the head of the unconscious benefactor of his fellows.

Captain Lauriston ordered the youngsters to Ealing forthwith, and would not hear of any discrimination between them. The house was large, the change would be beneficial to them all, and Mavie, he knew, would rejoice in their company.

And so they revelled in the loosening of their shackles and the freedom of the country-side, within strictly defined and, as they learned by experience, very necessary bounds. For on two occasions, before limits were imposed, Charles and Mavie, wandering free, had fallen on trouble which might have had serious results—once through capture by a band of gipsies, from whom they were only rescued after a whole night's detention by a passing horse-patrol, attracted to their evil case by the lusty signals of distress which Charlie managed to evolve before his mouth was closed by blows—which night caused their mother agonies of apprehension and a corresponding lapse in health; and the second time from a savage attack upon them by a footpad, whom they had unwittingly disturbed in his lair in a thicket near Alperton. There were many such about, for the country was in a state of chaotic distress, and Charlie bore the marks of that encounter for many a day.

Thereafter they were restricted to the meadows along the home-side of the Brent, which allowed them ample scope and yet were within view of the house on Castle Bear. Whence Mavie's wrath at Etienne's breaking of bounds and of the rules of the game, more, perhaps, from his daring to go where she was not permitted than from any innate love of bounds and rules; and Etienne's not unreasonable fear lest their general trespass should come to the ears of his grandfather, and result in an abrupt termination of his visit.

*(To be continued.)*

# A QUEENSLAND ISLAND.

By Dr J. P. Wilson, Melbourne.

MAGNETIC ISLAND lies on the nineteenth parallel of south latitude, and is therefore well within the protection of that Great Barrier Reef which breaks the long swell of the Pacific tides. 'The island was so named,' says Captain Cook in his famous diary, 'because the compass did not traverse well when they were near it.' Modern observation, however, has not confirmed this alleged eccentricity. The area of the island is about twenty-four square miles, and its triangular mass is wedged into the mouth of Cleveland Bay, whereon Townsville is built, with the mining centre of Charters Towers some miles inland.

Magnetic Island is vertebrated by a granite range, seamed with veins of quartz and dolerite, indicative of precious metals. Pines and more indigenous trees crown the hills. Patches of corn and vegetables, plantations of pine-apples, papaws, and grenadillos, straggle along the flats; but the greater part of the lowlands is still covered waist-high with tussocky grass, reeds, and scrub, fearfully suggestive to the new chum, as he wades through it, of snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and loathsome reptiles in general. Yet some day these flats will fatten droves of cattle and be studded with homesteads. A bush-fire amid this rank growth is a thrilling spectacle. The flame curls in spirals up the trunks of the palms, and then bursts into a nimbus of light around their feathery tops. The coast is indented with inlets whose beaches are glowing sand, fringed with she-oaks and ringed off from the interior by hillocks of gigantic boulders. Two distinct chains of coral-reef encircle the shores of the island. The closer reef is exposed with every tide, and from it beautiful specimens of coral may easily be gathered; but it is only at particularly low water that the jagged edges of the outer reef protrude above the sea.

About forty men, women, and children live permanently on the island; but in summer hundreds of gasping citizens rush over from the mainland in search of cooler air. A tent or hut of corrugated iron, with a door at each end but without a window, affords sleeping-space; but even at midwinter eighteen hours daily may be spent in the open. In June the sea-waters are pleasantly warm for bathing or wading; the coarse, hard sand of the beach makes an agreeable promenade for after-dinner strolls; oysters may be torn from the rocks at low tide; the pools are swarming with mullet, rock-cod, and garfish. In a flat-bottomed punt one may pull lazily to a shady nook to read or fish or look down into lovely gardens of many-hued coral, in which huge sea-anemones blossom and gaudy fish disport themselves. Inland there are hills to climb, gorges to explore, waterfalls to admire. Gorgeous butterflies rise before us in clouds; bright-plumaged parrots, green-crested white cockatoos, and leatherheads make the woodlands sonorous with their several varieties of screech; whilst white and blue herons, gulls, hawks, and eagles keep nearer the shore. Wallaby, goats, and pigs run wild amongst the gullies.

The views from the higher land are magnificently picturesque. Looking towards the mainland, one sees to the left the sombre cliffs of Cape Cleveland, and far away the blue outlines of Mount Elliott; the red sandstone of Magazine Hill and the ridges with the Townsville buildings lie in front; the leonine curves of Castle Hill are the background to these, and taper gracefully down to Kissing Point on our right. Turning round, we look over the expanse of Magnetic Island, set in an emerald sea, wherein, in the dim distance, Palm Island and many a similar jewel are shining.

Even the most lethargic of men or women, however, may, from a beach-seat, gaze on scenes of marvellous beauty at each successive hour of the twenty-four. At the first touch of dawn snowy clouds are seen to twine about the peaks, like folds of gauze round an Eastern woman's head; the sea is dark green; the landscape blurred by rising mist or mountain shadows. When day really breaks, the cloud-veil becomes a crown upon the head of a verdant hill; the valleys are flooded with sunlight; the sea shades off into a silver-blue wherein adjacent heights are purely mirrored; lace-like falls and shining streams are on every side revealed; the twitter of birds, the hum of insect-life, the low of beast begin. A third transformation may, in a twinkling, let loose a cyclone to churn the waters into ink, and shut off both hill and vale from view. But it is just after sunset that the boldest, yet most harmonious, colouring is to be seen. The open waters of the bay then become resplendent with a delicate, flesh-like pink glow; nearer shore the surface is alternately deep green and light blue. The land lends the bold dark grays of the granite, flanked with red masses of sandstone; whilst the eastern hills infuse a pale-blue tone into this glare. Above, the glorious iridescence of the western sky dominates the colour-scheme with a brilliancy which no impressionist has ever dared to imitate. But soon all this colour fades into a uniform gray, the stars come out, the sea is phosphorescent, the hills tower gloomily overhead, the rocks twist themselves into columned temples, the trees are nodding sentinels; only the lap of the tide, the bell-note of a frightened bird, or the sigh of the fresh south breeze breaks in on Nature's repose. We, too, sleep.

# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.

## CHAPTER IV.

The Shadow, cloak'd from head to foot,
Who keeps the keys of all the creeds.

AN hour later two Finns were standing beside the unlit bonfire at the top of the ridge.

'"Tis a steep climb on the Forgotten Rock, Erik,' said one of them, wiping his brow and panting; 'and you and I are older than when first we lit the Kokko fire together.'

'Every climb, ay, most things grow more difficult as we grow older. 'Tis easier to go downhill now,' said Erik; 'but the Rock is forgotten all the year round, save when we light the beacon on the Eve of Saint John. Our sons shall light it when we are at rest, let us hope, and their sons after them.'

'It is so,' nodded the other; 'it is so. But let us waste no time, for we must sail back in time to see the young folks dance.'

He lit a match and held it to the cut brushwood round the pile. The dry branches crackled and blazed, the two men watching the flames rising. Then Erik produced a flask of corn-brandy.

'Summer always with you, friend Mattias!' he said. 'With you also!' said Mattias; and the two old friends pledged each other.

'Look! let us hasten back!' said Mattias. He pointed to the points of flame in the distance, where the Kokko fires were kindled, ruddy dots in answering signals to each other along the coast. The two men had just begun the descent, when Mattias almost stumbled over the rope tied to the pine-trunk.

'See! A rope! A gun and knapsack! I know them, Erik! They are the tall Englishman's from the steamer.'

The Finnish peasant is not given to unnecessary speech. The two men looked stolidly at the rope for a minute; then they hauled it slowly in hand over hand until the stone appeared at the cliff's edge.

'Heliga Jungfrun, Erik! Something may have happened! The Englishman must have gone away, intending to return.'

'Nay, I think not, for the large Scottish captain told me that his ship would surely sail to-morrow.' He paused and looked at his friend. 'Time was when we would have gone up and down the rope like squirrels on a fir-tree; but now'——

'Let us hurry back to the ship, and if the Englishman is there all is well! If not'—— He pointed down the cleft, and shrugged his shoulders, and together they hurried down the slope, manned their little boat, and headed for the *Covesea*. Her deck was empty when they came in sight, save for Flett's big form leaning over the rail. He met them at the gangway, and Mattias's first question roused him. No; the English gentleman was not on board. What! Could Mattias not speak Swedish? Yes! Ah, that was better. Gradually he got the gist of the man's story, and in a trice he was beside the chief engineer.

'We've jist *got* to take the loan of the quarry's steam-launch, Mac,' he said, pointing to the little vessel, and rapidly gave him the bones of the Finns' information. Then he hurried forward and brought back a block and tackle. They jumped into the launch, followed by Mattias and Erik, and the launch fussed out of the bay, the captain steering.

'Let her rip,' said he, 'if you've to rattle the bolts out of her!' The engineer nodded. Every plank shook as she tore through the water. No one spoke, the captain drumming an impatient tattoo as he watched the goal draw nearer. The engineer took the last inch of speed out of her, and she ran swiftly to the Forgotten Rock under the guidance of Mattias in the bow, and into a rock-lined alley of smooth water. Flett was out in an instant, up to his knees in water, the block and tackle under his arm, shouting for the others to follow, outdistancing them easily, clambering over rocks, swinging round the trees, breaking into a run on the more level ground, going straight up without a look behind. When the others reached the crest, sweating and panting, he had already fixed the block and tackle to the tree. He pointed to the cleft's edge.

'I'm going down. I'll signal you when to haul,' he said, and swung himself over, out of sight.

The sun was now low down on the horizon, and the cleft half-lit and chilly. When his feet touched the ground he paused to recover his breath and listened. Some one was talking in a soft, childish voice, a thin treble laugh stealing along the cleft in a whinnying echo. Flett called a hoarse 'Hallo, there!' and waited. His voice reverberated along the cleft, but the quiet voice talked on, ignoring him. The sound of it was quite near him, round a spur of rock. He stepped on tiptoe forward, peered round it, and stood stock-still, frozen with horror and astonishment, staring at Westwater, who was half-lying, half-sitting opposite the grinning skeleton. One of its hands was in his, the handkerchief off its head, the thing wearing its fixed smile. Westwater's face was ghastly, blood on his lips, as he spoke to it in a whisper.

'Dick, waken up! You'll die in the snow if you don't. We'll get them across to Amsterdam, Dick! Eighty thousand golden sovereigns, Dick! Eighty thousand! Come, we must hurry. What a time I've had since the *Dark Rosaleen* night! They thought all the earths were stopped. But they were all at fault.' Then he sang in a child's treble, swinging the dead arm to the tune:

'There's only one cure for all maladies sure
That touches the heart to its core,
'Tis the sound of a horn on a fine huntin' morn——

Hounds were called off after a good run, eh? A good run!' He gave a dreadful, hollow laugh.

The skipper stepped forward and laid a gentle hand on his shoulder. Westwater slowly dropped the skeleton's hand, looking up at him without knowledge in his wide-open dark eyes, lowering them slowly to the belt on the ground, fastening them on it in a steely, idolatrous glare.

'Look, Ninette! Look!' he whispered, and began to unfasten the belt.

A nameless dread seized the other man as he listened and watched him groping in the half-world of his delirium.

'Look! Eighty thousand! Pigeon's-bloods, every one of them. For you, Ninette!'

He held his hands cupped together, and bent as if to kiss the something in them, greed and triumph in his eyes. Flett drew a long breath in amazement, for there—interchanging countless lambent lights, aglow with life and fire, as though the warm blood throbbed and raced in them, beautiful, alluring, joyous—lay a little pyramid of magnificent pigeon's-blood rubies. Westwater turned them over lovingly, half-childishly, whispering to himself. Delicate spurs of violet radiated from his cupped hands, twinkled into hyacinth, into purple, melted again mysteriously, crumbling into the living, trembling carmine of the rubies, bewildering gems, fit to shine on the white throat of Titania. He took up the belt again, their ruddy light sending shafts through the darkening cleft as he replaced them, and buckled the belt round his waist. Then he gave a deep sigh and closed his eyes, as one tired and bent on sleep.

Flett bent over him, shaking his head as he saw the ugly wound on the skull. The fallen rock beside him told its own story. The captain steeled his nerves, set his jaw firm, and came close to the skeleton. He looked carefully around it, finding nothing except a pipe, the rags of clothes, and the rat-gnawed shoes. He took off the belt from Westwater's unconscious form, buckling it round his own waist for safety. Then he fastened the rope-gear securely under Westwater's armpits, signalled to the anxious waiting men at the top, and with a sailor's handiness climbed up by the other rope, reaching the top at the same moment as the unconscious man.

'Dooms bad!' he said to the engineer as they laid their burden on the ground. The flames of the Kokko fire leaped and danced round them. There was silence for a moment.

'We must get him to the ship,' said Flett with a break in his voice. 'He'll no' last till mornin', an' there's no' a doctor within seeventy mile.'

The four men slowly, foot by foot, carried him down the slope to the launch. He neither opened his eyes nor spoke; but for his heavy breathing he might have passed for a dead man. They reached the *Covesea* at midnight, around them the wonderful white night of Finland, with its magic, tender light, not of night, not of day, to southern eyes almost theatrical in its effect, the flush of evening merging imperceptibly into, joining hands with, the dawn; the mirrored isles lying in serenity, their outlines softened; no sensuous colouring, as in a tropic night, but over all a cloudless dome of sky, of the clarity of an English noon, with an added mysterious peaceful beauty; the hush and the infinite distances edging the nerves, striking hidden notes of waiting and expectancy. Flanked by the green arras of the woods, the long line of the fires of Midsummer's Eve a twinkling gigantic chain of footlights, in the dead stillness, in the absence of a shadow, of a single star, it seemed as though Some One had rung up the curtain on a speck of poor human incident, trivial, infinitesimal, miserably out of scale on the vast Olympic stage.

*(To be concluded next month.)*

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### PRINTING WITHOUT INK.

THE huge modern printing-press requires type and ink, as did the early inventor's crude hand-press; and there has been no radical departure from the process as used by Caxton. Now, however, an invention has been perfected, and rendered commercially possible, which promises to revolutionise the whole printing industry. It dispenses entirely with ink and its attendant intricate distributing mechanism. The process is entirely electrical. One electrical pole is connected with the forme of type, and the other pole with the platen which carries the paper and presses it against the type or block to be printed. The result of the impression is that a clear imprint of the characters is obtained. The process is extremely simple, and dispenses, furthermore, with a considerable amount of the essential preliminaries in printing operations described as 'making ready.' Normally the imprint thus obtained is a sharply defined dense black, as is usually required; but, if desired, any requisite tint can be obtained. This latter development is probably the greatest feature of the process, for it renders colour-printing extremely simple. Instead of there being a certain delay between the red, blue, and yellow printing, as is now essential to permit the successive coats of applied pigment to dry, the three impressions can be made instantly after one another. For ordinary newspaper-printing the invention possesses great possibilities. It eliminates one-fourth of the complicated mechanism of the press—the ink-rolls and ducts—so that the dimensions

of the machine can be considerably reduced. Moreover, a heavy source of expense is eliminated, as the ink represents a certain outlay, while the ink-rolls require frequent repair. There is a complete absence of smudging, as, there being no deposit upon the paper, there is no extraneous matter to rub, as is the case with pigment. The process is applicable to the finest grades of art-work and block-printing, and a booklet that has been printed by the inventor by this means is far superior to the product of ordinary manufacture. Very little current is required to bring about the desired impression; and it can be made darker or lighter, as required, by increasing or decreasing the strength of the electric current. To bring about this end efficiently and easily, the inventor has devised a special type of resistance whereby the flow of the current is controlled as easily and as delicately as the flow of a fluid through a pipe by means of a tap. The manipulation of the process calls for no electrical skill, and a boy can work it. Another valuable feature is that the question of repulping waste is solved. Under present conditions the waste cannot be repulped to render it available for further printing operations, as the removal of the ink is a difficult stumbling-block. In the electrical process, however, the 'waste' is merely immersed at the paper-mills in vats containing a certain prepared and cheap solution, which causes the impression produced by the electric current to disappear, and, after repulping, the paper can be used again. In the course of private demonstrations carried out before the writer, the simplicity of the process was strikingly apparent. Even a coin laid upon the paper and slightly pressed leaves a clear impression. It may also be pointed out that the process involves no wear and tear upon the type or metallic surface of the block, and that no action is set up by the passage of the electric current.

### A NEW PERISCOPE.

Since the British submarine was run down in the Solent by the *Berwick Castle*, owing to the helmsman of the former not observing the approach of the latter, efforts have been made to improve the periscope, which is the eye of the underwater craft. The disadvantage of the old instrument is that it only gives the view of a partial field—that directly and immediately ahead—of the sea; consequently the observer is in ignorance as to what is approaching from behind or on either side of him. In the new instrument a decided improvement has been effected, in that the view is a continuous panorama of the whole of the area around the submarine. This complete circular view has been ingeniously achieved by a new arrangement of the lenses, and the image is projected on the eyepiece with striking definition of detail and luminosity up to a range of about eight miles. The Admiralty have tested the device, and have been so impressed with its advantages that they suggested certain improvements to accommodate the instrument to the new developments of naval warfare incidental to the introduction of the *Dreadnought* class, by increasing its range of vision up to thirteen miles.

### CURE FOR SNAKE-BITES.

Though venomous snakes are not often to be found in these islands, occasionally a snake-bite terminates fatally. In Austria, however, the position is vastly different, for the country is so overrun with the reptiles that they are regarded almost with fear by the inhabitants. The Government endeavoured to cope with the situation, and urged the residents in the rural districts to spare no effort to bring about their eradication, at the same time giving valuable information as to the habits of these undesirable pests and the best way in which to subdue them. In order to stimulate the co-operation of the peasants, a reward is offered for every snake killed. Some idea of the extent to which the country is infested may be gathered from the fact that in 1908 no less than two hundred and seventy-three thousand snakes were destroyed, of which all but four thousand belonged to venomous species. To aid the rural inhabitants in their warfare, the Government authorities have supplied a simple appliance whereby, in the case of a bite, the possibility of a fatal result is reduced to the minimum. This instrument comprises a small knife wherewith the wound of a bite is immediately enlarged, and in the cut thus formed a concentrated solution of permanganate of potassium is injected, as medical research has shown that the poisonous effect of the venom, in the great majority of cases, can be negatived thereby. That such a precaution is valuable is borne out by the fact that out of the one hundred and forty cases of snake-bites reported in 1908, only six proved fatal. The efficiency of this simple remedy has greatly reassured the peasants, who now display no signs of fear in seeking to exterminate this formidable foe.

### ECONOMICAL HOUSE-HEATING.

At the present moment considerable discussion prevails concerning ways and means to bring about smoke-abatement and a purer, clearer air; but so long as the domestic fire-grate holds sway the problem will be well-nigh impossible of solution. Attempts are now being made to educate the Briton towards the use of anthracite, for which special grates are required. In so doing, careful regard is paid to the general feeling for a 'sight of the fire,' as the stoves are provided with special means therefor. The grate is completely enclosed, for anthracite will not burn in an open stove. If preferred, however, gas-coke may be used with the same success. The stove fits into the front of the ordinary grate, and recalls the asbestos gas-stoves once so extensively used despite their deleterious effects upon the health. The front of the grate is glazed with mica, so that the glowing contents within are plainly visible. The stove is lit in the usual manner, or it may be set going with a shovelful of hot cinders drawn from another fire. When

thoroughly lighted, it is only necessary to charge the stove with a supply of fuel, and this will last for twelve or twenty-four hours. The heat which is radiated is intense, and owing to the disposition of the grate, the whole of this comfort is diffused within the room and does not escape up the chimney, which only carries off the harmful products of combustion. There is also a movable bottom, which can be agitated in order to stir up the fire or rake it from the outside. As the stove is completely enclosed, no dust can possibly enter the room, so that every requirement of cleanliness is fully met. Owing to the fuel burning without the slightest sign of smoke, the chimney does not become clogged with partially consumed carbon in the form of soot, so that sweeping is saved. The fire draws in the cold air from the room near the floor, and sheds it into the apartment again from the top, so that a constant current is circulating. Windows can be opened without any fear of draughts or propelling dense clouds of smoke and fumes into the room. As regards fuel-consumption, the stove is exceedingly economical, the cost approximating a penny three farthings per twenty-four hours. For heating a bedroom or sickroom this stove is superexcellent, as it successfully solves the question of maintaining an even temperature without any feeling of 'stuffiness.' Moreover, it overcomes the difficulty of keeping the house delightfully warm day and night; for it requires no attention when once charged, and indeed, when ignited at the commencement of the winter, need never be permitted to go out for weeks at a time. The stoves are of British manufacture, and are prepared in a wide and pleasing variety of designs, so that the most fastidious can be satisfied in regard to appearance.

### SUBSTITUTE FOR PNEUMATIC TIRES.

Under Engineering Notes in the *Times* it is mentioned that a Chicago inventor has recently brought out a device which tests so far made seem to promise will take the place of the pneumatic tire for automobiles and similar vehicles. The essential element is a volute spring, the inner coil of which is attached to the axle, and which is enclosed in a case within the wheel-hub. The axle is stationary and the wheel revolves upon it. The spring-case and the inner periphery of the hub are concentric, and between the two is a series of rollers forming a roller-bearing for the entire depth of the hub. Play for the axle under the compression of the spring is afforded by slots four and a half inches deep in the outer and inner coverings of the spring-case in which the squared end of the axle moves up and down according to load. The claims made for the device from a commercial standpoint are that hard rubber tires cost only about one-tenth as much as pneumatic tires; that they will last several years on ordinary roads, while the life of pneumatic tires is uncertain, but commonly does not exceed one season; and that the volute spring can be replaced in case of breakage as easily as a tire, and can be carried in reserve in a small fraction of the space required for a reserve tire. The outer coil of the spring is about seven inches in diameter, and the inner coil is squared to fit the axle.

### COMBINED TURBINE AND ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE.

Mr Hugh Reid, of Glasgow, the controlling spirit of one of our foremost locomotive-manufacturing establishments, recently announced before a Scottish engineering audience that his firm had evolved a new locomotive from which far-reaching results were expected. It is described as the first steam-turbine-electric locomotive. Steam is raised in an ordinary locomotive type of boiler, and is led therefrom to an impulse-turbine making three thousand revolutions per minute, directly coupled to a continuous-current variable-voltage dynamo or generator. This dynamo, in turn, furnishes electric current which drives a series of electric motors mounted on the driving-axles of the engine. The steam, after performing its allotted task, is condensed and returned again to the locomotive boiler. Such an engine, as may be realised, possesses many new and novel features, and it may be mentioned that the evolution of this design has occupied several years of ceaseless experiment and investigation of many abstruse problems. In this latest invention it is claimed that all previous disadvantages have been entirely overcome, and the preliminary trials with the first engine built on these new lines will be awaited with the greatest interest, for its practical success will solve one of the most perplexing problems in traction that confronts engineers and railway shareholders to-day.

### A NOVEL WINDOW-FASTENER.

The ease with which the ordinary type of fastener in sliding-sash windows can be forced from the outside, merely by the insertion of a knife or other thin-bladed tool, is only too well realised. Numerous efforts towards devising a more secure method of fastening the two parts of the window have been made, but the complicated nature and expense of these devices have militated against their commercial development. One inventor, however, has devised a fastener which is certainly novel and fulfils all demands for simplicity. There are two spring attachments mortised into the side of each sash. The top half of the window is worked by a cord which, when pulled, releases a locking device combined with the spring, allowing the window to be pulled down as far as desired. When the cord is released the window locks itself in that position, and can neither be pushed up nor down from the outside. As the locking is accomplished at intervals of a quarter of an inch throughout the whole length of the travel of the sash, a delicate adjustment of the window-opening is possible. The bottom half of the window is operated by means of an ordinary slip-bolt, the only difference being that it has to be pulled back instead of pushed forward to permit of the movement of the sash. Whereas the window can be pushed up and down easily from the inside,

it can only be pushed down or closed from the outside. The device is very positive in its action; and provided it can be supplied and fitted at a low price, comparing favourably with the ordinary type of fastener, it should meet with a widespread demand, for it offers an ingenious protection against those of burglarious intent effecting an entrance through the window.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELECTROPHONE.

The success of the electrophone in connection with Lord Rosebery's Budget speech in Glasgow, which was reported verbatim by reporters sitting in a newspaper office in London, was most remarkable. Repetitions have been called for, and already the possibility of the electrophone ultimately supplanting the telegraph in the distribution of news is being discussed. At Mr Balfour's Birmingham meeting the electrophone played a part of pathetic interest. Using it, Mr Chamberlain in his enforced seclusion keenly followed the words from the platform he gladly would have shared. The principle of the electrophone is simply that of the telephone; but as the speaker does not address himself directly to the apparatus, a number of transmitters are specially arranged to catch the sound-waves. In the Glasgow City Hall, for example, a small stand was used for the transmitters in front of Lord Rosebery's desk. Draped with silk, it distracted the attention of no one. For theatrical performances the transmitters are fixed along the line of footlights. In every case all the transmitters are connected to a common circuit, so that the varying electric currents resulting from the vibrations representing human speech act in unison upon the distant receivers. As a precaution against failures due to line faults, two circuits are appropriated for use; and operators are able to switch from one to the other when any imperfection is noticeable. What if both circuits were simultaneously interrupted? The possibility of this is the weakness of the electrophone system. A telegram can be repeated, an oration cannot. But the end is not yet.

### THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN WATER-TUBE BOILERS.

During the past few years the generation of steam by means of water-tube boilers, both for land and marine purposes, has undergone extensive application. The latest development in this sphere of activity is the 'Suckling' boiler, which possesses many outstanding features, the principal of which are extreme simplicity in design and construction, perfect circulation throughout every part, and large evaporation per square foot of gross heating-area. Moreover, the large external surface adds appreciably to the efficiency of the boiler, while the great radiation from the brickwork ensures smokeless combustion. The boiler comprises the two cylindrical drums for the water and steam, between which are vertically disposed the series of tubes connecting one drum with the other. Owing to the connecting-tubes being straight, and expanded into the two drums in such a way that their extremities are not constricted, the steam has the greatest facility for its escape from the tubes without any signs of steam-pocketing, which is a serious evil in this class of steam-raiser. At the extremities of the two drums are large tubular connections, the uptake being at the front end (where the hottest temperatures prevail), and the downcomer outside the furnace at the rear end, which is practically cool. Complete circulation is thus obtained. The steam produced is absolutely dry, and as the tubes are set at right angles to the path of the hot gases, the maximum heating-efficiency is obtained. The boiler can be easily cleaned and any tube withdrawn with facility when required. The vertical disposition of the latter offers certain protection against scale or clogging by impurities. The boiler can be used with any class of fuel, and the high figure of 6·72 pounds of water evaporated per square foot of gross heating-surface is recorded. Two of these boilers were recently shipped to South America, and are now working successfully at an Andine silver-mine, sixteen thousand feet above sea-level. Such a test in itself is supreme, for at that altitude the question of oxygen-supply in the rarefied air, necessary to bring about perfect combustion, is one of considerable difficulty.

### A CINEMATOGRAPH TARGET.

'Shoot straight and quickly' has long been regarded as an axiom in military circles, and in order that the marksman may develop this capacity to the fullest degree an ingenious target has been devised. The rifle-range is equipped with a cinematograph, placed behind and above the marksman, the rapidly moving pictures being projected upon a large opaque screen, backed by a recording-screen. The class of pictures projected bring the marksman face to face with a foe firing point-blank, such as an approaching scout or burglar shielding himself behind a desk. The marksman follows the incidents portrayed, and at the critical moment, when the opponent raises or shows himself to fire, discharges his rifle. The idea is to enable the rifleman to take his aim quickly and surely, and, at the same time, to fire before the man pictured on the screen. By means of the tell-tale behind the sheet, the marksman can ascertain whether he has hit his target-foe in a vulnerable part of his anatomy or only inflicted an injury. Owing to the rapidity and life-like movement of the scenes depicted, the straight and quick shooting capacity of the marksman is tested far more severely than is possible upon ordinary ranges with the existing type of moving figures.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

# THE CUXBERY DIAMONDS.

By B. Paul Neuman.

## I.

GODFREY BULLIATT, M.P., was, as all Eastnorshire knew, the owner of Carples Hall and the big estate that surrounded it. He had not made his money in steel or pork or oil; but he was a substantial, prosperous county gentleman, born into a good social position, and possessed of sufficient wealth to maintain it. He was M.P. for the southern division of the county. The family traditions were Liberal; but Godfrey Bulliatt had refused the Home Rule leap, and had retained his seat by the votes of those who until then had been his political opponents. He was on the whole a popular man in the county. He was a sportsman, had been the best boxer at Eton, had rowed in the Cambridge boat, and was a splendid shot. In the matter of the foxhounds he had been more than liberal, and he was a subscribing president or vice-president of innumerable cricket and football clubs. He could hold his own in any society, and more than once he had entertained Royalty itself at Carples. Altogether, a sound, strong, prosperous man.

In every cup, however, there lurks one bitter drop, and the memory of his first marriage still rankled in his heart. Not that there had been scandal or sensation of any kind. It had been a perfectly decorous but quite unmistakable failure. When he married Louisa Cuxbery every one thought he had done very well indeed, for she was the favourite niece of old Miss Cuxbery, who was not only fabulously rich, but also the possessor of the famous Cuxbery diamonds, worth a fortune in themselves. Louisa was a poor, timid, delicate little thing, with not much to say for herself, and no outstanding accomplishments; but one can't have everything, and the diamonds and investments would cover a multitude of failings. All his perfectly reasonable and legitimate calculations, however, were speedily upset. Miss Cuxbery, to his great delight, invited herself to Carples within three months of the marriage. He received her almost with his royalty manners, and in return she pronounced him an odious creature, and quarrelled violently with her niece, declaring that no one could possibly have married him except for mercenary motives. Within a year the poor little wife had released her husband, as far as she could, from his unfortunate contract, leaving behind her, however, a singularly small and unattractive baby, who was duly christened with great pomp Vivian Godfrey Herbert Tankerton Bulliatt.

After a brief, but still decent, interval, the bereaved husband threw his handkerchief again, and this time he left nothing to chance. Lady Nina Beaukirke was a distinguished-looking young lady, with a splendid figure and an adequate settlement. She was magnificently healthy, and had an excellent temper and a more than passable intelligence. Year by year she bore him a series of record babies, as sturdy and well built as their father and as even-tempered as their mother. As they developed into girls and boys the sporting element soon manifested itself, and the proud father often chuckled when he saw Bertie shaping at the wicket like a miniature Jackson, or Elinor galloping fearlessly round the paddock on her pony.

## II.

When Vivian was thirteen the headmaster of the preparatory school where he and Bertie were being educated came over to Carples one Sunday afternoon.

'What a fine little chap your Bertie is!' he said. 'He's one of the youngest boys in the school, and yet he's made his own place already. His batting is really quite wonderful for his age.'

'What about his Latin?' asked Mr Bulliatt with a smile.

'Very fair, very fair indeed,' replied Mr Lewthorpe; 'quite promising, I should say. Of course, to a boy built as he is, games will always be a great attraction.'

The father nodded. 'And what about Vivian?' he asked.

Mr Lewthorpe's expression immediately became diplomatic. He hesitated for a moment. 'Well,' he began, 'it is really about Vivian that I came over to see you, Mr Bulliatt. He is a dear boy—a dear boy. Mrs Lewthorpe thinks there is no one like him, but he causes me a good deal of anxiety.'

'Why, what's he been up to?'

'Nothing. That's exactly what makes me anxious. We've been boys ourselves, Mr Bulliatt, and we know that a healthy normal boy is always up to something. Now, Vivian is too quiet, too restrained, too correct in his behaviour. It seems strange for a schoolmaster to complain that a boy gives him no trouble; but I assure you I should be quite relieved to see Vivian get into a good, wholesome scrape.'

'So that you could give him a good, wholesome licking, eh?' said Mr Bulliatt, with a laugh that had, perhaps, just a hint of annoyance in it.

'That's the last thing I can imagine myself doing to Vivian. Why, I'd almost as soon cane my Fanny!' exclaimed the headmaster.

They were walking on the terrace in front of the drawing-room, and they took a couple of turns in silence.

Then Mr Lewthorpe spoke again. 'It's against my own interest, of course, but I've been wondering whether school-life is the best for such a boy just at this particular stage.'

'What else would you advise?'

'I think perhaps if he were kept at home for another year with a tutor it might tide over a difficult time. I have known such cases before. A year at that age makes a wonderful difference.'

'Well,' said Mr Bulliatt after another silent turn, 'I dare say you're right. At any rate we'll try. But I'm afraid he'll never make a decent English schoolboy. He's never been like my other boys. Why, a few months ago an old aunt of a sort sent him a present of a box of dolls. Fancy! A boy of his age! He simply took them and began playing with the nursery children, and showing them the dolls. It isn't natural. Still, we'll try what you suggest. As you say, a year may make a lot of difference to him.'

III.

A year went by, and others in its train; but the contrast between Vivian and his half-brothers only became more sharply defined. They went to Eton and upheld the family reputation for sportsmanship. He was so obviously unfit for the hurly-burly of public-school life that, instead, he was sent to read with a clergyman in Yorkshire. Bertie at fifteen was taller, heavier, and far stronger than his elder brother, who grew up a short, slight, dapper young man, with a high, rather narrow forehead and pale-blue eyes. Even about his best physical features there was nothing characteristically virile. His eyebrows were beautifully arched, his lips were finely modelled, and his hair was soft as silk. He was not stupid; indeed, he was distinctly imaginative, and he developed a decided talent for drawing. But in the ordinary branches of school education he was backward. He went to Oxford, however, in due course, and with careful coaching managed to pass his examinations just about the time that Bertie covered himself with glory by scoring 80 not out, and saving the match against Harrow.

On his twenty-second birthday Vivian was astonished to receive a cheque for one thousand pounds from Miss Cuxbery. When he was about twelve he had been invited to spend a week with the old lady, and a year later she had sent him the unfortunate dolls that had aroused his father's indignation. From that time till the date of the cheque she had taken no further notice at all of him or of any of the family, and six months after the sending of the one thousand pounds she died suddenly. Her will contained no reference to the Bulliatts. She seemed to have hunted out her remotest family connections, and left all her property among them. As for the famous diamonds, they were not even mentioned in the will. Some of the nearer relatives talked of opposing probate on the ground that the old lady must have been of unsound mind, and even Mr Bulliatt went up to town and consulted his solicitor; but it soon became apparent that they had not a leg to stand upon. Miss Cuxbery was eccentric, had a bitter, cross-grained humour, and was violently prejudiced; but her mind was clear and vigorous to the very last.

So far, Vivian, though certainly a disappointment, had given his father no serious trouble. With his step-mother he had always been a favourite, for to the second family, especially to the little ones, he had shown himself an exemplary elder brother. But in the midst of all those strong, active, energetic people he had appeared a singular, pathetic figure, a negligible factor in the sum that represented the Carples household. And then quite suddenly, in a moment, the negligible factor became significant, and the habitually weak stood revealed as the unexpectedly strong.

IV.

Luncheon was over, and Mr Bulliatt, according to custom, had gone to his study, lighted his pipe, and taken up the *Times* for the second time that day. In the early morning he read the news; luncheon gave him fortitude to tackle the leaders. He had just found the right page when a tap sounded on the door. He laid the paper down on his knee and shouted a masterful 'Come in!'

He was astonished to see his eldest son. It was very seldom indeed that Vivian took the initiative at all, even in the small domestic affairs. There was, too, an unusual expression on the young man's face, an expression which his father was at a loss to interpret.

'Can I speak to you for a moment, father?' he said.

As he stood there, the light from the opposite window falling strongly upon him, his poor little frail figure showed up with insistent weakness, and the old irritation stirred in Mr Bulliatt's mind. That this should be his eldest son, his heir! Then he reminded himself that the boy was not to blame.

'Certainly, Vivian,' he answered, and pointed to a chair. 'Sit down, my boy. What is it?'

The young man sat down, and then paused for a moment. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his forehead, gave a rather foolish little simper, and said, 'I've been thinking that I should like to marry.'

Mr Bulliatt was certainly startled. Vivian looked so absurdly young that it was really not easy to take such an announcement seriously. After all, though, the boy was right. He was more than twenty-two, quite time enough to be thinking—at long range, of course—of matrimony. So in a half-jocular and wholly good-humoured tone Mr Bulliatt said, 'And who is the fortunate young lady?'

Vivian flushed a rich red, but his voice sounded stronger and more manly. 'Miss Flagge,' he said.

Miss Flagge was the daughter of a former curate at Carples parish church, who had now a small living in Wiltshire. He had neither fortune nor good family to recommend him. The young lady herself had taught some of the Bulliatt children the elements of music.

Mr Bulliatt's first emotion was not so much indignation or anger as amusement. Miss Flagge to marry the heir of Carples! It was too absurd!

'A very pretty little idyl,' he said with a great guffaw. Then he glanced at Vivian and saw that his face had set into a quite unfamiliar expression.

'How long has this nonsense been going on?' he ended, speaking sharply.

Vivian answered in a curiously deliberate voice. 'We have only been engaged since yesterday week, but we have meant it for more than a year.'

'Oh, have you?' said his father, now seriously angry. 'Well, then, you'll please understand that I won't have you playing the fool like that. Do you hear?'

He waited for an answer, and Vivian in a very low voice said, 'Yes.'

'Very well'—and Mr Bulliatt turned with an air of relief to his paper—'there's an end of that, then. I'm glad you told me. Perhaps the best way will be for you to go abroad for a few months. I'll think it over. And I'll write to Flagge.'

His tone implied dismissal, but, to his secret astonishment, the young man did not stir. The squire had never before seen Vivian in this mood; he was still more astonished to hear him say, 'I would much rather you did not write.'

'I shall do exactly what I think best,' exclaimed Mr Bulliatt with emphasis. 'I don't want to pursue the subject at present. I'm very busy just now.'

The hint was quite broad enough, and Vivian took it.

V.

Three days after this interview Vivian Bulliatt married Laura Flagge. She was a bright, sensible, good-looking girl, and really fond of him. It was a runaway marriage, and the curate did not get Mr Bulliatt's letter of polite reproach and warning till his daughter had actually left his roof. He read it, in fact, just about the time when the squire of Carples was digesting the stiff little note in which Vivian apologised for disobeying the parental commands.

'DEAR FATHER'—it ran—'I am afraid you will be very angry when I tell you that by the time you read this letter I shall be married to my dearest Laura. If you only knew her I am quite sure you would think me wonderfully fortunate. I think perhaps it will be as well that I am not to go on living at home, for I know that I have always been a disappointment to you. I shall miss the children very much, and I think they will sometimes miss me in the nursery. I have left the box of dolls. Clem and baby will like to play with them. Give my love to mother. I hope you will both forgive me, even if you do not approve of my marriage.—Your affectionate son, VIVIAN G. H. T. BULLIATT.'

Mr Flagge was dismayed and tearful, Mr Bulliatt furious and apoplectic; but both were, and knew themselves to be, helpless. Perhaps in his secret heart the ex-curate was not altogether inconsolable. As for the squire, he relieved his feelings by having all Vivian's personal belongings immediately packed up and despatched to the address given in the letter: 5 St Rollox Terrace, Streatham.

'Everything, mind,' he exclaimed—'books, and painting-things, and his fishing-tackle. Don't leave anything out.'

A minute or two later, after glancing again at Vivian's letter, he opened his study door to shout out, 'And don't forget that box of his with the dolls. They'll be in the nursery, I expect.'

The young couple had settled down in a comfortable little furnished flat on Streatham Hill. Besides his one thousand pounds, Vivian had saved about one hundred and fifty pounds out of his liberal allowance, and he had strong hopes of making money by drawing. 'A man he knew' had told him how easy it was to get such work, and how well paid it was. The one thousand one hundred pounds would keep them in quiet comfort for three or four years; and by that time, even if his father proved obdurate, he would be earning enough to support their modest establishment. Laura, who had a better idea of the value of money, fully believed that Mr Bulliatt would speedily relent, and also had a good deal of faith in her husband's abilities as an artist. Still, she soon appointed herself chancellor of the exchequer, and did her best to save their slender capital.

VI.

Four years passed, and the situation remained very much what it had been. Bertie and his younger brothers and sisters grew up big and strong and healthy, and in a large, florid way handsome. The squire and his wife looked hardly a day older, though he had fought and lost an election.

As for Vivian and Laura, they still lived in their little flat at Streatham. But their capital, in spite of great care, had shrunk by half, while the number of mouths to be filled had actually doubled. A little Godfrey and a tiny Laura increased at once their joys and their anxieties. Vivian had long since learned by hard experience how fallacious were the hopes fostered by 'the man he knew.' But he had stuck to his work with surprising tenacity, and the discipline of disappointment was developing in him other qualities than mere draughtsmanship, though of late even in that direction gleams of encouragement had come. The *Graphic* had taken two drawings, and some really clever little cricket caricatures had gone off quite readily. Still, the money he earned was only a trifle, and he was consumed by anxiety as to the future. He had made several overtures of reconciliation to his father, and so had Mr Flagge on his behalf; but all these had been repelled with contemptuous silence. Unfortunately his wife's health had been unsatisfactory, and she had been obliged to undergo a severe operation. He would not hear of her going to a hospital, and the expenses of the nursing-home and her convalescence had been a cruel drain on the fast-dwindling little capital. Besides, her illness had been a long, dragging affair, and he owed their own doctor a long bill. Even now it was doubtful whether her recovery would be complete.

Still, there were rifts in the clouds. Husband and wife were devoted to each other, and the fact that her life had been spared made up for much.

Then the children were a perpetual joy; and, as Laura said, he was worth half-a-dozen nurse-girls. Another source of pleasure was the occasional visits of Bertie and of Elinor, his eldest half-sister. They were indignant at the harsh treatment meted out to him, and they brought many messages of affection from the younger ones, who still remembered their old playfellow. To them Vivian put on his most cheerful air, and they had no idea how badly things were really going in the pretty little flat, though of course they heard of Laura's illness.

One bright June morning Dr Steel looked in on his early rounds to tell Vivian that his wife would be back in three days' time. 'And, my dear fellow,' he went on, 'do try to put on your brightest face. Cheerfulness will be more to her than medicine. You aren't looking very sprightly now.' As he spoke his heart smote him, for he had a shrewd idea how the land lay.

'Just wait a moment, will you?' said Vivian, and went out of the room. He came back almost at once with a small parcel in his hand. 'Look here, doctor,' he began, 'you understand this sort of stuff, I know; you said it was a hobby of yours. I wish you'd tell me if you think they're worth anything. I don't care about keeping them, but I don't want to throw them away.' He opened the packet. Inside were five or six rings, a couple of scarf-pins, three sets of sleeve-links, and some studs.

Dr Steel took them to the window and looked at them carefully. 'I'm only an amateur, you know,' he said; 'but these'—he held up two of the rings—'look to me pretty good. If you like to trust me with them I'll get you an offer for the lot.'

Vivian's face brightened. 'I'd be very grateful if you would,' he answered. 'I shouldn't know in the least where to go.'

'You mustn't expect anything very grand; they are all small stones.' This was the doctor's good-bye, and he saw the brightness die out of Vivian's face. 'I'm afraid he is getting near the end of his tether,' he said to himself as he jumped into his victoria.

VII.

On the following Friday afternoon Dr Steel called at St Rollox Terrace on a double errand. He was the bearer of an offer of thirty pounds for the two rings which he had picked out, and he was anxious to see Mrs Bulliatt, who was expected home about five. It was five when he rang the bell. Vivian had gone to fetch her, and they had not yet arrived.

'Where are the children?' the doctor asked the little servant. 'I may as well have a look at them.'

'They are playing in the dining-room,' she answered, and took him in.

The children were both of them lying on the sofa, and between them sat a group of old-fashioned dolls. Godfrey, who was very much like his mother, held an extra big doll on his knee.

Dr Steel knelt down, and with sundry digs and pokes soon had both the children laughing. He laid hold of the big doll on Godfrey's knee.

'Hullo!' he exclaimed; 'what's her name?'

'She's the Keen,' said Godfrey, who was very forward. 'She's got a c'own and g'ass eyes.'

'So she has,' said the doctor, and began to squint and frown at her in the most extraordinary way. 'And look at her glass beads too. Don't they glitter? Why, I declare, they've all of them got glass eyes and beads round their necks too!'

'G'ass eyes! g'ass eyes! g'ass eyes!' shouted Godfrey.

Dr Steel pulled out a pocket-knife, deliberately prised out one of the Queen's eyes, and looked at it very carefully.

'What's 'oo doin'?' shrilled Godfrey.

'She's got a sore eye, and I'm putting it right,' said the doctor, replacing the eye in its socket.

Just then the door-bell rang loudly, and a minute or two after Vivian came in.

'She's lying down in the next room,' he said. 'She does seem wonderfully better. We'll give her a minute or two, and then we'll go and see her.'

The doctor hardly seemed to be listening. 'I say, where did you get those rum-looking dolls?'

'An old aunt, or great-aunt, sent them to me years ago. Why, what makes you ask?'

'What sort of a person was she?'

Vivian laughed. 'Enormously rich and frightfully eccentric. She left about a quarter of a million, and she ought to have left the Cuxbery diamonds; but they seemed to have vanished. No one knows what has become of them.'

While this little conversation was going on, Dr Steel had been stripping the dolls of their eyes and ornaments. Now he held out his hand with a pile of the glittering beads, and answered Vivian's last remark. 'I do,' he said; 'here they are, the Cuxbery diamonds, and worth ten thousand pounds if they're worth a penny! Let us go into the next room and administer the tonic.'

## SCOTCH MIST.

THE Northern hills are drear and dun;
They hide their heads in clinging mist,
Their sides are scarred and shadow-kissed,
Till sweeps the bright broom of the sun,
Range over range,
And, lo! the change!

The Northern men are like their hills;
They hide their hearts where few can reach,
They spike their souls with sharpened speech.
But he who with true purpose tills
Can pierce the mould,
And find rare gold.

NITA H. PADWICK.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# THE SOLITARY GUEST.

By SUSAN BALLARD, Author of *The Open Door*, &c.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IT is a well-known fact that it is much easier to fall in love when on the sea than when on the land. The reason of this is perhaps not very difficult to discover; there are more opportunities for intimacies in seven days on the sea than there are in seven years of an ordinary life on the land. The chairs drawn up side by side in the morning, the tramps up and down the deck in the afternoon, the long evenings spent in hanging over the ship's side watching the starlit sky—all these tend to produce a sympathetic and confidential frame of mind; and it is but a step further to fall in love and be engaged.

The cynic is apt to say that engagements are made on the sea to be broken on the shore; but there was no such melancholy ending to the engagement between Leslie Howard and Sibyl Moreton. From the first experienced hands at life on board ship looked after them with a smile as they tramped the deck together, and pronounced it to be 'a case.' Sibyl and her brother were making a tour of the world for pleasure. They joined the ship at Colombo, where they had done some sight-seeing, and on the ship they met Leslie Howard, with whom they at once formed a friendship. Leslie Howard was in the diplomatic service, and was going to investigate a little into the state of affairs in the Far East—that Far East which is so rapidly becoming the Near East.

By the time that their ship had reached Shanghai the young couple had quite made up their minds that they were intended for each other; and the voyage from Shanghai to Yokohama was occupied with endless discussions as to when, where, and how their marriage was to take place. Leslie Howard could see no possible reason for postponing the marriage till their return to England. It was ridiculous, he said, to think of Sibyl going sight-seeing with her brother in Japan and home through Canada, leaving him to go sight-seeing all alone in China. Of course his happiness depended upon his having her with him. Why not have the marriage at once? The only person who had any right to control Sibyl's affairs was her brother, and he was there with them, ready to give his blessing at any moment; and as for his own people, his father had been worrying him for several years to get married, and would be simply charmed to get such a daughter-in-law.

'Well, it rests with yourself,' said George Moreton to his sister. 'It is for you to decide, my dear girl. If you like you can say good-bye to Howard for a few months, and come along with me; in which case I promise you a regular St George's, Hanover Square, sort of marriage, and you will doubtless be blessed with a perfectly uncountable number of salt-cellars and clocks, and whatever happens to be the fashionable wedding-present of the moment. Or if you like you can marry Howard now; but in that case you must not count on the salt-cellars and clocks, for by the time you get home every one will have forgotten about your marriage; no one gives presents to a bride of six months' standing.'

'I don't mind about the salt-cellars and clocks,' said Sibyl; 'but there is something so dreadfully gloomy about being married without a single friend present; and I always faithfully promised Mary Davenant that she should be my bride's-maid; and really I don't see any use in getting even a wedding-dress!'

'No use in the world,' said George promptly. 'There will only be Howard and myself present, and you are surely not going to dress up in satin and orange-blossom for us?'

'Oh George,' said Sibyl, almost in tears, 'do you really mean to say that I am to be married in a common everyday dress and without a single bride's-maid? It is too horrid! No; I believe I will tell Leslie that we must wait till we get to England, and have a real, proper wedding.'



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'All right, my dear,' said George cheerfully; 'then you and I will wend our way home across Canada. And if we have any luck we ought to get a salmon or two there; there is said to be fine sport on the rivers. And Leslie can go and poke round Pekin. But supposing he finds some delightful young woman in Pekin and changes his mind?'

'George, you are horrid! Leslie would never, never change his mind. How can you think of such a thing? I do think you might try to help me to make up my mind, instead of just teasing me.'

'Try to help you to make up your mind!' said George. 'Goodness me! that's what I have been doing for the last hour. I have gone into every detail that I thought could influence you in any way. Hanover Square, wedding-dress, bride's-maids, salt-cellars, clocks, wedding-presents are in the one scale; and against them you must weigh Leslie Howard. Now, is Leslie sufficient in himself to turn the scale? No, stop. Perhaps I ought also to mention the fact that Leslie may be counted upon to let you shop to your heart's content in Pekin, and you may pick up things that will compensate for the salt-cellars and clocks.'

As a matter of fact, it was but little use for Sibyl Moreton to weigh in her mind the joys of a gay wedding in London in contrast with the loneliness of one in Yokohama; for Leslie Howard had quite made up his mind that he was going to carry Sibyl off with him, and it was impossible for her to withstand his persuasions. By the time that the ship reached Yokohama an immediate wedding had been fixed on.

'We must find out at once where we are to get married, Sibyl,' said Leslie. 'I expect it will have to be at the Consulate.'

'The Consulate!' exclaimed Sibyl. 'Oh Leslie, do you mean a dreadful, stuffy sort of place like what George and I went to once in Italy? Why, I should not feel as if I were being married at all unless I had a service in church. It would be more like going to prison than getting married to go before a consul. Do see if there is a church where we can get married without going to a consul.'

After a couple of days in Yokohama Leslie was able to give Sibyl the glad news that she could be married in a church, and that a visit to the Consulate was not necessary. 'It is hard on you, darling,' he said, 'to have such a hole-in-the-corner sort of affair, no bride's-maids, no music, no friends; but never mind, we will have no end of a good time in China together, and you shall buy just whatever you like in the curio-shops in Pekin.'

'Rash man!' laughed George. 'Fancy telling any woman that she might buy whatever she liked! However, Sibyl, I am glad for your sake that there is a church licensed for marriages here, for I own that there is something dreadfully criminal-like in going before a consul. I wonder what sort of a building the church is. There must be some verger-sort of person. I will get him to put up some decorations in the way of flowers so as to hide the fact that there are no friends present.'

The day appointed for the wedding arrived, and Sibyl Moreton and her brother returned to Yokohama from visiting some of the celebrated places of Japan. On entering the hotel the first person they met was a young Captain Compton, whose acquaintance they had made on the ship; they were glad to see any face that they knew, and he hailed them with joy. He was a pleasant, friendly man; but the Moretons would not have been so pleased to see him had they known that his regiment in Hong-kong had intimated to him that it would be glad to be relieved of his presence. Captain Compton had a genial, pleasant manner, but an unfortunate habit of running up bills and not being able to pay them. He was now staying in Yokohama in hopes that he would find some light but lucrative employment which would give work suitable to a gentleman. He was charmed to see the Moretons, and accepted with great alacrity their invitation to dinner. Before the evening was over he had been invited by Sibyl to be present at her wedding.

'I am awfully glad that I can be married in a church, and that we won't have to go to a Consulate afterwards; but just think of it, Captain Compton, an absolutely empty church, George to give me away, Leslie to marry me, a clergyman to perform the ceremony, probably a verger-sort of person, but not a single, solitary guest. Isn't it dreadful?'

'Quite dreadful, Miss Moreton,' said Captain Compton, 'and if I could transform myself into half-a-dozen beautiful ladies, gladly I would do so. But if the presence of a solitary guest in the person of a black-coated man will help, I shall be charmed to be your solitary guest.'

'Do come!' said George. 'After the ceremony the happy couple will go off to Miyanoshita, and you and I will come back to the hotel and have a rattling good wedding-lunch all to ourselves.'

Poor Sibyl Moreton! it was somewhat hard on her that of all her dozens of friends not one was present when she entered the church in her fresh young beauty; but as she drove away with her husband she declared that she did not miss them at all. 'I am just as happy as I can possibly be—as happy as if I had had six beautiful bride's-maids behind me and a hundred friends behind them. Poor, dear old George! I am glad that he has got some one to lunch with him. It would be horrid for him if he had had to sit down all alone.'

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### CHAPTER II.

A MAN was leisurely eating his breakfast in a third-rate London boarding-house. Everything round him was shabby, and the breakfast before him was of the most unappetising description. Time had not dealt kindly with Captain Compton. It was evident from his appearance that the light but lucrative employment

which he had sought in Yokohama had not been forthcoming. As he sat at breakfast he listlessly turned over the pages of the daily paper, his eyes passing down the columns in an uninterested way till suddenly a short paragraph seemed to rivet his attention. He read it again and again, till at last, laying down the paper, he rose to his feet.

'By Jove,' he said, 'that's rum!' A few minutes afterwards, dressed as carefully as his very shabby wardrobe would allow of, Captain Compton was to be seen proceeding in the direction of the City. Arriving at the door of a set of chambers, he asked the clerk if Mr Compton was at home, and then, opening a door, he walked into a farther room. 'Hallo, Tom!' he said, 'how are you?'

The person thus addressed looked up with no very pleased expression. 'What has brought you here, Dick?' he said severely.

'Oh, don't be afraid!' laughed Captain Compton. 'I have not come to borrow money. Do you happen to have a landed-gentry book or peerage at hand?'

Mr Compton, his brother, pointed with his pen to a large, red book on the table. 'There you are,' he said briefly.

Captain Compton sat down with the book in front of him. There seemed to be endless people of the name of Howard in it, but in course of time he found what he wanted. Sir Leslie Howard had an only son Leslie, who had married Sibyl Moreton, by whom he had two children. The residence was Grangemuir. By careful study Captain Compton also found out that in the event of the death of the younger Leslie and his son, a distant cousin, Montague Howard, would be the next heir. 'Yes, my good sir, I know you, and a precious scamp you are,' said Captain Compton to himself; and then, shutting the book, he turned to his brother.

'I say, old chap, you might do me a good turn. It is just a bit of information that I want, and that a lawyer like you can easily give me. Look at this; and, so saying, he pulled out of his pocket the newspaper paragraph that had arrested his attention that morning. 'According to this statement,' he said, 'the marriages that took place in the church in Yokohama were not legal ceremonies.'

'Good heavens, Dick!' interrupted his brother, 'you don't mean to say that you were married in Yokohama?'

'Not I,' said Captain Compton; 'make your mind quite easy on that score. But a man I know was. Though I was present at his marriage he has treated me abominably—cut me, in fact.'

'A good many people have found it necessary to do that,' remarked Mr Compton.

'Well,' said Captain Compton, 'I don't believe Leslie Howard knows that his marriage was illegal. It seems to have only just been discovered that there was anything wrong with the church license. But what I want to know, Tom, is this: would all marriages that took place in that church be illegal? You are a lawyer and understand those things, which is more than I can.'

Mr Compton read the newspaper cutting carefully through. 'It is quite clear,' he said. 'The treaty revision abrogated the church's license; but this was not fully understood, and marriages continued to be performed. All marriage ceremonies after a certain date were illegal ceremonies unless followed by a marriage before the consul. Did your friend go to the Consulate?'

'No,' said Captain Compton, 'that's just the point; he did not. Do you mean to say, then, that his children are illegitimate?'

'Why, of course, if the marriage is void the children are illegitimate. A very hard case; but it will probably be put right by an Act of Parliament, though it may take a little time to get it put through.'

'Well, thanks, old chap, that's all I wanted, and you can never again say that I only come to borrow money. So good-bye to you; and, so saying, Captain Compton went off.

The next afternoon the landlady of the 'Boar's Head' at Hedgeham might have been found pouring forth the local gossip to a newly arrived guest. 'And a nice, affable gentleman he was,' she reported in the kitchen on her return from her talk.

'It's a beautiful part of Surrey, sir,' she said to her guest, 'and I am sure we should be thankful that our lot is laid here. I suppose you are from London, sir, a nasty, grimy place that I never could abide, and I pities those that has to live in it. Were you asking about the properties in this neighbourhood? Have you seen Grangemuir, where Sir Leslie Howard lives? That's a beautiful spot. You should ask leave to walk through the park.'

'Is the young Mr Howard at home?' asked Captain Compton.

'No, sir, he is not; he has gone to South Africa on some Government business, and there are only Sir Leslie and Mrs Howard at Grangemuir. She would have gone with her husband if it had not been for the old gentleman and her two children.'

As the landlady spoke a carriage was heard rolling along the village street. She ran to the window, and Captain Compton stepped up behind her. Yes, there in the carriage sat Sibyl Moreton. She looked a little older than when he had last seen her in the empty Yokohama church, but she was a happy-looking, pretty woman. Opposite her sat two dear little children.

'There they go, bless their hearts!' said the landlady. 'The old gentleman is that fond of little Master Leslie that he can hardly bear to let him out of his sight.'

Captain Compton stood looking after the carriage. 'Upon my word,' he said to himself, 'it's precious hard on them, and I wonder how she will take it. To suddenly find out that the man whom you thought was your husband was not your husband, and that your son and heir is heir to nothing at all, instead of being heir to a title and a place, is enough to take the spirit out of any one. I suppose that

they will get an Act of Parliament to put the whole matter straight; but if Leslie Howard were to die while he is in Africa how would that affect the matter? Could they legalise his marriage after his death? I wish that I had asked Tom about that point. However, it's all one to me as long as I get a little ready-money out of the matter;' and meditating deeply on what line he should take in the matter, Captain Compton left the 'Boar's Head' and proceeded in the direction of Grangemuir.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE NEW BOY.

By GEORGE A. WADE, B.A.

THE new boy at any great school is a constant factor of interest and delight. For many generations he has been the recognised butt of the joker, the target of the scornful, the one fellow whom even meek Sandy Bliffins of the lower fourth could poke fun at, mimic, and lead into trouble without much fear of serious consequences.

The new boy has been the head and centre of innumerable stories, of countless anecdotes, of strange and varied experiences. He has been the recipient of traditions immense, the fellow introduced to extraordinary customs and ways, many of which have really belonged peculiarly to the school, but more of which have not! To write the history of the new boy at most of our public schools would be to complete a document that has long been wanting completion, one that would be full of intense interest, of unique attraction, and of poignant and thrilling matter.

The new boy sometimes turns out more than a match for his opponents, tormentors, and scorners, even at such places as Eton and Winchester, let alone at Little Pedlington Grammar School or at the Slush-cum-Mud Collegiate Academy. As witness the following story, recounted of a new boy at Henry VI.'s famous school near Windsor.

His very name proclaimed him the son of a well-known man who had made a fortune from soap; hence the quickly formed determination of the Honourable Reginald Clarence Fitz-Clarence to take a rise out of him there and then, and to provoke a good laugh from the fellows by his witticism.

'I say, youngster,' drawled out the Honourable one lazily, as he stood near the new boy with several others, 'what's your name?'

The new boy told him quietly.

'And your father's So-and-So, the soap-maker, isn't he?' went on Reginald.

'Yes,' answered the new boy.

'Then why the dickens didn't he make *you* a soap-maker instead of sending you here to Eton?' asked the Honourable.

The new boy blushed, but said nothing for a minute. And the crowd smiled. Then, a little later, the new boy turned to the son of the baron. 'May I ask your name, please?'

'Confound your cheek!' said the other. 'Well, it's the Hon. Reginald Clarence Fitz-Clarence, if you want to know.'

'And *your* father—what is *he?*' inquired the guileless one.

'He's a gentleman!' replied the elder boy haughtily.

'Indeed? Then why didn't he make *you* a gentleman?' naïvely put in the new boy.

The shouts of laughter at Reginald's expense from the group of boys around made that youth wild, and he strolled away in high dudgeon. The new boy had come into his own without a doubt!

The new boy has often a trying time for the first night or two. His bed has a strange knack of falling down, and his clothes vanish as if by magic. Then he usually finds himself going on all kinds of extraordinary errands, the absurdity of which he only recognises when he sees their results.

'Hurry up, Slopperdash!' sings out an older youth at Christ's Hospital to the arrival of yesterday. 'The house-master says you have to go at once to the cook in the kitchen and ask him to measure your mouth for a new spoon.'

Slopperdash, with the full glory of his new blue coat and yellow stockings, knowing that he will need a new spoon, and half-guessing that it will have to come from the kitchen, sees nothing strange in the errand, so he goes jauntily to see the head-cook. That worthy, having had some hundreds of boys come on the same mission, gravely regards the waiting Slopperdash after receiving the message, and then nods sagely and tells him to open his mouth as wide as possible.

Little Slopperdash meekly obeys, and gives it such a stretch that the group of lads waiting outside the window to enjoy the fun shriek with laughter. The cook tells the new boy that he will see it is all right, and off goes Slopperdash, to meet with a yelling crowd, whose hilarity and remarks soon inform him of the fool's errand of which he has been the victim.

The new boy looms great in our fiction about the schools. His ideas of the place, his experiences, his words on the subject all play a notable part in several famous novels. There was the arrival of Tom Brown at Rugby, which has become well known to all readers of that splendid boys' book. The new boy of to-day at that school sees the same old archway before him as he drives up the High

Street, the same schoolhouse, the same quadrangle. And probably his very words are the same as Tom's: 'So this is Rugby!'

Then there is detailed for us the new boy at Harrow, in Mr Vachell's fine story of *The Hill*. There is many a new boy, indeed, who arrives at a big school and is staggered by the same mute witnesses of his family's prowess, those Verneys of past times that flame on the new boy from the walls and carvings, which remind him how much is expected of him and what a reputation he must of necessity keep up. Think of the Lyttelton who goes for the first time to Eton, the Phillimore who newly comes to Westminster, the Fiennes who descends at Winchester to begin his school-life there. Imagine what it must feel like to such boys who see the names of ancestors for three or four hundred years back adorning the blackened walls of the old schools; who remember what a glorious part these men have played in England's history; who recognise the legacy bequeathed to them, the latest representatives, at the much-loved seat of learning!

It is not quite unknown for the new boy to be frankly impudent. But usually such cheek is sternly repressed, and severely paid for later on. It is not every youth who can carry off his start like the Brighton College beginner who went on the first afternoon after his arrival to watch the eleven practising at the nets. And as he watched he spoke aloud his opinion of the bowling frankly and fully —and most cheekily.

An elder pupil of the sixth surveyed him with astonishment, mingled with amusement at that same impudence. He regarded the scorner with a piercing eye. 'Perhaps you think you could bowl better yourself?' he said with an unrestrained sneer.

'Well, there's one thing certain,' replied the cheeky new one, 'I couldn't bowl worse.'

In order to take him down a peg the lights of the eleven set him on to bowl there and then when they heard the story. But there were dismay and amazement in the camp when the new boy upset wicket after wicket, and laughed aloud merrily at the looks of the vaunted sixth as he did it.

Then suddenly it dawned on the intelligence of the captain that, after all, here was a wondrous find of the Brighton College eleven for the coming summer. 'What's your name, youngster?' he asked as he came up to the new boy.

'Woods,' ejaculated the lad, with a grin that seemed to light up his whole face. 'Samuel M. J. Woods.'

That new boy's name has travelled with his fame much farther than Brighton since that day; and his smile—and some friends say also his delightful 'cheek'—is just as potent a factor on the cricket-field as ever.

How often the soul of a new boy has been harassed by the dread of that first singing can never be told. Nor how he has suffered from the woes of early fagging. It is simply astounding how the new boy delights the fag-master for a day or two by his strict attention to every little order and detail; and the fag-master fondly imagines that he has indeed found a treasure in Jobson mi.—a fag in a thousand. But, alas, what a different story it seems after about a fortnight! How strangely Jobson mi. seems to have altered! What 'hidings' he gets, what boots are thrown at him, what imprecations are hurled after him as he struggles along trying to do as little as possible in the way of fagging, and doing that little as badly and carelessly as it can be done—according to his master's account!

The new boy may have no musical voice at all, but he has to sing or wail aloud all the same at most schools when the fateful night comes. After practising for two days that touching ballad, 'When father started taking photographs,' in season and out of season, in the vain hope of doing it justice, the boy at Westminster ascends the rickety table, with the still more rickety chair on it, upon which he must sit and sing with a lighted candle in his hand. He has hardly opened his mouth before some unseen auditor requests him to 'Sing up!' whilst he is paralysed by hearing another boy at the very same moment telling him, 'Don't make such an infernal row, Traddles, for goodness' sake!'

Then yells of 'Get down!' float to his disordered hearing, whilst at the same time somebody is shouting, 'For conscience' sake get on with it, kid!' The upshot of it all is that the new boy gets flustered, stops, and is immediately assailed by a shower of biscuits and cries of 'Go on!' 'Encore!' 'Hurry up!' &c. If he is wise he will sing the touching ballad through as quickly as possible, regardless of interrupters and encouragers, and so pass through the ordeal once and for ever.

The new boy has his vanities and pride as well as his troubles and scorns. When he goes with his fond mother at Harrow, immediately after his coming to the Hill, to buy that wonderful straw hat at the appointed shop in the village, it is doubtful whether he feels more proud or shy as he marches up the street wearing it for the first time. It is a curious piece of headgear indeed, that straw hat—as flat as a pancake, with a brim as wide as a cowboy's sun-hat; and, with that terrible elastic fastening it *behind* the boy's head, what wonder if the new boy scarcely knows whether he is standing on his head or his heels!

The new boy, too, has a novel way of putting his foot in it, as they say, from the very first. He accosts masters and officials with a nonchalance and cheek that the more experienced youth simply marvels at. They tell you with glee of the new boy at Charterhouse who had brought his bicycle with him. He met the then 'head,' the late Rev. Canon Haig-Brown, on a private path in the school-bounds.

'Please, sir,' said the boy, 'may you ride a bicycle on this path?'

The genial smile of the 'head,' so well known to old Carthusians, broke out as he gazed at the innocent youth before him. With that quick retort of his, Haig-Brown answered, 'Yes, *I* may; but *you* mayn't!'

Even more awe-inspiring was the advent of a new boy once at Marlborough. He was proceeding thither by train, and in the carriage was a very kind-looking and talkative gentleman, who got into conversation with him. The boy opened his mind to the other traveller very freely, telling him where he was going, and making various comments upon the school, and upon what he meant to do.

'And you think you'll like Dr Farrar?' queried the kindly gentleman with a smile.

'Oh, I dare say we'll get along all right together,' was the off-hand reply. 'I'm told old Farrar's an awfully decent chap if you don't rub him up the wrong way. And I reckon he'll be a jolly smart master, either Farrar or anybody else, who gets over me!'

The gentleman laughed heartily with him at the remark, and bade him good-bye warmly as they parted at the station. But when, next day, the new boy saw the headmaster stand up in front of all the school, and met his eye, he nearly had a fit there and then. For this was the same gentleman to whom he had been confiding his views in the train about 'old Farrar' and similar interesting Marlborough worthies!

The new boy, as everybody knows and admits, is usually at a serious disadvantage. His innocence, his ignorance, his position, lay him open to special failure or unexpected downfall. He needs more assurance, more courage, more resolution, more 'cheek,' than happen to be bestowed on most young boys. Hence he often gets his nickname from some folly or mistake of the early days; and as that nickname sticks to him like a leech all through his career at Repton, Haileybury, or elsewhere—indeed often through all his life—it may prove a serious factor in his career.

'Where's he come from?' asked an older youth about a new boy at Uppingham.

'Melton Mowbray,' was the answer.

'Oh, then we'll christen him "Pork Pies,"' remarked the other.

They did, and 'Pork Pies' he remained to the end of the chapter. A friend and I saw him years later standing on the platform of Melton Mowbray Station as we passed through in the London express. We put out our heads, men as we were, and shouted delightedly 'Pork Pies' with all our might. He saw us, smiled gaily, and waved his hat in greeting.

It was our last glimpse of a kind heart. Two years afterwards he died. But to the end he was ever 'Pork Pies' to all his schoolfellows.

The new boy sometimes wins immortal fame because of his special newness. When Cheltenham College was first opened the boy who came strolling into its yard as its initial pupil was a lad named James. When his name was enrolled he little thought what an honour was conferred on him, any more than he thought what honour he would bring to the school of which he was, in truth, the first new boy. But to-day, though Lord James of Hereford is justifiably proud of many things in his splendid career, there is nothing that gives him so much pleasure as to remember that he was in deed and in truth the first new boy of Cheltenham's great school.

Or it may be that the new boy has a notable honour thrust upon him unexpectedly. This was the case with Lord Schomberg Kerr, who arrived at Glenalmond on the 3rd of May 1847, by mistake, as the school did not really open till the 4th. Another boy had arranged to be the first pupil there, but young Kerr would not go back home for the night. He stayed alone at Glenalmond, and thus became, quite unexpectedly on his part, the first boy at the celebrated Scottish school.

Everything, or almost everything, will be forgiven to the new boy by his fellows except too much 'side' or his turning out a fraud. In the latter event his path is made so painful and so thorny that it is far better for him to leave the school in most cases rather than to have his whole life made miserable by the taunts and jeers of his comrades. At one of our biggest schools—its name must be omitted for obvious reasons—only a year or two ago a boy entered as winner of one of the chief scholarships. Indeed, he was practically at the head of the new 'scholars.' From his very entrance he talked large about what he knew and could do. But within the first week or so masters and boys alike were simply flabbergasted at his intense ignorance and strange behaviour. How he had got so high up on the list, how he had ever won a scholarship at all, was a mystery to the whole school. As the term went on he showed up worse and worse; he became a standing joke; he was the most disliked pupil in the place; he had hardly a single friend. In sheer desperation at his plight, the 'head' had to recommend his parents to withdraw him, and they did so without demur; for there is nobody in the wide world so utterly pitiable as the boy in a public school who has not a single friend or well-wisher.

The new boy is a hardy perennial. He springs up in his thousands year after year. He has three periods of blooming in the course of the twelve months, and he blossoms very effectively as a rule. His arrival is looked for with as much eagerness as that of spring or breaking-up day. He is a character that is ever the same, yet ever changing and ever changeable. There is in the new boy such potentialities, such promises of future triumphs, such hopes of coming success. Masters who have been disappointed with the barren years of the past, parents who have keenly looked forward to the day when Tommy would be in very truth a Wykehamist, sports-captains of the school who have been long waiting for a crack bowler or a dashing bat to

come on, boys who have desired to get out of the junior rank—all these hail the new boy with loud acclaim as the harbinger of good things, the hope of glories to come.

Dear old new boy! Brave, lovable, joke-causing new boy! What a grand thing it is, too, when the new boy realises those splendid and long-cherished hopes! But the world will ever regard the new boy as it is said to regard a lover; it will simply love him and laugh at him to the end.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

## CHAPTER VI.—HOW HEPSY ADMINISTERED COMFORT.

'MY goodness me! what ha'e you weans been up to noo?' asked Hepsy, as they crept softly in upon her on tiptoe.

'It's only mud—mostly, Hepsy dear,' said Mavie, looking down over her frock, on which Jerry's long-bristled brush had laid the mud in nice, regular streaks.

'Only mud—mostly! An' what's the rest?'

'Oh, a dog bit me a little, but it isn't much; and John Sax sucked it till it was all right,' reeled off Mavie quickly, by way of diversion from mud-stains and to get it all over and done with.

'A dog bit ye! Show me;' and Hepsy's gentle fingers rolled the little sleeve up hastily, and her knowing eyes settled anxiously on the discoloured wound.

'It didn't look half as bad as that till John Sax sucked it till he nearly sucked the skin off,' said Mavie by way of further extenuation.

'John Sax is a skeely wee laddie!' said Hepsy, as she tenderly examined and felt the wound. 'I think it'll be a' richt, dearie; but I doot it may leave a bit mark unless we're careful.' And she sent the boys off to rig themselves in clean things, with instructions to levy on Charlie's wardrobe if necessary, while she bathed Mavie's arm and anointed it with cooling ointment, and tied a bandage round it which would not show under her sleeve.

'We willna tell yer mither aboot it,' said Hepsy quietly, 'for she hadna too guid a nicht, an' I dinna want her troubled.'

'No, don't tell her, Hepsy dear,' agreed Mavie with relief. 'And don't tell Aunt Charlotte. She is such an old fuss.'

'We'll just keep it to oorsel's. Hoo cam' ye to be bitten by a dog?' And Mavie had to tell her all about it, and about the soldiers, and how they had broken bounds.

'Ye s'ould keep to yer bounds, dearie, or oor hearts will never be at ease anent ye. Ye mind what happened to ye before?'

'We're very strict as a rule, Hepsy; but the soldiers got into our heads, and we didn't think. Can I go in to see mother?' For at times, after a bad night, the children would be away into the fields long before Hepsy would allow her charge to be disturbed.

'Yes, dearie; go in. She was askin' for ye. But go cannily, an' make nae noise.' And Mavie skipped lightly away down the passage.

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## CHAPTER VII.—HOW SWEET A SAINT WAS MRS CHARLES.

'MOTHER dear, I am so sorry you had such a bad night,' whispered Mavie, as she snuggled up into her privileged place inside her mother's lifted arm. 'I'll be as quiet as a mouse. I won't disturb you the least littlest bit.'

'You never disturb me, dear. Such a happy little face is the best medicine in the world. Where are the boys?'

'Oh, they're cleaning up. We got a bit dirty,' said Mavie.

'Any scalps to-day, General?' with an understanding smile, for she entered with fullest appreciation into all their doings, though bound at times to her couch for days together.

No wonder Charles Lauriston worshipped his wife. Suffering had chiselled the radiant beauty of her face to a rare and arresting loveliness which set one thinking of the sweet saints of old; though, truth to tell, the sweetest of them all was not to be compared with her. Eyes and nose and mouth and chin all combined to a fine totality of quiet strength and endurance, gracious and beautiful still in spite of—rather because of—their long and severe chastening. It was a brave, sweet soul that looked out through the calm eyes and gentle face, and seemed even to illuminate from within the rare soft texture of its envelopment. She was a perfect expression of strength in weakness; for, if at times her bodily vigour was small, none had ever heard a word of complaint from her lips. On the contrary, she was ever ready with cheer and heartening for those whose lot was far more smoothly cast, and yet had fault to find with it, and her smile was an unspoken blessing. She was a wonder to many, but not to those who knew her best and knew from what deep wells her strength was drawn.

'We didn't get as far as scalps,' said Mavie. 'Some soldiers came past, and we ran after them, only just a wee, wee little bit, mother'—this very

quickly, to shave off the awkward corner of trespass —'and, what do you think? It was father's old regiment, Jerry says. And an officer on a great big gray horse took Charlie up in front of him, and one offered to take me up too, but I didn't like, though I wanted to ever so much; and Charlie looked splendid, and the officer's going to look out for him when he goes into the army.'

'Well, well! I'm glad the great big gray horses did not tread on any of you.'

'Oh, they were lovely, and the great big men too; and the officer who took Charlie up was a dear. I do wish I could be a soldier!' At which her mother laughed softly.

'You'll have other work to do in the world, dear. Soldiering is not the only thing in life, nor the noblest. It is better to make than to mar.'

'But it's so little a girl can do. All the great big, grand things are for the men'——

'But for us women, Mavie, the grandest things of all—to keep life sweet and beautiful. It is better to build than to break down, better to heal than to wound.'

'Ye—es,' admitted Mavie grudgingly. 'But men must fight sometimes.'

'Sometimes they must, when nothing else will avail. But you will see things differently as you grow older, and then you will find out that a woman has her work in the world, and that it is no whit behind a man's. How are the little Frenchman and John Sax getting on?'

'Oh, all right. Etienne's rather a cheat, you know, and John Sax is rather stupid.' At which her mother smiled.

'I have a very high opinion of John Sax,' she said quietly. 'He is not a fireworks like the rest of you, but he's a boy to trust.'

'Oh, he's as straight as an arrow, is John; but he really hasn't much 'magination, you know.'

'Some people I know have more than their share.'

'I like 'magination; it makes you feel large and wide.'

'It's a good thing, if it doesn't carry you out of bounds.'

'We only went just a wee, wee little way, mother.'

'Yes, dear; I wasn't thinking of that. John Sax will never go much out of bounds, I'll wager.'

'But he did,' cried Mavie gleefully. 'He just went with the rest of us.'

'Then I'll be bound he came last to look after you all.'

''M—yes, he was last. He generally is. But he went all the same.'

'John takes after his grandfather. I don't know what yours would do without him. He is his right hand at the bank, and one of the very best men I know. Now, will you run and bring the boys to me for a minute before you go in to dinner?'

### CHAPTER VIII.—HOW AUNT CHARLOTTE FEARED HIGHWAYMEN.

AUNT CHARLOTTE presided at the children's dinner. They had to wait for her. People generally had to wait for Aunt Charlotte. It was one of the many outward signs of her lack of inward and spiritual grace—a passive want of consideration for others which we have learned to estimate as little less mischievous in its effects than active malevolence.

Of a surety Aunt Charlotte wished no ill to any living creature; unless, maybe, to footpads and highwaymen in general, of whom she had a morbid horror ever since one of the fraternity stopped her coach on Ealing Common one night, and courteously relieved her of her rings and diamond necklace, just as she was congratulating herself on her safety. And no one would have been more surprised than herself had she been told in confidence that she was a perpetual and unmitigated nuisance in a regulated household.

She came sailing in at last, tall, fair, smiling at nothing in particular, a fine figure of a woman, and distinctly good-looking, if somewhat lymphatic.

'Dear, dear! and have I kept you all waiting?' she beamed.

'Yes, ma'am,' said Charles, somewhat saucily. 'But we do not mind. We are used to it.'

'Ah, in my young days gentlemen never minded waiting for a lady,' said Aunt Charlotte, settling gracefully into her chair with a beaming smile all round.

'I suppose they would get used to it too in time.'

'How true it is! One can get used to anything. But, above all things, one should cultivate politeness to ladies.—'*N'est ce pas, mon cher?*' to Etienne. She spoke French well, and was proud of it.

'*Mais assurément, mademoiselle,*' bowed Etienne, with the grace of a De Montessonne.

'What gentlemen they breed in France!' mused Aunt Charlotte, beaming approvingly on him.

'Robespierre!' murmured the incorrigible Charles under his breath. For though, from their association with M. de Montessonne and Etienne, they all spoke French fairly well, they still regarded it as a task-language, and resented its unnecessary introduction into familiar intercourse.

'Ah, we must not judge,' said Aunt Charlotte, as the rasp of the hated name caught her ear. 'Above all things, let us be charitable, my dears;' and added vaguely, 'for what else is there, you know?' which was Aunt Charlotte all over.

'Oh, well, there's dinner, and I'm hungry,' said Charles stoutly.

'*Mais c'est bien evident;*' and turning to Etienne, she continued, 'I shall see M. le Marquis to-night, I expect. Shall I give him any message from you? And what report shall I give him?'

'My compliments to monsieur, mademoiselle,

and we are behaving beautifully, and enjoying it much.'

'*C'est bien!* And you are not letting these wild Red Indian people lead you into any mischief? I hear you all came home covered with mud. What had you been doing to get so dirty?'

'We were just playing,' said Etienne non-committally; and even Charles, who had already explained the matter to his mother, felt no necessity to enlighten Aunt Charlotte.

'Well,' said she, looking pointedly at Charles and Mavie, 'I do hope you will remember your papa's instructions. I never shall forget the state we were all in the last time you two went astray. All night we were thinking all manner of awful things. And your poor mamma!' Aunt Charlotte could not express what poor mamma had felt.

'Oh, well, that's all past, Aunt Charlotte, and we were as sorry as we could be,' said Charles with a very warm face. 'There's no need to keep on raking it up again.'

'I don't want to rake it up, my dear boy; but I do hope you'll never do it again.'

'Jerry 's getting his pistols ready, Aunt Charlotte,' said Charles presently with an air of sympathetic reassurance, by way of counter-stroke.

'His pistols, Charles! Whatever for?' with a startled look which afforded Charles the greatest possible gratification.

'Didn't you hear, aunt? The Windsor coach was stopped last night, and the passengers robbed of every penny. I thought Honeybun would have told you'—not ill-pleased at the chance of plumping a shot into that tale-bearing handmaiden.

'No, she didn't tell me,' said Aunt Charlotte breathlessly. 'Whatever shall I do? Go I must. Mr Fox is to be there, and Mr Pitt is expected to look in during the evening, and your grandfather is counting upon me to do the honours.'

'Oh, well, Jerry will have his pistols,' repeated Charles encouragingly.

'Dreadful! To think that we cannot go a trifling journey such as that without exposing ourselves to such horrid risks. I shall speak to Mr Pitt about it.'

'I expect he knows,' said Charles. 'It would take a lot of Mr Pitts to catch all the highwaymen. Jerry's pistols will be of more use. You should have one inside with you, Aunt Charlotte, and when the highwayman comes to the door shoot him down, as Lord Strathmore did, and the other one will run away'——

'Dreadful! Dreadful! I know nothing of pistols. There is nothing for it but to trust in Providence, I suppose; for really what else is there, you know?' And she gazed at them helplessly, in great distress of mind, and evidently already saw old Jerry lying weltering in his gore, and herself and Honeybun at the tender mercy of the gentlemen of the crape masks and sprightly heels.

'I'll go with you if you like, Aunt Charlotte,' suggested Charles hopefully. 'I wouldn't half mind potting a highwayman. It would be rare fun.'

'Your mamma wouldn't hear of it, and I'm told it is best not to resist them, or even to look at them too close. If you do, they make an end of you. How unspeakable life is!' she sighed. 'I'm truly sorry I ever came to the country.'

And more than one of them could have enlarged upon that head; but they only looked what they thought, and Aunt Charlotte went off for a personal consultation with Jerry.

(*To be continued.*)

## THE POSTAGE-STAMP AND ITS STORY.

'WHO invented the postage-stamp?' is a question often asked, and to find its answer we must go back to the seventeenth century. In 1653 the Comte de Nogent and the Sieur de Villayer obtained from Louis XIV. the privilege of establishing post-boxes in various quarters of Paris. A printed 'instruction' was issued to the public, stating that their correspondence would be transmitted if they 'put with their letters a piece of paper which is to bear the words *port payé*, because no money will be accepted; the said piece of paper is to be attached to the said letter, or put round the letter, or slipped inside the letter, or in any way they may find convenient; in such wise, however, that the clerk may see it and remove it easily.' If a specimen of this *billet de port-payé* or postage-paid note were unearthed at the present day it would be worth many times its weight in gold, but no copies are known to exist; and this is not to be wondered at, since each *billet* was removed in transmission and presumably destroyed. We do not even know what it was like in shape, and can only guess that it may have been a narrow strip or band of paper somewhat like the stamped newspaper-wrappers in use in our own time. It bore a certain inscription and a private mark of De Villayer's, and there is little doubt that to De Villayer himself the credit of its invention is due, De Nogent's connection with the post being merely a nominal one. Indeed, we learn from Saint-Simon that De Villayer was 'a fellow full of singular inventions, and had plenty of cleverness,' and was also the inventor of 'those flying chairs that move by means of counter-weights up and down between two walls to the floor required'—in other words, of what we now call lifts.

But nowadays postage-stamps mean to most people the little gummed labels affixed to our letters; and so, if the question with which this

article begins is asked, the inquirer most likely intends to say, 'Who invented the adhesive postage-stamp?' In February 1837 Rowland Hill proposed the use of 'a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash, which the bringer might, by the application of a little moisture, attach to the back of the letter.' No evidence that will bear the slightest scrutiny has been produced to support the various prior claims to the invention of the adhesive postage-stamp; and even should such a claim ever be established, it could not in the slightest degree lessen Rowland Hill's reputation, for it was only the adoption of his great plan of a uniform rate of postage, coupled with prepayment, that rendered the general use of stamps, impressed or adhesive, practicable for postal purposes.

In January 1840 uniform penny-postage came into being; but it was not until May of that year that the postage-stamps themselves were ready. There were four varieties in all: adhesive stamps of the value of one penny black and twopence blue, and envelopes of the same values. The stamps showed a profile of the youthful Queen, after a medal by Wyon, and in their severe elegance of design and superb engraver's-work form miniature works of art that in their kind have never since been surpassed or even equalled. The envelopes (known familiarly to collectors as the 'Mulreadies') bore an elaborate allegorical design by William Mulready, R.A., in which Britannia was seen despatching winged messengers to all the quarters of the globe; or, to quote the author of the *Ingoldsby Legends*:

> Those queer-looking envelope things,
> Where Britannia (who seems to be crucified) flings
> To her right and her left funny people with wings,
> Among elephants, Quakers, and Catabaw kings.

As enormous values are sometimes attributed to these early stamps, it may be well to say that specimens of the penny stamp are still readily obtainable from the dealers at sixpence apiece, and of the penny envelopes at as many shillings. The original penny stamp (or 'queen's head,' as it was called for many years), though its colour was altered from black to red in 1841, remained in use until 1880, by which time the number of stamps of this denomination had reached the enormous total of twenty thousand six hundred and ninety-nine millions eight hundred and fifty thousand and forty. On the other hand, the 'Mulready' envelopes were in use for a few months only; the public, contrary to expectation, showed a very marked preference for the convenient little 'queen's heads,' and Mulready's design, while not devoid of merit, lent itself easily to unmerciful caricature, literary and pictorial. Rowland Hill himself wrote reluctantly in his diary: 'I fear we shall be obliged to substitute some other stamp for that designed by Mulready, which is abused and ridiculed on all sides. In departing so widely from the established "lion and unicorn" nonsense I fear that we have run counter to settled opinions and prejudices somewhat rashly. I now think it would have been wiser to have followed established custom in all the details of the measure where practicable.'

At the end of ten years after the introduction of Rowland Hill's stamp only thirteen foreign countries had adopted the invention, and it is curious to think that the example of Great Britain should first have been followed, in 1843, not by other great European powers, but by Brazil and two Swiss cantons. But during the fifties the accessions came thick and fast, till by January 1860 there were eighty-five countries that had issued postage-stamps. These coloured labels, with their interesting and sometimes mystifying varieties of design and lettering, soon began to attract the notice of the curious, and early in the fifties a few individuals here and there were forming stamp collections in ignorance of each other's existence. Still, it was not until 1861 that the hobby attracted public attention, developing in the following year into a veritable craze. An open-air stamp-bourse established itself in the narrow passage of Birchin Lane, Cornhill, where high and low, rich and poor, congregated for sale and exchange. 'We were often raided by the police,' writes a veteran philatelist. 'I myself was taken to the police-office on the charge of collecting a crowd and obstructing traffic. The scene was interesting and amusing—an assemblage of ladies and gentlemen, youths and small boys, each with a book or books full of stamps, as intent on business as the regular stock-jobbers of the neighbourhood. One of Her Majesty's Cabinet Ministers was seen there, and ladies with their albums carried by livery-servants.'

Professional stamp-dealers sprang up, printed catalogues were published by Dr Gray of the British Museum and others, and periodical journals treating of stamps began to appear. The stamp-mania, like all manias, died; the Birchin Lane gatherings dwindled away, and stamp-collecting, soon to be dignified by the name of philately, settled down into an organised pursuit, worthy of a place as the younger sister of numismatics. In 1869 the Philatelic Society was founded in London under the presidency of the late Sir Daniel Cooper, Bart., succeeded in turn by Mr (now Judge) Philbrick, K.C., the late Earl of Kingston, and in 1896 by the Duke of York, who as Prince of Wales still holds that office. In 1906 His Majesty the King signified his pleasure that the society should be styled 'The Royal Philatelic Society, London,' which title it now bears.

Perhaps the most important event in the annals of philately was the munificent bequest in 1891 of the late Mr Tapling's collection to the British Museum, for its acceptance by the trustees of the national treasure-house effectually brought to an end the old days when stamp-collecting could be dismissed with a contemptuous smile as a pastime for children, or at best a method of instilling some notions of geography into the juvenile mind. The vast collection in question—the second greatest in

the world—was brought together by Thomas Keay Tapling, M.P., who died at the early age of thirty-six years. He collected as a schoolboy, and when he was about fifteen an old gentleman, a friend of his family, gave him a Christmas present of one hundred pounds on condition that he was not to bank it but to spend it as he liked. He devoted the whole of the money to stamps. Through every period of his life—at Harrow and Cambridge, as a student of medicine, and at the Inner Temple, and finally as head of the great City mercantile firm of Thomas Tapling & Co., of Gresham Street—he steadily continued his collection, studying both the stamps themselves and the literature which treats of them. After his death the work of re-arranging and mounting the collection for the British Museum was entrusted to an expert, who was occupied for seven years in the task. For some years only a few sheets of the collection were on view in glass cases in the King's Library, the contents being changed from time to time; but this unsatisfactory plan was superseded a few years ago by the use of three great cabinets with vertical slides, which were constructed at a cost of three thousand six hundred pounds. These cabinets contain the whole of the adhesive stamps in the collection, with the exception of nine specimens of the greatest rarity, which are shown in a room apart.

Among these rarities are the famous 'Post-Office' stamps of Mauritius (1847), specimens of which have always been keenly sought after by philatelists on account of their exceeding rarity. The stamps derive their name from the inscription on the left of the design, which shows a primitively drawn profile of Queen Victoria crowned with a diadem. There are two values, a penny one printed in orange-red and a twopenny in dark-blue. The stamps were engraved by a watchmaker of Port Louis, and only one thousand were printed, of which number only twenty-six copies are known to exist at the present day. The first specimens did not come to light till 1865, when two used stamps, one of each denomination, from the album of a Bordeaux collector, were bought for eight pounds by a Brussels dealer, and sold to Mr Philbrick for twenty pounds, then an enormous price to pay for a couple of postage-stamps. They now have their resting-place in the largest collection in the world, the property of M. la Renotière of Paris, who bought the Philbrick collection in 1881 for eight thousand pounds. By 1875 the price of 'Post-Office Mauritius' stamps had risen a little; in that year a copy of the twopenny stamp was found in the collection of another Bordeaux amateur, who was anxious to raise the necessary funds for a visit of pleasure to the gay capital. It was sold for twelve pounds, and passed into the hands of M. la Renotière, who in his turn exchanged it with Mr Tapling for some other stamps. It was not until 1878 that another 'Post-Office' stamp, a penny one (used), turned up. Major E. B. Evans, R.A., was then stationed at Port Louis, and he bought from a professor of music a small collection in which was the stamp in question. He estimated its value at about thirty pounds, and after keeping it for some years he sold it to Mr Tapling for seventy-five pounds. This specimen is now, with the companion twopenny stamp already mentioned, in the British Museum; it is preserved on the original envelope, which was addressed to a 'Monsieur Alcide Marquay,' and contained an invitation to a ball given by Lady Gomm, the wife of the Governor of the island.

The latest specimen of the 'Post-Office Mauritius' to be discovered was in a little collection made by the vendor, a Hampstead resident, when a schoolboy in 1864. The collection itself contained nothing but trivial rubbish with the exception of this 'Post-Office' stamp, a twopenny blue, unused and in faultless preservation, with the small original margins intact. It was put up at auction in January 1904, amid a large assemblage of stamp-dealers and collectors. The bidding started at five hundred pounds, and went by hundreds to seven hundred pounds, this latter price being offered by a collector who already possessed two copies of the penny red stamp. It was then jumped to one thousand pounds by a London dealer, who went as high as one thousand two hundred pounds. Two other dealers then bid up to one thousand four hundred pounds, at which point one dropped out, and it was knocked down to the other, acting for the Prince of Wales, for one thousand four hundred and fifty pounds, the highest price on record for a postage-stamp.

Another of the British Museum rarities is the British Guiana two cents rose, of 1851, a primitive-looking stamp set up in that year from ordinary printers' type at the *Royal Gazette* office in Georgetown. This stamp is even rarer than the 'Post-Office Mauritius,' and remained unknown till 1877–1878, when four copies were discovered. One was sold to M. la Renotière; one, after passing through many hands, went into the collection of the late Sir W. B. Avery, Bart.; another was sold for twenty pounds to Mr Philbrick, and sixteen years later fetched two hundred and ten pounds at the Hunter sale in New York; the remaining one was sold to the late Mr W. E. Image, and is the specimen now in the Tapling collection. No more copies came to light until 1889, when a pair was found and sold for one hundred and seventy-five pounds. In 1896 another pair was discovered, and has an interesting history, which Canon F. P. Luigi Josa, of Christ Church, Demerara, tells as follows: 'One Easter Day, 1896, Christ Church was financially in a bad way. We were overdrawn at our banker's to the tune of one hundred pounds odd. We had an instalment of the mortgage on our chief school due, and other claims, and we were making efforts to raise some money, and our comparatively poor people gave an Easter offering of a little over seventy-five pounds. An old coloured lady, Miss Preston by name, sent me two blue stamps of 1852, and these I sold for thirty-three dollars sixty cents,

and on Easter Monday I wended my way to Miss Preston to thank her for the gift. Whilst there I inquired whether she had any more of these valuable stamps, especially as buyers were in search of the circular stamps of 1851, and for the two cents rose they were offering over one hundred pounds. Miss Preston said she had given all her stamps away, but she brought out an old basket filled with old receipts and bills. I searched, when, lo and behold! there tumbled out of the basket an envelope addressed "Miss Rose, Blankenburg," this being the name of one of our plantations on the west coast of Demerara. This envelope contained two stamps, an unsevered pair, and they were the very stamps that buyers had been in search of, and for which there were standing advertisements. The lady, Miss Rose, to whom it was addressed, was present in the room, being also a member of my church. On hearing that the two stamps were worth a lot of money, she literally danced with joy, and said, "Thank God! I am at last able to give something worth while." Both the old ladies, although they owned their house and land, were comparatively poor, and so I took my churchwarden to thank them again, and to persuade them to receive a portion of whatever they might fetch. "Not a penny, sir; not a penny. These stamps were reserved for my dear old church."' The stamps were sold by Canon Josa for two hundred and nine pounds, and passed through various hands at increasing prices, being finally sold to Mr H. J. Duveen for six hundred pounds.

A greater stamp 'find' occurred in 1895, when a Kentucky coon, Black Bob, employed as porter at the Louisville (Kentucky) court-house, was commissioned to clear up some boxes of old correspondence. In the act of shovelling a large batch of old letters into the furnace, several that were loose fell at the negro's feet. To one of them Bob noticed a stamp attached. He picked it up for examination, and a search through other bundles brought more stamps to his view, till altogether he found one hundred and forty-seven of the rare St Louis postmaster's stamps of 1845. The stamps were on the mail of a St Louis banking-house addressed to their Louisville correspondent. The janitors of the building discovered the darky curiously examining his find, and one of them, knowing of an adult friend who 'liked such things,' as he said, offered a 'quarter' and a drink for the lot, and Bob was too thirsty to resist. The janitors in their turn sold the first lot of nine stamps for five dollars; but on discovering their true value they obtained a more satisfactory price for the rest, and indeed got fifteen hundred dollars for their last eighteen. The whole lot was resold for nearly twenty-three thousand dollars, it is said, the reputed retail value being sixty thousand dollars.

The knowledge of *trouvailles* like these serves to inspire every collector with the hope that he too may meet one day with some such good fortune; but the tale of high prices realised for rarities must not be read as meaning that stamp-collecting is necessarily associated with a colossal outlay. At the present day a collection numbering many hundreds may be obtained for a few pounds or even shillings; many substantial collections, indeed, have been formed simply by gifts and the wise exchange of duplicates. This being said, we may fitly conclude with the following testimony written by a venerable French *savant:* 'What was originally in my case nothing more than a mere amusement or relaxation became in time the subject of extended researches, studies, and works of all kinds, foreign, I confess, to my profession, but supplying my mind with never-failing enjoyment, and so offering a delightful diversion to the cares and preoccupations of daily life.'

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# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.*

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Luck o' the Spey*, &c.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

THEY laid him down on an improvised couch aft, and a silence fell on the ship. Flett had done the best in bandaging and restoratives that his rough-and-ready knowledge allowed; and as he watched the still figure with an aching heart, grimly recalling the events of the last few hours, Westwater's ravings, the scene down the cleft in the isle, suspicions, hopes, fears, a hundred formless conjectures obtruded themselves. Who was Dick, who had left his bones on the Forgotten Rock? And the rubies —whose were they? Who was Westwater? The belt round the captain's waist seemed to him to be a positive weight.

He watched patiently, the white night wearing slowly into morning. Suddenly there was a movement from the couch. Westwater slowly opened his eyes and looked at Flett and his surroundings. This time there was speculation in his gaze. He smiled feebly, saying nothing, a pitiable anxiety growing in his eyes. The skipper gave him some brandy, and a patch of colour rose in his face as he beckoned Hugh nearer him with an anxious gesture. The skipper bent over him.

'I remember! Send—the—others—away!' he gasped.

Flett signalled the mate to withdraw, and they

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were alone, but for a shadow, The Shadow, near the stricken man. Westwater's hands wandered slowly down, and clutched suddenly at his waist.

'Where is it—the belt, skipper?' he whispered, almost fiercely.

'Safe with me,' said Flett, and showed him it around his own waist. 'Safe! You 'll have it back when you 're better.'

The ghost of his old smile flickered on the other's face.

'When I'm better! I've had a runaway knock or two at the Door in my time; but—this time I'm—going—inside. You know what the belt holds?'

Flett nodded. 'Ay; I know.'

'Curse them! Throw them into the Gulf! Curse them!' he said, an uncanny vigour in his voice.

'S-steady, man! Curse naething just at—at—this time. If they're no' yours, you've time yet to'——

'No, no. "*Rien n'va plus*," I hear the croupier. I've played, and lost the game. That 's all.' His voice went down again to a weak whisper.

'No, no,' Flett broke in quickly, 'it 's no' the end o' a game ye're at. You've time yet'—he hesitated—'if you want to—to—to repent.'

The other man looked intently, penetratingly into the captain's eyes, and hung his head, blank despair in his wide, staring eyes as he held out a hand to the other. The big captain took it in his, and was on his knees on the instant beside him, telling him—not without the difficult and searing tears of manhood—broken, humble words of counsel: of hope, mercy; of the tremendous words 'the forgiveness of sins, the life everlasting,' his slow, clumsy pleading strewn from the bedrock of his heart with his native Scots speech, homely, incongruous, rugged, but heard and understood by shining companies of angels.

'Leave me—for a moment, captain,' said Westwater; and Flett, slow in many things, was swift to understand. He went softly from his side, as he saw the other's white lips moving.

Westwater raised himself slowly, leaning on one elbow. 'I'm ready. Promise me—something. Promise.'

'I do,' said Flett simply, and held out his hand again. The other took it. 'But what aboot the—on the Rock yonder—an' the—who was'——

'Dick! Who was Dick, you mean?' He gulped down more brandy. 'Dick was—Dick. My ape for the—the chestnuts. I'm to blame. Let it go at that. Poor Dick! He and I shipped as stokers on the *Dark Rosaleen*, out of Hull, on her last voyage.'

'You a stoker! The *Dark Rosaleen!*' interjected Flett. 'Lost with all hands, oot there, in a fog.'

'So Lloyd's report. Wrong. A collision. Dick and I were the only men saved. The worse for us both. We got ashore on the Forgotten Rock. Winter coming on—no food—bitter cold. So we waited—together—for Death, starving, with a fortune beside us. A fortune. There it is!' He pointed to the belt. 'One day—making for the crest to signal, a blizzard caught us. Dick fell over the cleft, carrying the belt with him. I wandered about—two days. Russian gunboat, on survey, took me off—brain-fever. Then England. Then I shipped with you, Flett, to come back—for them. I 'm sorry, Flett. I knew the spot, I thought, and here—I—am.' He dropped back exhausted.

'An' the jewels—what 's to be done wi' them?'

'Flett, promise me again!'

'I have promised.'

'I ask your pardon, captain. Listen. Take them—to the man—I name—in London. They are his. And give him this too.' He groped in a pocket, and then handed Flett a little book. 'He is a just man, and I—I—good God! I was his friend once. Write the name down—now, now, quickly!'

Flett took out a pencil and a scrap of paper.

'Lord Criffel—9—Cromdale Square, London. He 'll know the sender, and no one else—in this world.'

The captain started. The Criffel rubies! Surely he had heard the phrase before, or read something like it, somewhere? He wrote the name and address down, and the other gave a sigh of relief as he watched him. Flett was following up the train of thought, when he heard, this time in a weak and halting whisper:

'Captain, another promise. Don't take me to England. Bury me at sea.'

'But your friends, an'—an' home,' said Hugh gently, for he saw that The Shadow had drawn closer.

The other shook his head.

'No! I've been—a—a—coward. No lofty walls of Troy for me. Promise me!' he asked, almost a command in his eyes.

'I promise,' said the captain, taking his hand. The other gave a quick glance of thanks and lay silent.

The sun was up, the wide arch of the heavens filled with it and the freshness of the morning, the floor of the sea dazzling white in the distance, nearer, changing into blue, and close at hand into clear green broken by the dark-brown tangles of seaweed in the shallows around the ship.

Dying embers of the Kokko fires wrought fitful stains on the clean air. Faint, far-off laughter of some belated revellers tinkled over the burnished bay. Birds called and called in the woods, and a couple of butterflies chased each other in a white and trembling zigzag round and round the deck, over the side, and out of sight. In the article of death, the man's gaze followed their snowy flicker, until The Shadow laid its slow, sure hand over his eyes.

In the distance the thin, formal chimes of the Swedish brigantine's bell heralded the routine of a new day.

*(To be continued.)*

# PORTLAND (MAINE), LONGFELLOW'S 'BEAUTIFUL TOWN.'

By F. C. Armstrong.

WELL might her most illustrious son sing the praises of his birthplace in verses that will live as long as the language in which they are written; for, seated amongst her hills, in her mantle of living green, and with her exquisite bay sparkling at her feet, the city of Portland is one of the fairest, as well as the most interesting, of New England towns. For America, she is a venerable town. It is nearly three hundred years since Captain John Smith—better known by his exploits in Virginia than his explorations along a coast which the early visitors thought too cold and bleak to be inhabited—found that 'west of the Kennebec River is the land of Ancocisco, at the bottom of a deep bay filled with many great islands, which divide it into many good harbours.' Recognising a fine harbour of refuge on an unfriendly coast, the brave pioneer left a few men upon the 'neck' or promontory of the mainland which jutted out into the bay, and sailed away to make further discoveries elsewhere.

If the brave sailor saw the bay as it revealed itself to more modern eyes almost three centuries afterwards it is small wonder that he was struck with its beauty, for the world has few more lovely prospects than that which lies at the feet of the fair town. Lightly resting, like great emeralds fringed with pearl upon a sea of sparkling sapphire, lie upon the waters of the bay the islands which were the 'Hesperides' of her young poet's dreams. Far away beyond them gleams the wonder and mystery of the great ocean, stretching into infinity; and when you look towards the land you see undulating hills clothed in the richest tints of varying green. The town behind you is well named 'Forest City,' for her busiest streets are fringed with tall elm-trees that cast a pleasant shade upon the crowded side-walks below, while in her demure residential avenues the splendid trees lining them give a sense of restful privacy which is very pleasant and refreshing.

When John Smith first saw the beautiful prospect mainland and islands were clothed in impenetrable forests, and amongst those dark shadows lurked a foe so cruel and relentless that the bravest hearts sank at the very mention of the Red Men. One of the larger islands, now a crowded summer resort, was a favourite gathering-place of these demoniac enemies. During the terrible Indian wars in the later decades of the seventeenth century many fierce attacks were made upon the town from this vantage-point.

At first the young colony was not greatly troubled by the savages; they did not, perhaps, think the place of sufficient importance to be pillaged. It was not until 1623, nine years after John Smith had visited the 'neck,' that anything like a colony began to take form. Then an adventurer named Christopher Levett landed on the promontory and actually began to build 'stone houses.' Levett returned to London, and his comrades seem to have melted away.

Ten years later two men who appear to have had interest in high places procured from old Sir Ferdinando Gorges, about the last survivor of the earliest commission, a grant of the whole district. These men, who were named Cleve and Tucker, managed to secure this lease on very favourable terms. It is quite possible that Sir Ferdinando had no very definite idea of the vastness of the territory he was signing away for a term of two thousand years. It seems as if the very vaguest ideas of the enormous size of the new continent existed on the other side. Even within our own time ignorance of geographical distances has led to mistakes sometimes.

With that wistful yearning after home which has scattered broadcast over the face of New England the familiar names of the Old Country, the settlers on Casco Bay called the little town Falmouth, and the name still exists in the lower parts of the city, along what was then the sea-front, but which now is lined with the black wharves and the quays of her poetic son's verses.

Cleve visited London more than once in order to make sure of his rights, which he so strongly established that to this day all the lands in the large district are held under the act of settlement he then procured. But he himself did not enjoy the advantages he secured for the town. He died poor, worn out, it is said, by endless litigation.

The outbreak of what is known as the Indian war in 1670 tried the growing town sorely. The Red Indians, backed by the French, fell upon it, determined to exterminate the inhabitants and burn the houses. But, although the savages were amply supplied with arms and ammunition by their civilised allies, the resolute stand made by a mere handful of brave men within the little town held them at bay until help arrived.

Amongst that heroic band of defenders there was a man who was doomed to perish by the hands of his own countrymen. This was George Burroughs, the 'Fighting Minister,' who for some time had been 'an acceptable preacher' in Falmouth. His evil fate led him back to Salem after the splendid defence of Falmouth, and there he perished miserably when the mad delusion of witchcraft fell upon that 'saintly' town. In her sad tale of *Lois the Witch*, Mrs Oliphant has lightly outlined his splendid personality; but the historical records of his character are more striking than the fictitious.

It was during these years of strain and stress that a number of Huguenot families, driven from their homes by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, arrived at Falmouth to make their mark upon the civilisation of the new town. England and France were now at war, and the soldiers of the 'Most Christian King' fought side by side with the savage Red Men against the growing town. In one of their ruthless attacks it was burned to the ground, this being the first of the three conflagrations that have passed over the fair city. She speedily recovered from this catastrophe. A truce was concluded with the Indians; but when the town was rebuilt, very wisely a fine fort was also built for her protection. New immigrants from the Old Country reinforced the population, bringing fresh enterprise along with them. They saw the splendid possibilities of the town, and began to develop them. At her feet lay a magnificent waterway; behind her, woods that provided an inexhaustible supply of the finest timber in the world. Soon a shipbuilding industry sprang up, bringing in its train other auxiliary trades. Her ropewalks have been made classical by her sweet singer, who has also ennobled her potteries by his genius; but a great provision trade, fisheries, and, above all, her overseas commerce with the West Indian Islands brought to her busy quays a flowing tide of wealth. Strange that a city almost fanatically prohibitionist should owe so much of her wealth to the manufacture of strong drink, but such is the unquestionable fact. It was through the tons of molasses carried to her port from the great sugar-producing islands of the west that the famous New England rum of our ancestors was produced, and the distilleries of Portland were the chief source of her prosperity for many long years.

Revolutionary troubles sorely interfered with her prosperity for a time. Curiously enough, she had amongst her burgesses men who stood for the king, and suffered for their loyalty. But, indeed, the good town had her justifiable reasons for turning her back upon King George. A certain Commodore Mowat, of the Royal Navy, upon what appears to have been very slight provocation, shelled the town, burning it to the ground, at a loss, it is said, of fifty thousand pounds to the citizens. This was in 1775.

But once the troubles were overpast, Portland, now a chartered city, with Falmouth for a suburb, forged ahead. New houses were erected, new markets were opened, with fresh enterprise to bring still greater wealth into her hands, and the world went very well with the newly built city.

In 1785 General Peleg Wadsworth, a distinguished citizen, who had covered himself with glory during the war, began to build for himself upon the extreme outskirts of the city the comfortable red-brick house that is now set apart as a memorial of his famous grandson and namesake, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. At that time the substantial mansion stood apart amongst its sheltering trees in a wide garden. To-day it is in the heart of the city. The old trees still stand in the small court-yard in front; but the wide garden is covered with houses, and the quiet country road upon which it stood is a street filled with busy traffic. There is something very quaint and suggestive about the house. The bricks of which it is composed have acquired a wonderful richness of colour in the passing of the years. It is exactly as it was when the poet lived under its roof-tree, and the pride of the city is to keep intact everything connected with him it has gathered into the old rooms. He was not born here; but he was only eight months old when, twenty years after the house was built, General Wadsworth moved to an estate conferred upon him by a grateful country for his services during the war, and Stephen Longfellow, who had married his fair and wise daughter Zilpa, moved into the town-house, bringing with them the infant who was to be the most illustrious of that town's sons.

Stephen Longfellow, the poet's father, handsome, brilliant, and a rising lawyer, came of a good old English stock improved by generations of strenuous colonial life. He did well for himself when he took to wife the mother of his poet-son. You can see their portraits on the walls of the house in which they lived and died. Personal beauty was one of Nature's gifts to the family. Even the stiff, old-fashioned local painters who left their presentments to us have not failed to give us the impression of a gifted family. General Wadsworth looks like a handsome, debonair old gentleman of a courtly school, and his son-in-law must have been a more than commonly 'personable' man. The ladies' likenesses are not so successful; still, you can understand a good deal that the painters have left to the imagination.

In 1825, when the poet was still a dreamy boy, Mr Longfellow found the house too small for his large family — there were eight children and a maiden aunt residing in the house, with its original four rooms on each floor — so a third story was added. In this addition to the home you can see the room in which the poet slept. The house is almost austere in its simplicity; the furniture solid, simple, good of its kind, but absolutely devoid of ornament. Most interesting is the old, ink-stained desk in the little back parlour where the poet wrote several of his well-known verses, including 'The Rainy Day.' You cannot help feeling a thrill as you touch the severely plain bit of old furniture, and think of the visionary lad who wandered about the 'beautiful town' when its reviving trade was at its busiest. Because the embargo of 1807–12 had played havoc with the trade of the town, her ships lay idle at her wharves or rotted in the bay; her seamen sought other ports or else took to evil ways; her industries languished; her population decreased; her gallant captains were flung idle upon the world, which seemed to have no room for them. But when the war of 1812 broke out the city seemed to leap back to life. Her ships awoke from their long

sleep, and sailed familiar waters once more in all their olden pride; the city revived, renewing her youth; and in its midst walked a little child whose young eyes were seeing and whose ears were listening to all that went on round him, to be stored in memory and transmuted into golden verse when the time for singing arrived. He was only an infant of five when the thunder of battle resounded over the town, and a fierce fight raged at her very gates. In the bay at her feet was fought all through a summer morning the sea-fight of Casco Bay, when the English brig *Boxer* met the United States frigate *Enterprise* in deadly combat. How the thunder of those guns must have impressed itself upon the child's brain, when in after-life—indeed, in the end of his splendid career—he tells us how he

> Remembered the sea-fight far away,
> How it thundered o'er the tide;
> And the dead captains as they lay
> In their graves o'erlooking the tranquil bay,
> Where they in battle died.

For the result of the fight was the death of the two commanders, and a noble funeral, and an honoured resting-place in the fine old Eastern Cemetery that overlooks one of the loveliest scenes on earth.

How much the 'magic of the sea' and the 'beauty and mystery' of the ships impressed the boy's vivid imagination we who read his poems can well understand. Only a boy who had hung round the shipbuilders' yard, and noted every stage of the ship's progress from keel to crow's-nest, could as a man produce poems like his 'Building of the Ship.' Or how could any one who had not grown up in the vicinity of a ropewalk write the lovely verses he dedicated to what, after all, is a prosaic business? The sea seems to throb in his very blood and brain, and it is in his poems dealing with ocean that he is at his best, and that 'best' is very good indeed.

He knew the woods right well also. The lovely stretches of planting that lie close to the busiest parts of his beloved 'beautiful town' were haunted places to him. With tender, longing remembrance he returns to his native city to renew old impressions when his fame had spread wherever the English language was spoken; for, like many another poet-dreamer, he had lived long enough to find that 'old things were best,' and in spirit he wanders through 'Deering Woods' to find amongst their 'leafy domes' his lost youth, with all its gleams and glooms, its songs and silences, which he has translated for us into a language that stirs our inmost soul.

He wandered far from the old red-brick house; yet, as we stand under its roof, he does not seem far away. There is the cradle in which he slept the deep slumbers of infancy, the little cap that covered his baby-head, the frocks he wore while he was yet 'the baby' of the family. Later, we can read the letters he wrote home while he was wandering in the lands beyond the Hesperides of his youthful dreaming. Love for his mother was his deepest passion in those days. Happily she was left to him for many years. A letter written to her on his journey in Europe is framed upon a wall of the room where he wrote much; it shows the longing of his heart to be with her 'at thanksgiving time,' and is very touching. He saw with deep regret the last great Portland fire, that of 1866, which had no heroic beginning, but was the result of a very common accident. A small boy playing with fireworks on the Fourth of July in that year managed to kindle a blaze in a boatbuilders' workshop which spread over so much of the town that traces of the damage it wrought still remain.

But again the town has recovered herself, and now her public buildings are on a par with those of her more 'hustling' sisters. For there is a fine flavour of aristocratic feeling about Portland. She is by no means a 'smart' city. She has her old residences still inhabited by the descendants of the merchant princes who built them. The elms in State Street shelter many stately homes where old traditions are strictly preserved. Although thoroughly American, if the Forest City were on the other side of the water her politics would be termed Conservative. She is a highly respectable town. The thirsty outsider would in vain seek for a bar whereat to quench his thirst—that is, if he did not quite understand how such matters are managed in secret in a prohibition town! One of her respected citizens said proudly to a visitor that not one of certain youths he knew had ever seen a bar, an assertion which provoked the unexpected reply, 'Just imagine their delight when they do see one!' which showed that the speaker had some insight into human nature.

There is a bronze statue to Longfellow in the town; and other distinguished natives were N. P. Willis, Sara P. Parton (Fanny Fern), Commodore Preble, Neal Dow, and Thomas B. Reed.

## THE POTTER.

The wheel is whirling—let it whirl!
All the day they go and come,
Cups like sapphire, pots like pearl,
Shapen by the skilful thumb.
Cups like sapphire, pots like pearl,
All the day they spin and whirl:
For the potter knows the clay
Must his mastercraft obey.

My wheel is swaying—let it sway!
Whirling pass my pots of pearl;
Bright and dark, from day to day,
Sad and sweet, they spin and whirl.
Bright and dark from day to day
My jewel-vessels whirl and sway:
But the Potter knows His art,
While He turns and shapes my heart.

ALEXANDER EAGAR.

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# 'I C H  D I E N.'

By Lettice Milne Rae.

BY the side of a grassy upland slope, such as is to be found in the shire of Oxford, stood a little wayside chapel. It had stood there for many long years—from Anglo-Saxon times, some said; while others maintained that it had been founded by a Crusader as a thank-offering for safe return from glorious victory. Whatever its age or date, it was certain no man from that country-side answered the call to battle without first lighting a candle or offering a prayer at that shrine, which was dedicated to Our Lady of Victories.

Now, the chapel, though so obscure a place, possessed a great prize. Whether bestowed by its pious founder or by some other none knew; but there, in a corner to the right of the altar, stood an old oaken reading-desk, and on it, firmly secured by chains so that none might take it away, lay a copy of the Scriptures written in Latin. But it was as a pearl before swine, for few who came to worship at that shrine could read, and fewer still could read the Latin tongue.

Our Lady of Victories lay less than two leagues from the township of Oxford. That mistress of learning was then in her childhood, and had but three colleges, the latest founded being named the College of the Queen or Queen's College, in honour of Philippa, consort of Edward III., the reigning king of England. The new college already possessed a goodly number of scholars, and was even honoured by the presence of the king's son.

One mellow October afternoon in the year 1345 a scholar of Queen's, a tall, spare youth, might have been seen making his way along the path that led to the shrine. The autumn sunshine was still warm and bright, and gilded the leaves on the trees which rustled in the cool breeze, some falling at the feet of the youth as he walked with a quick, firm step that betrayed a keener vitality than his appearance warranted. His face was pale and thin and worn with much study, but it had a look of earnest purpose; and his eyes shone with the light of an unconquerable spirit, though his back was bent, and his scholar's gown was old and threadbare, covering a poor and shabby tunic.

As he came nearer the chapel his step quickened and his eye brightened. Doffing his cap, he entered the low doorway; and, although a man of peace, he knelt at the altar and prayed that he might have victory. Then, crossing to the old reading-desk, he opened the precious manuscript and began to read. There he stood reading intently till the brief sunlight of the October day faded, sometimes copying pages of the book on to a bit of parchment which he drew from his wallet. So absorbed was he in his task that the entrance of another pilgrim to the shrine passed unnoticed.

The new-comer was a youth goodly to see, tall and handsome, somewhat younger in years than our student. His limbs were strong and lusty with the strength of boyhood; his black curling hair hung on either side of his proud, fearless face; his dark eyes flashed with ambition, and in their depths lurked both tenderness and cruelty. He also wore a scholar's gown over his rich and sumptuous tunic. His bearing was noble, but he bowed his haughty head in all humility before the altar as he knelt to pray for victory, and was full of young hopes, for he was soon to go forth to battle with life and the enemies of his country, to win his spurs, and to make or mar his name.

Long he knelt before the altar in lowly supplication. Then, as his gaze wandered from the image of Our Lady of Victories, his eye lighted on the figure at the reading-desk still bending over the pages of the great book. He watched the reader for some time. Something in the pale face attracted him. Here was another youth with hopes and dreams very different from his doubtless, but yet a seeker after victory.

But now the last rays of the sun had died away, and the chapel was almost in darkness. The reader could no longer see the closely written pages. Rolling up his parchment, he replaced it in his wallet; and, making a reverence, he left the shrine, and slowly


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walked along the path towards the town, dreaming dreams and seeing visions.

The young worshipper remained alone for some moments; then he too passed out into the darkening night. After following the scholar for a little distance, he quickened his pace and soon overtook him. 'Good-even, friend,' said he. 'Ye go to the town? Art scholar there?'

'Ay, of Queen's,' answered the other.

'Then we be fellow-scholars. I also am of Queen's. If it displeaseth thee not I shall bear thee company, that we may beguile the way, for the moon hides her face to-night and the road be dark.'

'Right welcome are ye, Sir Stranger. I fear me I shall prove but a poor companion, being a simple scholar and not given to much speech.'

'But to much thought, Sir Scholar, and a man not without ambition, methinks, in spite of his few words,' interposed he of the fine tunic.

'Ay, sir, ye have guessed aright; I have my hopes and dreams. How came ye by that surmise?' asked the student, glancing questioningly at the youth.

'I saw ye at the shrine of Our Lady of Victories, and I read thy face, Sir Scholar. I know that hunger in your eyes, for I have felt its pangs. But the day draweth nigh when I shall be free to cast aside books and parchments, and go forth to wield a sword in defence of my country.'

'So thy desire is the glory of arms, good youth?' said the scholar gravely.

'Ay, sir; and what better desire can a man have than to couch a lance or break a spear for home and country, to uphold the right and protect the weak as a true knight?'

'Ay, Sir Warrior, 'tis a noble thing to defend the right, to uphold the oppressed and down-trodden, to fight against the enemies of England; but there be subtler weapons, good youth, than the sword and the spear, weapons that can be wielded even if the body be weak and the sword-arm feeble.'

'Speak ye of the dagger of the assassin or the powder of the poisoner?' asked the knight-aspirant with scorn and horror in his voice.

'Nay, nay, good youth, these be foul means,' answered the student. 'The stab in the dark and the poison-cup are for dastards and cravens. The weapons I think on are fair and honourable, more powerful and more far-reaching—ay, and making for more lasting peace, if wisely used, than the sword or the spear.'

'What may those weapons be, good sir?'

'The tongue and the pen,' replied the scholar quietly.

'The tongue and the pen!' laughed our warrior. 'These indeed be weapons for the scholar and the man of peace. But how defend our hearths and homes by such feeble means?'

'Good youth, no man can judge their strength; they are like arrows shot into the air, flying for great length, and then striking, man knows not always how or when or where, but ofttimes striking deep.'

'Ye liken it to an arrow, but can a pen overwhelm the enemies of our country as our trusty bowmen? Can the tongue alone redress a wrong, Sir Scholar?'

'Ay, Sir Warrior, the greatest enemies of England cannot be slain by sword or spear; for they are not corporal—they are here in our midst, within our homes and our monasteries. The corrupt life, the hardened conscience, the sins of sloth and greed, oppression and cruelty, superstition, ignorance, and error—yea, even error in the Church herself—are greater foes to our country than the armies of France.' And the scholar's voice rang out on the still night.

'Ye are bold, Sir Scholar,' cried the youth with a sudden glance at his companion's face as it gleamed in the darkness, and admiration and surprise were mingled in the glance.

'Ay, sir, for I too would serve England, and fight for truth, honour, and freedom, and I fear not to attack her enemies whatever or whoever they may be. I hope to be as bold and strong as any soldier in the king's army, for I shall fight under the banner of the King of kings.'

'Methinks, Sir Scholar, that our king loses a valiant warrior if ye remain among pens and parchments. Would ye not rather be in the battle-charge, to feel the heart beat high and the blood course swiftly through the veins? Think of the glorious onset sweeping down the foe, the shout of victory—a sound worth hearing—and the banner of England borne aloft, floating proud and free!'

'Nay, nay, good youth, such glory in warfare is only in dreams. War must ever be hard, cruel, and terrible, and should only be waged for the righteous maintenance of national justice, peace, and safety, not for the love of power and glory and self-aggrandisement. These wars with France are no national quarrel. I fear me our king seeks his own cause when he leads his armies against the French king, and not the right and might of England.'

'Methinks ye are over bold to talk thus,' cried our warrior hotly, and his haughty face looked dark. 'Ye are but a simple scholar; what can ye know of the king's wars? Cannot the cause be for moral good as well as the glory of the realm? Would ye rather that men sat at home in idleness and ease, wasting their manhood in petty quarrels and tavern brawls? Is bull-baiting or cock-fighting a better pastime than following the king, lead where he will and in what cause? Then indeed would sloth and greed rule the land, and men would be at the throats of their brother-men for lack of better sport. Nay, the king would raise a nation, strong and free, welded together in loyalty, that Englishmen may be as brothers, Norman and Saxon as one, all the old feuds forgotten in the love of country and the desire to serve her. How better can a man learn this than by following his king to battle, fighting shoulder to shoulder with his countrymen, learning endurance and hardihood, facing privation and danger, even death; and not the bowmen and

yeomen only, but the knight and the squire, lord and retainer, nobles, princes, king, all striving for the same end and for the love of the same Motherland?'

'Ay, good youth, ye speak well,' returned the scholar gently. 'May ye be the noble warrior of your dreams, and serve your king and country with valour and with victory. England hath need of both the sword and the pen, and her soldiers must be fearless and dauntless, strong to attack evil and error, whether in king or people, pope or prelate. And God defend the right!'

'And grant ye your victory, Sir Scholar, for ye have a warrior's heart beneath your scholar's gown. We are now within the town, and I must bid ye farewell and seek my lodging. I thank thee for thy company, and shall remember thy words. Tell me thy name, that I may know it when the fame of thy conquests by pen and tongue are spread abroad.'

'John Wycliffe,' was the answer.

'Then, John Wycliffe, farewell. If ever ye would wield the sword rather than the pen, seek out Edward Plantagenet and remind him of this walk from Our Lady of Victories on St Crispin's Eve;' and, having spoken, our warrior disappeared into the darkness.

'My lord the Prince!' gasped our scholar, amazed, as he peered through the black night and heard the retreating footsteps.

John Wycliffe, first translator of the Scriptures into the mother-tongue, and first English reformer; Edward the Black Prince, the great soldier, the hero of Crécy and Poitiers—both loved and served their country, and was not victory theirs? Let England, mighty and Protestant England, say!

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# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER IX.—HOW THE MARQUIS LOOKED TO HIS ARMOUR.

IN his own apartment in the small house in Queen Street, M. le Marquis de Montessonne, habited in a very ancient dressing-gown, with a coloured silk kerchief twisted like a turban round his little, bald head, was deep in his preparations for the evening.

On various pegs about the walls hung his black velvet coat, his knee-breeches, his beautifully worked waistcoat. On the bed were his lace ruffles and neckcloth. Below it, his silver-buckled shoes shone like mirrors. On the plain chest of drawers, from which he had just carefully extracted all these things, stood his dress-wig, on a stand by the small looking-glass. He was going over each article with critical care, as a knight of old inspected the armour on which his life might depend in the coming fray.

It was the top front room of the house, and boasted two small windows. Etienne's room at the back and the staircase occupied all the rest of the storey. Monsieur's room was not large, and contained no superfluity of furniture. Etienne's was smaller still, and contained still less. Both rooms were, however, scrupulously clean and neat. It did not take very long of a morning to put them to rights.

M. le Marquis's thoughts were concentrated on some of life's problems. His face showed it, and his lips. When he examined the long black velvet coat, with its great flapped pockets, you might have thought the trouble lay there. But it did not. The coat was immaculate, and the waistcoat, and the breeches. The beautiful lace ruffles, indeed, presented something of a problem, and might sufficiently account for the pinched brow and pursed lips, for here and there the critical eyes had detected a tiny lapsus. And yet, so exquisitely delicate was their texture, and of so intricate a nature, that to the ordinary—and certainly to the general masculine—eye they must have remained undiscovered. But the marquis knew that lace as he knew his family tree—with which, indeed, and the family fortunes, it had been somewhat intimately associated. And the flaws annoyed him, even though they might be known to none but himself; for in lace, as in the more important departments of life, a stitch in time may save much labour later on.

He produced from the top drawer of the bureau a needle and thread; from a tiny corner-cupboard a small glass containing a spoonful of coffee, which he proceeded to dilute more and more, with careful comparison with the lace, until it was no more than tinged water. Then he threaded his needle deftly, as one to whom the delicate operation was no novelty, drew his thread through the attenuated decoction, and left it to dry for a few minutes, while he gave a fresh twist here and there to the flowing curls of the wig with his long white fingers; discovered a tiny hole in one of his black silk stockings, and darned it neatly; gave a final polish to the silver buckles of his shoes; found a slight abrasion on one shoe, and healed it with an application from a tiny blacking-pot and gentle rubbing; and then washed his hands and set to work on his discrepant laces.

Judging by his face, the task was no easy one; but in fact he was looking a long way past it. The holes in his laces were not the only ones that would be visibly none the worse for some careful patching, and at times these more serious shortcomings and their possible reparation held him contemplative, and the long fingers would dally and the needle remain suspended, or prick lightly here and there inconsequently, as though probing possibilities and endeavouring to gauge whither they might lead.

Ludicrous enough the little gentleman looked, perched on the side of his bed, with his fantastic

head nodding now and again like a china mandarin, and now fixed in steady introspective stare.

The loose ends of his turban had broken loose, and flapped when he nodded like the ears of a prize rabbit; but his thoughts were too deep for diversion by matters extraneous, and the comicality of his appearance would not have disturbed him in the least had he known it.

His task satisfactorily ended, he assumed his ordinary workaday coat and wig, and went downstairs to drink a dish of tea with Mr Sax, of whose arrival home from the bank the front-door knocker had just given unmistakable warning.

His chair was waiting for him at the side of the table nearest the fire. Mrs Sax had placed him there that first January day when he came in from the bank with John, looking small and shrivelled with the cold, and he had occupied that place ever since. When the boys were there they sat opposite him, and the table was not of such a size as to make Mr and Mrs Sax at the head and the foot feel very far apart.

'Ah, *mon ami*, you tear yourself from the great affairs to waste the time that is money in feasting and revelry. But it is marvellous!' was the marquis's jovial broadside as he bowed elegantly and sat down.

'I have known great affairs carried through even in such places, M. le Marquis,' said John Sax soberly.

'Ah, ha!' chuckled the marquis with a quick glance at him. 'You men of affairs are never satisfied.—What a race it is! Does he not also dream affairs all night long, madame?'

'I have known him do that, mussure,' said Mrs Sax with a smile. And if the sharp eyes of the little Frenchman had been on the lookout they might have noticed a momentary tightening of John Sax's jaw, and the look of relief that eased it as she added, 'But not for a long time now, I'm glad to say. I think he comes home too tired to do anything but sleep sound all through the night.'

'And the bank is still there?' joked M. le Marquis.

'Still there, monsieur, or was half-an-hour ago.'

'And I wager, in the press of greater matters, you forgot to order the chairs.'

'How much?' asked John Sax, to humour him.

'Ah, then, I withdraw. You are not a safe man to wager with.'

'I never made a wager in my life.'

'*Parbleu!* to think of it!' with an expressive shrug. 'But, in truth, one can live without when one has to. But, yes,' he said with a reminiscent nod, 'it is extraordinary what one can do without when one has to.'

Had he not proved it in his own person, he—Marquis of France, with half-a-dozen great châteaux in various 'departments,' as they called them now, with servants innumerable and lordly revenues—five years ago? And since—and now! Still, it was impossible for him not to remember at times that there was one thing he had not had to do without, as so many of his friends had had to do—and that was the power to remember at all, the power to think, even to themselves; the power to keep their heads on their shoulders.

'Won't you eat something, mussure?' urged Mrs Sax, seeing that he only sipped his tea.

'Nay, madame, I thank you. But it were waste at both ends to eat now, and again at the banquet. 'Twould be but wasting your substance and my opportunity. With your permission I will hold myself in reserve, in justice to Sir George's *chef*, with whose quality I am well acquainted.—You expect some bright particular stars to-night, Mr Sax, is it not?'

'The Governor of the Bank of England is to be there,' in a tone of mingled pride and awe, 'and Mr Fox, and the Lord Mayor of course, and possibly Mr Pitt.'

'Ah, ha! But we are highly honoured! Well, honour where honour is due. And when does our good Sir George become My Lord?'

'Ah!' said John Sax with a non-committal nod which might equally cover knowledge or ignorance.

'And our hostess to-night? Is it mademoiselle or madame?'

'Miss Lauriston has come up from the country. I have just taken her her jewels from the bank. Mrs Charles's health has not permitted of her coming.'

'The pity!' and yet there was a savour of satisfaction about M. le Marquis's acceptance of the news. 'So sweet a lady! It is grievous to have such poor health.'

'It is that,' said Mrs Sax. 'And so good and beautiful a lady, too. If ever any one deserved the very best of everything, it is our Mrs Charles.'

'Truly!'

'And Mr Charles, he's another that deserves as good. There's not many like him.'

'If only blind Fortune gave us all our deserts!' murmured monsieur regretfully.

'We'd not have had the pleasure of knowing you, mussure, maybe,' said Mrs Sax complimentarily.

'The loss would have been equally mine, madame. One learns in adversity what good fortune never succeeds in teaching one. When the wheel turns once more in our favour some of us may have learned our lessons, and, for such, life will have the keener flavour by reason of abstinence.'

'I'm sure I wish you'd take a bite before you go, mussure,' said Mrs Sax with concern. 'It'll be quite eight o'clock before you get anything, and may be half-past if any of the big people are late of getting there.'

'I will pay Sir George the greater compliment of bringing to his table an absolutely unblemished appetite. In anticipation I already enjoy the masterpieces of his *cordon bleu*. Sometimes,' he moralised, 'the pleasures of anticipation are greater than the actual realisation.'

'You're sure of a good dinner,' said Mrs Sax. 'Sir George spares no expense. His dinners are quite the talk of the town.' And then to her husband: 'Remember to unscrew the knocker before you go, John, or maybe it won't be there when you come back!' Not that the knocker was in any way unique, unless perhaps in the extreme brilliance of its polish. But knockers, even of modest pretensions, cost money, and long and sad experience of the ways of young men about town had taught Mrs Sax that, after dark, a knocker unscrewed and lying in the passage was worth many knockers on the outsides of doors.

Mrs Sax, as you will have perceived from the foregoing, was of a kindly, matter-of-fact turn of mind, and M. le Marquis rather enjoyed his discussions with her, in which she kept safely on solid ground while he played airily round their subject in a lighter atmosphere. And John Sax, as a rule, sat listening quietly, with no more than just a word now and again to show that he was of their company.

And sober enough the little house would have been at times lacking M. le Marquis and the boys. Monsieur, indeed, was inclined to think it had grown even more sober this last year or two, and that in spite of his efforts at enlivenment. And from that he deduced the fact that, in middle-class life in England, after a certain age the wine of life loses its sparkle and becomes flat and insipid; so different from France, where, *ma foi!* it is when the follies and cares of youth are past that life waxes to its fullest, and increase of years and knowledge but add a finer edge to one's enjoyments and a broader base to one's privileges.

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### CHAPTER X.—HOW CAPTAIN CHARLES WAS GOOD TO LOOK UPON.

ITH most polite punctuality, M. le Marquis and Mr Sax descended from their chairs in Grosvenor Place a few minutes before eight o'clock, and were greeted at the head of the great staircase by Sir George and Miss Lauriston, who stood there in state to receive their guests.

And a very good specimen of a fine old English—British, one should say, since he was of Scottish descent, though the distinction was not at that time so minutely insisted on as it is now—gentleman was Sir George. He was well over man's allotted span, and in his five-and-seventy years had seen some trying times in the financial world. But he was tall and stately still, and if a slight bowing of the broad shoulders told of burdens stoutly borne, his genial smile and strong, alert face seemed to discount any undue pressure from them. A man of immense financial knowledge and resource; a man who had known how to turn to advantage even the lean years that had resulted disastrously at times to others; a man whose unblemished business career inspired universal confidence and was now enjoying its well-earned honours and its very solid rewards. So said all the world, and when all the world says a thing there is generally some foundation for it.

And Miss Lauriston seconded him to perfection. Her tall, full figure, sumptuously arrayed and blazing in her mother's jewels, her face animated and gracious beyond its wont, Aunt Charlotte, thoughtful of her position as hostess and for the time being stirred out of herself, was good to look upon. She had come safely through the dangers of the road. In spite of Master Charles and Jerry MacClootie, no highwayman had molested her, though she had been on the anxious lookout for him from the moment they crossed Ealing Haven and took the high-road by the Common.

There was in her face still a sense of successful enterprise; in her manner and bearing the conscious satisfaction of sumptuous attire and ample means. On an occasion such as this Miss Lauriston never forgot that she was a wealthy woman in her own right. Her mother's fortune had grown immensely, and was still growing, for she never spent anything like her income.

More than one who came up the wide staircase, and saw her beaming above him, said to himself, 'Gad, but it might be worth while having a shot at her yet! She don't look her age, and she's rolling in money.'

John Sax received a friendly nod and smile from host and hostess, M. de Montessonne the more impressive welcome suited to his rank in life and very agreeable to his present circumstances.

'M. le Marquis, you honour us with your presence,' said Sir George, with a warm shake of the thin white hand in its priceless laces.

'The honour and the pleasure are mine,' said M. le Marquis, raising the tips of Aunt Charlotte's fingers to his lips with inimitable grace, and passed on with a touch of elation in his face at the gentle pressure that had rewarded him.

In the room beyond he became immediately the sparkling centre of a lively circle, through which, and from which, jokes and laughter flashed and coruscated like sparks in a November bonfire.

It was Mr Fox who took him by the arm just before dinner was announced, saying, 'Of a truth, M. le Marquis, it seems to me that you grow younger every time I see you.'

'It is a faculty we cultivate in France, monsieur.'

'Among other things! What is your latest news from—shall I say home?'

'Home assuredly,' said the marquis quickly, 'though for the moment in the hands of the Philistines. My news is not good. The night is still dark over there.'

'General Bonaparte carries all before him. He is a mighty warrior.'

'As a warrior I cannot but admire him. As a revolutionary I detest him. He is the devil. But he will pass like the rest.'

'You hope to see the end of him?'

'Assuredly. Our turn will come again. It is only a question of time.'

'You teach one faith and hope, M. le Marquis, and, damme, one needs all one can carry in these times! He is a wonderful man, is General Bonaparte.'

It was a very grand dinner, and there were some very great people there. For the house of the wealthy banker, whom all delighted to honour, was neutral ground, where political opponents could drop their masks and foils for a time, and meet in such fellowship as their temperaments and the ardour of the game had left them. There the mighty lions of the two Houses could purr soft nothings into opposition ladies' ears, and even greet one another with a lack of resentment restorative of faith in human nature, if somewhat productive of doubt as to the genuineness of their roarings elsewhere. There their mates could restore the balance of parties, quite to their own satisfaction, in ways not observed or understanded of men. And there the younger members of their families could watch with awe the familiar intercourse of the Olympians whose names were household words with them, and between times could make eyes at one another and form intimacies which sometimes ripened into closer fellowships and odd combinations. It used to be said that more matches were made at Sir George Lauriston's than at any house in London, and I suppose it was true.

That night, by reason of the Princess Royal's wedding a few days before, the rooms were thronged with an unusually brilliant crowd. The Ladies Frances Somerset, and Mary Bentinck, and Caroline Damer, and Mary Howe were there in their bride's-maids' dresses, all very gay and by no means unconscious of their supreme social importance. And there were Ministers and ex-Ministers, and future Ministers, and foreign Ministers galore. For this was a house where all liked to visit, and the operations of the greater house, of which it was but an ornamental adjunct, were far-reaching and wide-spreading.

Strolling quietly among the gay throng, with a smiling welcome for and from every man he met, and for the ladies, young and not so young, a graceful word of greeting which left a trail of bright faces in his wake, Captain Lauriston was doing his part as usual in making his father's guests feel most comfortably at home. He was tall, square-shouldered, and of most distinguished bearing, and still carried with him more of the soldier than the banker. His strong, clean-cut face, however, readily as it broke into smiles, had in these last five years taken on somewhat of the sober control of the man of affairs. And that was a look that became it well, for it was the face of a man born to win the confidence of his fellows, from the steady, deep-set eyes to the firm, tranquil mouth; the face of a man to whom, in times of trouble, other men would turn instinctively with full assurance of such wise advice and assistance as its owner had to give, and with the certainty that, end the matter well or ill, the course recommended was without doubt the one he himself would have taken. A strong, high face, full of quiet determination; the face of a man who, having decided his course, would go through with it to the end, though the end were death itself; the face of a man who would carry his burden without complaint, and would show no sign though his way should lie through the valley of shadows.

Look at him well, and rejoice in him for a moment if you can, with the high light in his eyes and never a shadow in his path; for hereafter we shall see him in very different case.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE DECAY OF THE SUGAR-INDUSTRY.

By C. M. Hale.

IT is hard for those whose duties keep them at home, and compel them to gain their knowledge of the progress of events through the medium of the printed article, to realise the evil days on which the once flourishing sugar-industry of Demerara has fallen. Brown sugar is not quite such a common article upon our tables as it was twenty years ago; but, if any thought is given to the matter at all, it is concluded that the reason is to be found in the popular preference for the whiter and apparently purer product, and, in a measure of course, this is perfectly true. But if any one with a taste for statistics were to discover what percentage of the sugar consumed to-day is cane-sugar from British colonies, and what percentage is subsidised foreign beet-sugar, he would probably begin to get some dim conception of the state of affairs.

Before going farther afield, let us consider the state of affairs at home in one town only. Thirty years ago there were three sugar-refineries in the port of Bristol. Three years ago there were none. It might interest our political economists to calculate how much labour, directly and indirectly, a refinery employs, multiply it by three, and see how the total compares with Bristol's unemployed. The result would probably suggest more than one reflection.

But to go to the source and seat of the decay, the colony of British Guiana, better known by the name of its principal county, Demerara, alone presents us with facts at which to pause. In the whole colony there are not more than forty sugar-

factories. Within the memory of living colonists there were at least double the number. Amalgamations have accounted for some, but by no means all. Early in 1909 one of the largest and most important, Plantation Windsor Forest, on the west coast of Demerara, was abandoned because there was not the money forthcoming to keep the sea-defences in repair. In June, Plantation Het Vergenoegen, on the same coast, was sold at auction, and turned by its purchaser into rice-land. Shortly afterwards Plantation Skeldon, on the Corentyn River, distributed three allotments of its indentured coolies among neighbouring estates because it was found necessary to cut down expenses.

It is not as if these estates, which are only selected as typical of many others—Springlands, Highbury, Zeelandia, New Forest, among them—were new ventures or the property of bubble companies. Far from it. Het Vergenoegen, as its name shows, dates from the days of the Dutch possession, while the others were all properties of over forty years' standing, to make a very conservative estimate. Their failure was due to no sharp finance or questionable stockbroking; they simply perished under the general blight that is rapidly destroying the whole industry.

Wherever one goes one sees the obvious and deplorable signs. Villages are built on what, to trained eyes, are the unmistakable drainage systems of cane-pieces. The very place-names are the titles of dead and forgotten estates. Land believed to be virgin soil, grown over with bush and jungle, time and time again on being cleared reveals the rows of parallel drains and fourfoots, side-lines, and middle walks that speak eloquently of a departed prosperity.

Over the whole colony is the same stamp of decadence. On the island of Wakenaam, on the Essequibo River, there were at one time eleven sugar-factories. One remains, and the chimney of another serves as a landmark and guide to the somewhat uncertain river-navigation. Again, as one drives or rides along the west coast road from Vreed-en-Hoop to Tushen de Vrieden, there is to be seen one of the most eloquent testimonies to the general decay. Just as the road turns into the village of Meten-meer-Zorg, there lies, by the weed-choked remains of what was once a mill-dock, a complete cane-mill, with three rollers and a beam-engine, all grown over with corilla-vine and creepers. It marks the site of a closed factory, and is, though perhaps the most conspicuous, by no means the only one of its kind. There are other similar remains at Canefield and Adelphi. Had there been any shred of vitality in the industry the mill would have been sold long ago. As it is, no one even bothers to steal it piecemeal.

These, then, are the outward signs of the inward decadence. Some of its results are even more deplorable, but we shall only touch upon one before going on to the cause and the prospects of recovery, and that one the most terrible of them all.

The sugar-industry employs a considerable number of white overseers, chiefly Scotsmen. In the days of its bygone prosperity, when situations as managers, deputy-managers, and head-overseers were plentiful, this industry held many fine prospects; but now that, with the yearly shutting down of estates, these openings become proportionately scarcer and overseers' salaries smaller, the chances of marrying and settling down become less also. The attendant social evil would be inevitable in any country; very little reflection will be necessary to perceive the stages to which it has grown in a colony where Europeans are placed in a position of peculiar power over two-thirds of the inhabitants.

Apart from the sugar-industry, British Guiana is a colony of immense, and at present scarcely developed, resources. The soil is unusually fertile, and is, according to the analysis of the consulting chemist at Plantation Albion, richer in sulphates and phosphates than that of Louisiana and similar districts. The minor industries, the production of rice, rubber, citrate of lime, and sisal-hemp, and cattle-farming, only require capital to spring into prosperity. At present what capital there is is mainly American, aided by the indefatigable industry of those invaluable colonists, the Creole Asiatic Indians; and herein lies the great danger, that of American dominance, which it is the interest of every imperial-minded Briton to combat when it threatens a British colony. Indeed, the prospects and future of the Demerara sugar-industry, on which the colony depends at present for its existence, should occupy the attention of all Britons, from whatever point of view they choose to look at it. Patriotic and imperial motives apart, the colony is far too valuable to lose. Half-developed though its minor resources are, and in spite of the decadence of its mainstay, the sugar-industry, it is quite prosperous enough to be self-governing. How long it will remain so, or even remain a part of the Empire, depends very much on the measure of assistance which the mother-country is prepared to extend to its main industry, on which, as before stated, its continued existence hangs.

What, then, are the causes of the decay? One main factor, on which two minor factors hang: first and foremost, the competition of foreign beet-sugars in the English market, which has driven Demerara sugar to America; secondly, the juggling with market prices in America, which compels the planters to sell at the price that is offered, and not always for what the sugar is worth; and, thirdly, the well-meant efforts of the internal Government of the colony to stamp out the social evils consequent, as before explained, on the decadence of the sugar-industry.

To take each in order, foreign beet-sugars have driven Demerara sugar from the English market and closed the Bristol refineries. These sugars, the manufacture of which in France and Germany is subsidised by Government, have an unfair advantage over the colonial article, which cannot be manufactured and shipped to Britain cheaply enough to compete successfully with the foreign sugars.

Here some may observe that though it is possible to take measures against the competition of the foreign sugars, the new home beet-sugar industry recently begun at Sleaford, in Lincoln, would prove an equally dangerous rival, and one which no man short of a fanatic would desire to see crippled. The reply is that it is not beet-sugar that has been fatal to the Demerara article, but subsidised beet-sugar. When it comes to fair competition between the two, cane-sugar has nothing to fear. There is room for both industries so long as the one is not subsidised against the other. Let the foreign competitor be excluded, and the two British products may vie with each other on equal terms.

Demerara sugar, then, is driven to the American and Canadian markets. Now, sugar, like every other product of the soil, has its seasons. The long grinding, as it is termed, lasts from September to the end of December; the short crop is taken off in June. Consequently the Wall Street financier and his Canadian counterpart can anticipate the entry of the sugar into the market, and, by methods only too well known to recapitulate, practically control its price, to their own gain and the planters' detriment. Lastly, the internal Government of the colony, by its stringent penalising of the combined outcome of low salaries and human weakness, is effectually and rapidly, if unintentionally, causing the disappearance of the experienced planters and the substitution of new, almost untried hands in their places; all of which things combine together to produce the closed estates and ruined factories that are a blot on the land, and engender the talk about reciprocal relations with Canada that is only a disguised disavowal of the mother-country.

These, then, being the causes, what is the cure? In stating our unshaken belief that the only cure is a smart protective duty on foreign sugars, we are conscious that we are treading contested ground, and running the risk of raising a storm of controversy; but a little quiet reflection will show that it is nevertheless the case.

If Demerara sugar could re-enter the British market the decadence would be arrested, a period of renewed prosperity be inaugurated, and a stop put to the wavering loyalty to the homeland at present disguised under 'Canadian reciprocity;' and if it is to compete successfully with the subsidised beet-sugar, it can only do so by means of a protective duty.

Immediately the cry arises, 'Dearer sugar for the working-man.' Perhaps it might be a halfpenny a pound dearer. But with all due deference to the great and far-seeing minds of political economists—who badly want to catch the working-man's vote—we beg to suggest that a protective duty would also mean more prosperity, less unemployment, and higher wages for the working-man, under which circumstances he could afford his slightly dearer sugar with a little more readiness perhaps than he affords his dearer tobacco at present.

The prosperity of the Demerara sugar-industry means the importation of more machinery, which means employment for the working-man. It also means more money in circulation and more luxuries purchased in the colony, hence more luxuries imported, from which it is not a very far step to more work in Britain. It also means the revival of the Bristol refineries, whose relation to unemployment has already been hinted at; and last, but not least, the almost automatic disappearance of the social evils which are making the colony a cesspool and a disgrace to European civilisation.

The writer will never forget the impression made on him on one occasion over a year ago, when his duties took him about a mile into the interior of the bush and jungle known as the New Forest. The main irrigation-canal of Plantation Rose Hall, an estate some seven miles distant, receives its waters from the Canje Creek at a little village called Zorg, about eleven miles from New Amsterdam; the reason for going this distance being the necessity of obtaining fresh water, not salt, for irrigating the canes. A narrow footpath, technically termed a 'dam,' ran along the side of the canal, which was bordered on both sides by almost impenetrable jungle, consisting mostly of chinchilla or sand box-trees, with now and then a sand-cocoa or a longjohn. Here and there the path widened to a little clearing sometimes as much as a dozen acres in extent, where were a few coolie *benabs* and mud huts roofed with straw obtained from the rice cultivated around them. The whole gave the impression of virgin soil laboriously wrung from the tenacious forest.

A twist in the path brought other and less hopeful evidence, however. The material underfoot had changed from earth to some gritty substance in which brick predominated. A few rusty molasses-tanks, the remains of an old punt, and the skeleton of a multitubular boiler showed their somewhat gaunt outlines from beneath the veil of ever-flourishing verdure that half-concealed them. But it was not this scene which chiefly arrested the eye, significant though it was. On the opposite side of the canal was a most magnificent forest, nearly sixty acres in extent, of tall, feathery cabbage-palms shooting up in some instances to nearly seventy feet. At the water's edge were the dim traces of a sanded path. And then came realisation. That splendid forest, which looked as if it had stood in its serenity for generations, had grown out of the line of palms that, not a generation ago, had bordered the carriage-drive to the manager's house at Plantation New Forest. There was something about the stately, silent grandeur of the trees that seemed to suggest a fitting monument over the grave of a departed greatness, and they served far more than desolate, weed-grown cane-pieces or rusting factories had done to give me an impression of what the colony once had been—an impression which has never been eradicated.

# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.

## CHAPTER V.

Instead of shores where ocean beats,
I hear the ebb and flow of streets.

IT was blowing great guns in the North Sea when the captain kept his promise and gave Westwater to the deep, amid a waste of broken waters, canopied by hurrying clouds. The driving rain still whipped the decks. The baffled sea panted, chasing the *Covesea*, in hungry packs; but the crashing of her bows to their onslaught, the clamour of the wind, the cries of the tackle and sheathing, and the hundred hidden voices of shipboard were dying down. The *Covesea* had met the full strength of a Nor'-West gale; not the first nor the fiftieth that her skipper and she had weathered. Now she steamed, drenched, shaken, but safe, amid the lees of the storm, the gale half-spent and the sun plucking up courage again behind travelling banks of slate.

Flett wore the precious belt buckled round him. It had never left him since the moment when he took it from the unconscious Westwater on the Forgotten Rock. After the other man's death, the captain pretended to cast about for some solution of the scene on Midsummer's Eve other than the one that was forcing itself upon him. There were a hundred possibilities, he argued. The jewels might have been honestly there, the result of some legitimate joint adventure. Lord Criffel would have some simple explanation. Of course he would! Westwater's brain must have been overwrought. If the jewels had been stolen, why so much concern about their delivery to Lord Criffel? And so forth. Thus spake Charity, hoping all things.

Then the captain remembered, unwillingly, the cleft on the Forgotten Rock, the hungry, delirious glare in the man's eyes as he handled the jewels, the refrain of 'Eighty thousand pounds! Eighty thousand pounds!' the last scene on the *Covesea's* deck—the little tragedy, the unspoken cry for forgiveness. So Doubt fenced with Charity, until the call to arms of the rising wind in the rigging and a menacing sea had crowded all theories, all speculations, all thoughts out of the captain's mind other than those for the safety of his ship and crew.

Now, after he had been a couple of days in his oilskins, the *Covesea* safe and nearing the estuary of the Thames, his thoughts began to circle again round his mission with the jewels. What manner of man was Lord Criffel? he often wondered; until one evening, when the engineer and he had been discussing home affairs and Morayshire, a chance byway in their talk gave him a ray of information.

'Ye come from Speyside, Mac,' the captain had said. 'D'ye get some fishin' when ye're hame?'

'Whiles. I get a cast when the finnock are runnin'. The laird 's no' greedy,' replied Mac.

'Whose water is it?'

'Lord Criffel's; but my folk have had a croft there under three o' them.' There was a subtle suggestion, never very far below the surface of his type, that somehow he ought to have a right to the fishing as well as the laird.

'Lord Criffel!' and Flett could not avoid a slight start. He went on in an elaborate unconcern: 'Man, it runs in my head that I saw somethin' aboot him in the papers—was it last year?—somethin' aboot a jewel-robbery.'

'Ay, like enough you would. Her ladyship's rubies. I forget the ins an' outs o 't, but they were cleverly stolen on a railway journey. A bonny fortune in them! Scotland Yard was never in the hunt, an' I 'm thinkin' the Earl will never see the rubies again.'

The captain thought diametrically opposite, but deemed it unnecessary to say so.

'Maybe no',' he replied abstractedly; 'maybe no',' as Mac went below to the noisy beloved companionship of his engines.

The storm died, and in due course the *Covesea* took her modest place in the procession up the Thames. The captain saw her in dock, cleared his papers, and after engaging a room at the Baltic Hotel, had his stereotyped interview with his owner's agents. There with a boy's delight he learned that he would have ten days free before he sailed again, and therefore time to run home to Findburgh. This was Saturday. He would go home to-morrow—after his meeting with Lord Criffel. So he thought as he descended the steps of the agent's offices and stood for a moment framed in the solid commercial doorway, in a street swept by fierce currents, about him the enveloping roar of London.

Flett watched the stream. Those in the current were all in a deafening, monotonous hurry; most of them anxious, many of them callous, many sad-looking, as though their eyes said, 'We must hurry! We must live, mustn't we? We must keep afloat somehow, anyhow. We are part of a System.' Full-blooded, sleek ogres, top-hatted, pig-jowled; white slips of starved typewriters; hunted-looking clerks; low schemers; pitiless, razor-faced trackers; a poaching hansom on the prowl; a multitude of frock-coated, lunch-in-a-hurry, old-eyed youngsters; a millionaire playing for huge counters; a creature near him in abject rags, one-armed, hawking matches on the kerb for a perilous profit of a few coppers a day, exchanging a mirthless jest with the lady of the orange-stall—all of them, cabman, plutocrat, tatterdemalion, owning a common denominator in the wary and considering

eye of commerce. An arresting yet colourless medley, this pitiless welter, this gray, everyday tide-roost of humanity, where broken men and women, in the awful parlance of the System, 'go under,' and are forgotten. The captain, glowering at them with his clear eye, his voyage-tanned face, his big square figure on the steps above the ruck, looked by comparison like some defiant Incarnation of the Open Air. His eyes swept the crowd, and he instinctively felt for the belt round his waist. It was safe.

'Hugh!' He was startled by a slap on his shoulder. 'This is lucky! I heard ye were here, this mornin'.'

Flett turned, to see a genial Aberdeen skipper.

'Hallo, Duncan! Glad to see ye! Where 's your ship?' said Flett, and shook hands heartily. The two drifted at once into sailormen's talk; and Duncan, at a loose end, promptly suggested an adjournment for a whisky-and-soda.

'Na, man, I canna,' said Flett, remembering his mission and Lord Criffel. 'I've somethin' to do this very afternoon, an' I 'm off north to-morrow.'

'Ye're surely in a desperate hurry,' quoth the Aberdonian, and urged that they had not met for a year or two; there were three or four old friends who would rejoice to see him at 'Andrew's,' a Scottish hostelry in Aldgate then well known to the North Sea captains; the Sunday train north, after Edinburgh, was a slow one. Why not wait till to-morrow, unless, of course, he had an appointment to-day?

Flett hesitated. After all, he reflected, he had no appointment. There was something in what his friend said. There was no great hurry. He had not been in London for years. The meeting would do well enough to-morrow. He would call at Cromdale Square next day, tell his story, hand over the rubies, and then Northward Ho! to-morrow.

Yes! He would put it off until to-morrow; but as he changed his mind he instantly became aware of a slackening of his mental cables. A shadow of disloyalty to Westwater's trust touched him. He could not define it. Unused to self-analysis as he was, his mind tuned in the main to open and simple issues, the ripples of less than uneasiness more than inquisitiveness on his mental surface stirred him curiously. Introspection was novel and disquieting to him, raising a subcutaneous tingle of irritation. There was no reason, he said to himself, why he should gallop post-haste to Lord Criffel with the rubies. After all, his trusteeship was self-imposed, at least voluntary. He might have refused it. At any rate, he was doing his lordship a favour.

'All right, Duncan, I 'm your man! It will do to-morrow,' he said suddenly. Still, as he sauntered along, trying to listen to the Aberdonian's gossip, he was absorbed, almost querulous, conscious of some vague self-indictment. However, he would certainly go to Cromdale Square to-morrow.

Ah, to-morrow! Procrastination may be the Thief of Time, but he is the mildest-mannered vice that ever scuttled man. He presumes a deal on his far-out poor relationship to the virtue of Good-Nature. And he has a way with him! So has a cumulative poison. None so insinuating as he. Recklessness takes your arm in summer for a pleasant bit of the road, till he suddenly leaves you lying bludgeoned in midwinter, and you hate him. Pleasure is a crafty usurer. You know that some day he will refuse to renew his bill, after robbing the clear eye, the hard muscle, the quiet mind, and you hate him. Love-of-Money beckons always a yard or two in front, until, near the end of the trail, you discover that you have no other company, and that, as one who has travelled by night, you have seen nothing of the scenery. But Procrastination, the smiling, ubiquitous vagrant, steals into your blood, and anticipates your mood. 'To-morrow the sun will shine,' you and he sing. 'Let us to great things to-morrow.' So you hob-nob with him only half-unwillingly, as one listens to an agreeable knave. Ah, to-morrow!

The two friends arrived at 'Andrew's,' and there met some of the masters of the Firth Line of Aberdeen, the Baltic and East Coast Line of Leith, and half-a-dozen other bronzed comrades. There was the good filling talk between sailormen of common interests and rare meetings: of freights and their vagaries, wages, the loading-line, German competition, the prices of bunker-coal, the prospects of promotion, p.p.i. policies, and how poor So-and-So went down with his ship last month in the Bay. There was also old single-malt 'Spey Royal' whisky, sound measure of it too, no degenerate London thimblefuls dispensed by haughty sirens crowned by peroxide in gilded buffets, but stalwart brown drams, ten 'under proof,' the veritable juice of the barley, fit libations for the strong heads and strong bodies of these sons of the red ensign. The hum of conversation, the company of his friends, and the 'Spey Royal' proved first aids to the twinge of the captain's conscience, and he joined in the talk and laughter until the bells of St Dunstan's boomed out a reminder that it was time for him to return to the 'Baltic.'

There he found two letters waiting him, one from his wife, full of local news and items of domestic politics; the other short, to the point, appallingly definite. It was from the agent of the Highland Bank at Findburgh. Thus it ran:

'Dear Sir,—I have to draw your attention to the fact that the period for which the cash-credit in favour of Mr John Main was authorised expired on the 15th inst. The bank's efforts to obtain payment or reduction of the amount by Mr Main have been unsuccessful, and I am instructed by my Directors to call upon you, as the co-obligant, to make arrangements for the payment of the advance within one month. The total amount, with interest, is £317, 16s. 2d.'

And the agent wound up with the polite but incredible statement that he was the captain's obedient servant.

The captain read and re-read the letter in a thickening mist of perturbation. Fights with the sea, the clutch of physical danger, held no terrors for him. He knew and understood them; but this new, unfaced, barely considered peril of the land fairly staggered him. He had become, for the credit of the family, security for his brother-in-law in a bad fishing year. One bad year succeeded another, and this bombshell of hard fact was the result. He dropped to a seat and read the frigid phrases over again, his big frame shaking. Three hundred and seventeen pounds sixteen shillings and twopence, within one month! That meant his whole savings and a little over. Not a great deal of money, perhaps, but his all, the outcome hardly gleaned from the toiling years, a barrier-reef between the hungry seas of anxiety and his islet of home, between bare, dull necessities, cramping parsimony, and a few bright luxuries for his wife and bairns. He sat stolidly for half-an-hour, scarcely moving, his numbed wits in a coil of perplexity, his thoughts moving in impotent, fruitless circles, back, always back, to the letter in his hand.

He was no fatalist. No instinct to take any reverse 'lying down,' to acquiesce and accept or blame Providence, had its dangerous root in him; but the money-world was to him an uncharted sea, known only in the beaten track of doing his best, drawing his pay, husbanding his money, and avoiding cross-currents and the unknown. His wits travelled slowly round and round the warning in the letter.

A nimbler mind would have conjured up possible ways and means, a more sanguine and resourceful one, some optimistic vision, some magic door out; but the sudden blunt issue deadened him. He could see no other road than the plain one, the devouring of his savings by the bank, the borrowing of a little more to save his own and his brother-in-law's name, at best a jury-mast to try to carry his maimed craft along into better weather. An hour passed, as he sat silently brooding, too unhappy to curse, listening to the callous ticking of the clock. Twenty city chimes tossed melodious answers to each other. Eleven o'clock! He remembered that he must go back to his ship and see that everything was all right on board for the night. He put the letter in his pocket, and after a half-an-hour's walk was once more on the *Covesea's* deck.

A hundred tremulous images of the lights of the shipping lit up the brown face of the hurrying river. Sudden voices rose on the night from belated boats threading their way through the craft; a police-boat on swift patrol answered another's hoarse call; the towering bulk of a liner moved slowly down-stream, vague and tremendous in the darkness. The captain watched her pass, and as he saw her lights gradually shrink and vanish, a sudden yearning gripped him, a yearning to put to open sea, to feel his foot on the bridge, to taste the satisfying urgencies of ordered thought and clear action; to hear the faithful heart-beat of the ship in her singing engines, watch her forefoot lift to the ocean; to fill his day with work and duty, and lay the ghosts of his unquiet mind. He paced the deck automatically. The blaze of the countless electric lights had gradually gone out, and their reflected night-glare lowered in the heavens, as though an Invisible Hand had swept the vast slate of the sky, leaving behind a powder of stars.

Sleep was refused him. The thought of it was as distant and impossible as though his ship lay blinded in the stealthy folds of a sea-fog instead of safe at her moorings in the Thames. He looked for a moment at the whisky-bottle, then moved away from some subtle danger, for he was in doubtful weather, and his sailor's instinct forbade the counter-brace.

The chimes notched another hour of Time. Sleep he must, he thought, and determined to tire himself out by walking. He bade good-night to the second-mate, stepped across the gangway, and stood for a moment or two listening to the voice of the night orchestra of London.

It was at the climax of its symphony, in a multitude of chords, continuous, vivid, challenging, contrasting, blending; in the rolling drums of the late 'buses; the near staccato notes of clipping hansoms; jingling harness; the sudden rush of unseen passing trains; the hum in many octaves of skimming automobiles; the whistles of tugs fussing homewards; owls of sirens hooting far off in melancholy minor wails; the mellow clangour of the bells chiming midnight; the voluble river; the rustle of a myriad footfalls; the flexible multitudinous murmur of human voices running counterpoints to the sense of majestic harmony struck in the rich full bass, the deep masterful undertone of the roaring surf of humanity threshing and beating in and around the great city.

He plunged into the more crowded streets, and strode steadily on for a couple of hours or more. The deep chords of sound gradually died down in the gathering quiet of the tired city before the first few tentative notes of the prelude to another day. He stopped at a coffee-stall, one of the exchanges for creatures of the night, hooligans, thieves, night-hawks, and gulped down a cup of coffee, evil eyes watching him, a policeman watching them. Then he set off again, covering the ground aimlessly, doggedly, swiftly; but Black Care was in better training, and walked close behind him with mocking, easy step.

Chance led him, tired but still sleepless, to the Embankment. The crackle of a few early carts punctuated the silence. The street-lamps were beginning to look tawdry before the first faint glimmer of day as he sat down on an empty seat, where the plane-trees whisper and shudder in their grave scrutiny of the homeless. Green bright torches of the gray city by day, the plane-trees of the Embankment by night—near them tragic human shapes, around them the unseen

phantom legions of the vanquished—are the Duletrees of London. Tyburn never saw grimmer sights than they see in the darkness. In their shadows range as many fanged prowlers as in the jungle; broken gentlemen, their boots agape, sleep there, clutching their last shilling; novices, wide-eyed, stonily awake; callous habitués, hands in pockets, lean shoulders hunched, snoring bundles of rags that had once been bright-eyed men and women, herded there by hunger, homelessness, drink, poverty, despair; some still watching the dying embers of hope; the majority with dull, defeated eyes; old, young, the wicked, the weak, the unlucky, the incapable, jetsam, flotsam, battered men, and the women who only smile by night beneath the gas. So near the river. Part of the System! A notable corner, one of the condemned cells of the earth; and above this human scrap-heap, through the bright open windows of a luxurious caravanserai, a cruel string band streamed the measured ecstasy of a valse.

An evil-eyed, unshaven wolf came, apparently out of nowhere, looking stealthily at the new-comer as Flett sat down, and drew closer until a night-policeman appeared, when the human beast of ravin slouched off with an uneasy grin. Then a little old man seated himself at the other end of the bench, sucking an empty pipe. He looked, and as a matter of fact was, a harmless sponger, with a garrulous tongue. The skipper looked at his battered rags and his mockery of a smoke, and listened to him good-temperedly.

It wasn't always the benches in the park with 'im. No, guv'nor! (It never is.) The old story, it was. To be honest, it was easy come, easy go. 'Ad the gen'l'man such a thing as a pipeful o' tobacco abaht 'im? No. That was a pity. Yes! 'E was saying, it was easy come, easy go. But once dahn on your luck, the world 's a rum plice. Crool 'ard for money. Crool 'ard! Toffs over there—he nodded vaguely at the City—with loads of it, an' 'ere was 'e without the price of 'is blank breakfast. Money was rotten badly divided in this world. Why should one man 'ave thousan's, an' 'im not a blank copper? Tell 'im that!

Hugh could not, but he gave him a sixpence. The creature thanked Flett, and vanished in the twinkling of an eye. The policeman ran an experienced eye over the captain and stopped opposite him.

'Mornin',' said he. 'None o' my business, in a manner o' speakin'; but if I was you I wouldn't chuck any money about here. Some o' 'em'—he jerked a thumb at the seats—'are orl right, but the most o' 'em are toughs. Toughs!'

'Thank ye,' said Flett. 'I was just thinkin' o' gettin' back to the "Baltic." How far?'

The constable gave him crisp directions, chatting with him for a hundred yards, as far as his beat took him.

'Yes,' he wound up, 'rum place the Embankment. I'm about fed-up with it sometimes. Though the most o' 'em are toughs, yer can't 'elp spottin' the real dead-beats and out-o'-works; *and* the women, my Gawd! I sometimes think there 's suthin' out o' gear in the luck, or the division o' the cash, in this world. But it ain't no good grumblin'. Well, well! Mornin'.' The good fellow turned on his beat to put in his fifty-six hours of the night per week, to earn his four shillings a day.

Flett strode off again, reaching the hotel thought-weary and tired in body after his long tramp on the London pavements, to fall asleep just as the sun's first arrows glanced in on the Thames in a thousand silver ricochets.

*(To be continued.)*

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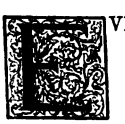
# MORE TRAMPS WHOM I HAVE MET.

By the Rev. THOMAS HANNAN, M.A.



EVEN when I go abroad I cannot get away from tramps. Of course, I am a bit of a tramp myself, and I suppose there is a kind of telepathy which brings kindred spirits together—as the German expressed our old proverb, 'Birds mit one fedder always go by demselves.' On one occasion I was taking a photograph in a quiet street of the ancient French city of Amiens, when suddenly a tramp 'materialised' in front of me. He did not seem to come from anywhere—he just got there. He waltzed round me, as the Americans express it, and he spoke French which sounded the same as Scotch when spoken under the same spirituous influences. He was so intoxicated that I have no doubt he thought I was waltzing round him; but he wanted his photograph taken. He was a tramp of the first water—if that expression may be used of a class which avoids water in any form, except rain. But he did not want money—he was too happy for that; and I was so pleased to get off that I took his photograph. But this amiability on my part caused him to glue himself to me, and I got clear of him at last by sprinting up a side street known as the Rue des Tripes. He could not weather the corner in time to pursue me.

I visited Ireland once. I was tramping along the road from Boyle to Sligo, knapsack on back, when I met a female tramp who belonged to the tinker class. She begged, and I shook my head. She passed on cheerily, with her baby on her back, and I soon saw another of the same company approaching. When the second lady got near me, the one whom I had refused turned round and called out, 'Arrah, Bridget, now, don't be proud, but take

the penny the gintleman's goin' to give ye to buy tay!' Of course, after that piece of wit I could not refuse. This incident reminded me of the story of a witty Irish beggar-woman and an old gentleman, who was hobbling along with his gouty toe wrapped in flannel and encased in a large carpet-slipper. He was not feeling amiable enough or chastened enough to throw a penny at a beggar, and he growled a refusal, to which she promptly answered, 'Throth, it's the hard-hearted ould sinner ye are indade, indade; but it's no harm I'll be afther wishin' ye at all, at all. Shure it's mesilf'll be prayin' to the holy saints to make yer ould heart as tinder as yer poor fut.'

It is very curious, when one goes in for the kind of philanthropy involved in giving employment to tramps, how seldom the kind of tramp you want turns up just when you want him. Two years ago a distressed but cultured foreigner came to me, anxious to do translation work. He would be quite useful now, as I happen to have some papers to translate; but I had none then. He was a German, and was too superior for me to think of offering him garden-work. In addition, he was surprised that his sister, who was coming over to be a governess somewhere, had not called on me to inquire about him. His one desire now was to get back to the Fatherland. So I gave him a shilling to help towards the accomplishment of that laudable object. It is quite wonderful what a shilling can do in the hands of a competent financier; but my friend did not get far on his way to Germany. In fact, that shilling only carried him half a mile; and I propound this for the reader who is fond of solving riddles: that although it was spent in less than two hours, it supported him for three days. Of course, the answer is that he was 'run in' a little farther along the road in the early afternoon for being 'drunk and disorderly'—on my shilling—and was placed next day on the horns of the dilemma expressed in the formula, 'ten and six-pence or three days.'

I think the most really pathetic case which I ever came across was that of a man who was evidently a gentleman. He called on a Saturday afternoon, and was so clearly a man of good breeding that he was shown into my drawing-room. He was a tramp, a highly experienced tramp, and probably will remain so; but his clothes, though old, were of good make, and he wore them as one who had been accustomed to good clothes. His fluency was extraordinary; and his English was that of a cultured man, with no provincial taint in it. He professed to be the grandson of a famous poet, and he called my attention to the resemblance between himself and the poet, especially in the arching of the forehead, which was remarkably high. He recounted a history which was sad, unfortunate, and, in one particular, blameworthy. I have never seen reason to doubt the main features of his story. I knew that there must, however, be a lot behind it in the way of help given to him by friends to put the broken pieces of his life together again. It happened that the only small change in my possession was twopence-halfpenny, and I felt ashamed to offer the grandson of one of the sweet singers of England the insult of such a sum. But I did; and he took it cheerfully, as if he had often been insulted that way before. Then he trudged away, trousers strapped round his ankles as if he meant to go long and far. And I meditated sadly on the faithlessness of heredity, the grief which would be felt by the poet who supported a fellow-poet's family, could he see how far his descendant had descended, and my own good fortune in having had only twopence-halfpenny in my possession. Not long afterwards I read of a man with the same appearance and the same story being sent to prison for begging in the Lake Country, so I assume that it was my unfortunate friend.

To associate with tramps is, in reality, a liberal education. They represent most of the professions. I remember seeing a cheery quartette chopping wood in a Church Army shelter in London; they were a parson, a lawyer, a schoolmaster, and an old soldier. But they had all got to the same level; they were tramps, and it is a most difficult problem to all the agencies which exist for the elevation of the downfallen to get them to be anything else.

The profession which uses the definite article as the Highland chief uses it with his name is often represented—namely, the theatrical profession. Its members are probably the most sympathetic people in the world, and the great ones of the profession are most liberal in helping their less fortunate brethren. But sometimes they get tired, and then the 'chronic' starts out for the parson. One of these got me very badly once. He arrived on a Sunday evening as I was about to start for church. The rain was pouring—a fact which ought to have suggested caution to me. He was extremely gentlemanly—quite as much so as the grandson of the poet. He furnished me with both his theatrical and his real name. The latter was a family name which would command respect anywhere. He was carefully dressed, and had come to me after an unsuccessful effort to obtain an engagement at the local theatre, which is a very 'one-horse' affair. He illustrated Shakespeare's words that 'one man in his time plays many parts.' He told me that he had attained the highest ambition of every actor, and had played the character of Hamlet. But he fell in my esteem when he told me that he had also, at a later period, taken the part of the Ghost in the same play. Apparently there was a sort of slump in dramatic talent at this time, for he had been reduced to the humble level of delivering shop-bills announcing the details of a kinematograph show in Edinburgh. His visit to me was prompted by the desire to obtain comforts for his wife, who had just broken her leg. On this occasion I happened to have half-a-crown in my pocket,

and I parted company with it, which worried me during the whole service.

But this incident had a sequel. In a few days a lady called. She was an actress, and had very coquettish manners. She had her head swathed in bandages, and she informed me that she was the wife of Hamlet, whom I knew '*so* well.' It appeared that it was not her leg but her head which was broken, as the result of an attack of giddiness, which had caused her to fall downstairs. Ah, those horrid attacks of giddiness! They are the cause of most of the failure and poverty and misery and crime in this civilised country of ours! I was so annoyed at her husband's anatomical ignorance that I forgot to be gallant, and turned the lady out at once. I learned afterwards that Hamlet had made a good thing out of a series of well-timed visits, and had then reverted to his successful representation of the Ghost.

The glamour which surrounds the stage in the eyes of young people would soon disappear if they could penetrate the mysteries of 'doing the smalls,' and see the faces of the company when 'treasury-day' has arrived and the manager has departed. 'Treasury-day' is pay-day, usually Friday; and 'doing the smalls' is touring the small towns, in most cases only stopping one night in each place. Business is very often bad, and when Friday comes the manager sometimes suffers from total loss of memory and cannot be found. Then the unfortunate players become veritable tramps, and I have on various occasions had to help quite nice people in this difficulty.

A tramp once told me the truth, and it gave me such a surprise that I completely lost control of myself and encouraged him in his evil ways. He was an old soldier, a jolly fellow who had left the army with the rank of colour-sergeant. He was a handsome man, with a laughing face, curling hair, a fine moustache (well turned and curling upward), and a fine soldierly air. He gave me a magnificent salute, and I demanded to see his papers. They were all in order, and showed that he had a good pension. Instead of asking him how he came to be on the road, I said, 'Suppose I give you a shilling, what will you do with it?' His answer came like a crack, 'Oh, probably drink it!' I gave him a shilling at once, forgot that I had a garden, let him go without a lecture, and retired to my study in a dazed kind of way. Talk about truth being at the bottom of a well! When it gets up and hits you in the face like that, you do not know where you are.

When you help a tramp, he always believes that he deserves it. At least, if he does not, he is very good at pretending. Only a few days ago a tramp who was charged at Workington with being a vagrant indignantly protested that he was a respectable working-man. He was asked what he did for a living, and replied stoutly, 'I walk for a living.' That is the pride of the free-born Briton! I have found myself up against it more than once, but particularly on a certain occasion when I was working in my front garden. An alleged ship's engineer came sauntering up to me. He had called the previous year, and was taking the journey again. His garments were oily, and he wore the usual peaked cap of the sailor. I knew him, but he did not recognise me. 'Is the master in?' he inquired familiarly of me. Knowing that he was a humbug, I answered gruffly, 'What do you want?' With great dignity he responded, 'That is no business of yours; tell your master I want to see him.' That was simply 'asking for it,' and I 'riz' on him. Then he recognised me, and his disappearance was rapid. I am sure he has put me off his visiting-list.

If you want to keep tramps off the premises you must keep a tame one on them. A tramp is about as difficult to tame as a golden eagle; but when once tamed, he keeps other tramps off better than a bulldog. I possess one now. Other tramps come along, see him working like a nigger in the garden, and shy off as if they had been bitten. It is not fear of work, but simple, downright loyalty; they will not poach upon another man's preserve—when the other man is a brother-traveller. I first caught mine three years ago, and taught him the elements of gardening. Then he disappeared and toured in England. From the time which elapsed, I have a suspicion that he was searching for the North Pole. He has been working steadily with me, when the garden requires him, since last April, and has now formed a working connection in the neighbourhood. He arrives punctually, works hard and steadily, and can be relied upon to do the work allotted to him as thoroughly when left alone as when under my watchful eye. And he has always been thoroughly sober. He seems to have largely forgotten that he was once a wild man of the wide, wide world; for, in discussing certain aspects of gardening work the other day, he informed me that he had been brought up to it, although I know that I taught him. It is a pleasant sight to see that a man has acquired a feeling of having a place in the economy of industry. How good it would be if our army of tramps could be made to do profitable work, and to set themselves to the task of restoring 'the years that the locust hath eaten'!

# THE SOLITARY GUEST.

## CHAPTER III.

CAPTAIN COMPTON passed through the heavy iron gates of Grangemuir and up the drive. As he walked he stopped now and then to look around him. It would have been difficult to find a more beautiful and peaceful scene. The afternoon sun shone through the great beeches and firs, and made long shadows on the bracken and grass. A few rabbits ran hither and thither, and an occasional squirrel scuttled up a tree. As he approached the house there was the gleam of flower-beds under the windows, and he heard the happy laughter of children playing under the trees.

When he rang the bell and asked for Sir Leslie Howard, the butler looked a little askance at the somewhat shabby-looking individual before him; but when Captain Compton produced his card with name and regiment he relented, and said that he would make inquiries. Captain Compton was shown into a comfortable, spacious library, where a fine-looking old man rose to receive him.

'How do you do, sir?' said Captain Compton. 'It is long since I have seen any of your family, and you probably do not know my name; but I was interested in seeing your daughter-in-law drive past this afternoon, for I very well remember being the solitary guest at her wedding in Yokohama.'

'Oh, indeed?' exclaimed Sir Leslie. 'How very interesting! I have often heard my son's wife speak of her lonely wedding in Japan, and I recollect that she has always said that there was one guest.'

Captain Compton proceeded to relate the circumstances of how he had been invited by Miss Moreton to her wedding, and then, after a little desultory conversation, he pulled a newspaper cutting out of his pocket.

'I am afraid that what I am about to say will be very disagreeable to you, Sir Leslie,' he said; 'but you will have to face the matter sooner or later. In fact, if it had not been for your son's absence in South Africa you would probably already have heard of this unfortunate business.'

'Unfortunate business!' broke in Sir Leslie. 'What are you talking about?'

'I think you will understand it best if you read this,' said Captain Compton, handing him the newspaper cutting.

Sir Leslie proceeded to fix a pair of glasses on his nose, and then took the paper from Captain Compton's hand. He read it over more than once, and then, looking up, he said sharply, 'What has this to do with me?'

'Ah,' said Captain Compton, 'I see that you do not realise the full bearing of this statement. Allow me to explain a little. It was understood in Yokohama that a certain church was licensed for marriages, and that no ceremony was needed at the Consulate. But a clause in the treaty revision deprived the church of this license. The matter was not understood at the time, and marriages continued to be performed under the impression that they constituted fully legal ceremonies. As a matter of fact, they were not; and parties who were married in church ought to have proceeded afterwards to the Consulate for the legal ceremony after the religious ceremony.

'Now, Sir Leslie, as I happened to be present at your son's marriage I know for certain that he did not have a consular ceremony. On what day does your daughter-in-law celebrate her wedding-day? The 1st of June? Just so, the day on which Mr George Moreton and I saw her drive off after the church ceremony. I recollect that Miss Moreton particularly disliked the idea of going before a consul. Do you now realise the importance of what I have told you? I can see by your face that it is quite new to you.'

Sir Leslie rose from his seat and walked up and down the room. 'New to me!' he said with a groan. 'Good heavens, I never heard such an awful thing! But no, it is impossible. Do you mean to tell me, sir'—and he turned in a fury upon Captain Compton—'do you mean to tell me that my son's marriage was not properly legal?'

'Really,' laughed Captain Compton, 'one would think, Sir Leslie, that your son's marriage was not correct through some fault of mine, whereas I am only the bearer of an unwelcome piece of news.'

'I apologise,' said Sir Leslie, sitting down with a groan; 'but such a piece of news as this is enough to make a man forget himself. I don't yet realise what it means.'

'I can tell you exactly what it means,' said Captain Compton; 'for before coming to bring the unfortunate fact to your notice I wished to be quite sure of its bearing, so I asked a lawyer what were the exact changes that it would make in your family circumstances. According to a lawyer—a lawyer, remember, who is not likely to make any mistake—your son's marriage cannot count as a legal ceremony, and in that case these charming children'—here Captain Compton pointed out of the window to a little group under the trees—'these children, I regret to say, are illegitimate.'

Sir Leslie started from his chair. 'No, no,' he exclaimed, 'that is impossible!'

'Pardon me, my dear sir,' said Captain Compton. 'Once it is proved that the marriage is null and void the children must be illegitimate; there can be no question as to that. And I fear that as the matter stands at present the next heir to your property, in the event of anything happening to your son, is not that charming little fellow I see playing in the park, but your cousin, Captain Montague Howard, who, I imagine, is not a favourite relative of yours.'

Sir Leslie's face darkened at the mention of his cousin's name. 'He is forbidden this house,' he muttered.

'Quite so,' said Captain Compton. 'His reputation is such that I am sure no one would wish a beautiful property like this to pass into his hands, for it would not remain there long; it would be in the hands of the Jews. But in the meantime we need not contemplate any such melancholy event. Your son is a strong man, and in no danger. When he comes home, which I understand will be in about two months, the matter can be put in the hands of the lawyers, and redress will soon be obtained. However, the position is distinctly a painful one for your daughter-in-law. She is now passing for Mrs Leslie Howard when she is legally only Miss Sibyl Moreton.'

'Surely,' said Sir Leslie anxiously, 'there is no need for my daughter to know till my son comes home? Does any one know of the matter but yourself?'

'I believe not,' said Captain Compton. 'Her brother, George Moreton, who was the only other person present at the wedding, is, as you know, in New Zealand, and it is quite likely that he will not see this statement. No, as far as I know, Sir Leslie, there is absolutely no one that is acquainted with the particulars of your son's marriage but myself.'

'And you?' said Sir Leslie earnestly. 'I am sure we can trust you, my dear sir, not to let this matter be known.'

'Ah,' said Captain Compton with a smile, 'that is a matter for considerable thought. Here am I, a poor man. I make no secret of the fact that I have nothing beyond my small pension to live upon, and I find it very difficult to make ends meet. There comes into my possession a secret of some importance. I can go to-morrow to one of the daily papers with this very fresh little bit of news: a well-known family in trouble; the heir's eldest son found to be illegitimate; a charming society lady has no legal right to her married name. News is scarce just now, Sir Leslie. If I go up to town to-morrow it might appear with headlines in *The Daily* on Monday. What a sensation it would cause in your village!'

Sir Leslie rose to his feet with a look of perfect horror on his face. 'You are a fiend!' he exclaimed. 'I believe you are delighted at this misfortune.'

'No more of a fiend than other men,' said Captain Compton imperturbably. 'No poor man lets a chance of making money pass unless he is a fool. But let us consider the matter calmly. All I want is some money; all you want is to keep the matter private till your son returns. Surely the arrangement is quite clear. You pay me the money, and I will give a written statement that I will not mention the matter to a soul. Let us say fifty pounds.'

Sir Leslie groaned. 'Can I trust you?' he said. 'If I give you fifty pounds, what proof have I that you won't go next day to the newspaper you speak of?'

'I give you my word of honour, Sir Leslie, that no such thing will happen. I will give you a written statement by which you can show me up as a scoundrel if I break my word. Think the matter over, Sir Leslie. The inn in the village is a delightful change from my London lodgings, and I shall spend the night there. If I receive a note from you with your cheque this evening I will send you my written promise; if not, I will consider myself free to make any use I like of my information.' So saying, Captain Compton left the room.

*(To be continued.)*

## LIFE.

God give me grace to use my hands,
In willing service day or night,
For any of life's great demands,
To soothe, to labour, or to fight;
Not counting cost of fruitless toil
Or strained to grasp unworthy meed.
Marked they may be by sodden soil,
Bruised they may be by honest need.

God give me grace to use my eyes
To watch life's issues day by day,
And see the glory of wide skies,
Azure or clouded, fair or gray.
To read the soul behind the face,
The smile disguised by fear or frown;
And if tears blind them for a space
Let me be brave to weep unknown.

God give me grace to use my heart,
Full-filled with love and strong to live,
Fearless in home or field or mart,
And with good measure glad to give.
So drink the lees of every sweet,
So hold my faith and run my race,
To sigh, content, at its last beat,
'I've worked, seen, lived by God's good grace.'

C. FARMAR.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# JOHN BASKERVILLE, PRINTER.

By R. A. Gatty.

LOVERS of books and collectors of rare editions are delighted when they can meet with a 'Baskerville' classic, or any work from the press of that notable printer. It is not every one, however, who knows the curious history of this celebrated man, or his subsequent fate, which was not only extraordinary but gruesome.

John Baskerville was born at a place called Wolverley, in Gloucestershire, in the year 1706. There is no record of his having attached himself to any particular line of business, but we hear of him in 1721 keeping a writing-school at Birmingham. He also was occasionally engaged in cutting inscriptions on gravestones. In the year 1745 he had taken to a japanning business; and this was a very profitable concern, and he became a rich man. His tastes were always inclined to literature; and now that his means allowed him to indulge them, he began to try his hand at improving printing. He turned his attention to typefounding, and so successful was he that even at this day his types may be considered models. By his unceasing efforts he brought printing to a degree of perfection previously unknown in this country.

In a letter from him to Horace Walpole, dated November 2, 1762, he says he is manufacturing his own ink, presses, chases, moulds for casting, and all the apparatus for printing. There is another interesting letter bearing the date of July 15, 1760, from a Mr Derrick to the Earl of Cork, containing a description of Birmingham and the work of John Baskerville. He says: 'I need not remind your lordship that Baskerville, one of the best printers in the world, was born in this town [this was a mistake], and resides near it. His house stands at about half a mile's distance on an eminence that commands a fine prospect. I paid him a visit, and was received with great politeness, though an entire stranger. His apartments are elegant, his staircase in particular curious, and the room in which he dines, and calls a smoking-room, is very handsome. The grate and furniture belonging to it are, I think, of bright wrought-iron, and cost him a round sum. He has just completed an elegant octavo Common Prayer-Book, has a scheme for publishing a grand folio edition of the Bible, and will soon finish a beautiful collection of fables by the ingenious Mr Dodsley. He manufactures his own paper, types, and ink, and they are remarkably good. This ingenious artist carries on a great trade in the japan way, in which he showed me several useful articles, such as candlesticks, stands, salvers, waiters, bread-baskets, tea-boards, &c., elegantly designed and highly finished. Baskerville is a great cherisher of genius, which, wherever he finds it, he loses no opportunity of cultivating. One of his workmen has manifested fine talents for fruit-painting in several pieces which he showed me.'

It appears, however, that Baskerville's printing business was not really profitable. He was not supported by the book trade, and, like many men who introduce innovations, he had to wait for his success. The University of Cambridge granted him leave to print the Bible in folio and two editions of the Book of Common Prayer; but at the same time the University claimed a share of his profits to the extent of twenty pounds per thousand copies of the Bible, and twelve pounds ten shillings for each thousand of the Prayer-Book. Again, the Stationers' Company demanded thirty-two pounds for their consent to print the Psalms, without which the Prayer-Book would not have been complete.

From a passage in a letter to Horace Walpole it would appear that in 1762 he was desirous of withdrawing from the business, for we find him writing: 'This business of printing, which I am heartily tired of, and repent I ever attempted.' After 1765 little or nothing issued from his press. His most notable editions are Horace, Terence, Catullus, Lucretius, Juvenal, Sallust, and Florus in quarto-royal, Virgil in octavo, and also some of our English classics. The japanning business continued to thrive, and no doubt made some compensation for the loss in book-printing. Baskerville's heart and tastes were bound up in the latter, and apparently he


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grudged no expense to bring out his works in the greatest perfection. It was a noble effort even if it terminated in a loss, and it has won him a fame in the book-world which he loved that he never dreamed to attain.

He was a good son to his parents, who were in poor circumstances; and he supported them to the day of their death, and they attained a good old age. He married the widow of a Mr Eaves, but had no children. Like many men of genius, he was rather eccentric, and one of his whims was to have the panels of his carriage painted to represent one of his trades. Although he became famous for his production of the Bible in folio and the Book of Common Prayer, he was not himself a Christian but a positive unbeliever. It was this, perhaps, which led him to put in his will a direction that he was to be buried in his own garden.

It happened that in his grounds were the remains of what had been at one time the base of an old windmill. He added to this structure and converted it into a kind of conical monument, with an urn at the top. He died January 8, 1775, and by his directions his body was placed in an upright position under this remarkable mausoleum. After his death his widow carried on the japanning business; and nothing more would have been heard of Baskerville, in all probability, had not the Birmingham rioters in 1791 destroyed his tomb. His body, however, was not desecrated; and it remained there until 1820, when the growth of the town and rearranging of streets led to Baskerville's garden being rooted up. It was then that some labourers came across a leaden coffin.

It is difficult at this point to trace exactly what happened; but it is on record that when the coffin was opened at that time, it was found that the body within did not present the usual features of decomposition. It had, for some reason or other, become practically a mummy. In those times, we may presume, there was not that strict investigation such as would be made at the present day; for there is pretty good evidence that the mummified body passed into the hands of a glazier, who dressed it up in Court clothes and showed it in a room at the price of one penny to all who cared to look. No doubt it was a source of income to the glazier, and the authorities apparently did not interfere.

The widow must have been long since dead, and there were no relatives to come forward and claim the corpse. How long this exhibition lasted it is impossible to say; but as so many people had seen the ghastly show at the glazier's, the fact was well known in Birmingham, and has been handed down from generation to generation. Then follows a long period of oblivion as to Baskerville's fate, and nobody knew what had become of him—whether he had been eventually buried, or was still put aside as an anatomical specimen. Probably the mystery would never have been solved until the end of time but for quite an accidental circumstance. Under the Birmingham Churches Act, leave was given to pull down Christ Church; and under this building were some vaults—or, rather, niches—five hundred or more, all labelled with the names of those laid within them. There was one which had no name, and as all the bodies were to be removed and reburied, it was thought necessary by the authorities to make an inspection of this vault. It was accordingly opened, and within it was found a lead coffin, with the words 'John Baskerville,' in large-sized printer's types, soldered on to the lead.

There had been so much uncertainty about the final resting-place of poor Baskerville that, to set everybody's mind at rest, the authorities ordered the coffin to be opened. Little more than a skeleton was found inside; but the entire body was there, and the remains of a shroud could be seen round it. An examination was made of the head, and curiously this betrayed the evidence that the body had been in a glazier's hands. In order, no doubt, to fix the jaws, putty had been inserted, and by the side of the head lay a glazier's putty-knife. The coffin was removed with the others to a final resting-place.

One hundred and twenty or more years had elapsed since the great printer's death, and but for the unhappy directions of his will the terrible fate which befell his body after death would have been averted. It would seem that the leaden coffin in which he was found was the original one in which he was buried under the mausoleum, as his own types were soldered on the lid. The glazier, therefore, must have preserved this with a view of eventually burying him when the disgraceful show terminated. In soldering the types, the letter 'J' had been put upside-down; but this may have fallen off and been replaced carelessly, for it is unlikely that his own workmen would make such a mistake.

Baskerville's house and garden have long since disappeared, and streets and houses cover the ground; but it is curious that printing-works exist on the old site at the present day. The work of Baskerville will be better appreciated when it is remembered that, from the time of Caxton up to 1720, the types used in England were mostly imported from Holland. In that year a man named William Caslon, originally an engraver of ornamental devices, turned his attention to letter-cutting, and soon obtained such a reputation for his work that he not only stopped the importation of foreign types into England, but his own were frequently sent into Continental countries. The foundry established by Caslon in London has continued up to the present day, and is represented by the flourishing firm of Messrs H. W. Caslon & Co. Next to the name of Caslon, that of Baskerville must be placed in the history of the art in England.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER XI.—HOW THE MARQUIS GOT WHAT HE WANTED.

TWO matters only concern us greatly in connection with Sir George's dinner-party.

It was in the great drawing-room, after dinner, that Mr Pitt, who had come in late from the House, with the weight of many cares on his shoulders and plainly visible in his face, first mooted the idea of a national subscription for the defence of the country and the carrying on of the war.

Bonaparte was carrying all before him on the Continent, and fulminating direst threats against unbendable Britain; the country was groaning under its burdens and crying aloud to the King to get rid of his Ministers and make peace—reasons enough for a serious face, without a doubt.

Mr Pitt was talking with his host, surrounded by a circle of financial magnates, including the Governor of the Bank of England, which, in consequence of the unparalleled demands upon its funds by the Government for war purposes, had been compelled to suspend cash payments but a month or two before. There, also, was the Lord Mayor, who had been forced by his liverymen in the City to present a petition to the King begging him to get rid of Mr Pitt. And there, keenly interested in it all, was John Sax.

'Money we must have,' said the Minister gravely, 'or England may go the way of Austria and Italy. No sacrifices then will atone for lack of them now. The sacrifices would be infinitely greater, but they would be too late to be of service. It is easier to keep up than to get up if once we are thrown. What would be your idea, Sir George, of a national subscription? Would the City and the country respond?' And the grave, keen eyes rested with searching inquiry on the banker's face.

'I can answer for one, Mr Chancellor,' said Sir George heartily. 'Lauristons will consider it an honour to head the list with ten thousand pounds. I think you may count on others not being backward. General Bonaparte on British soil would be the worst investment Britain ever made.'

'I will never forget this,' said Mr Pitt, moved out of himself, and he gripped his old friend's hand impulsively.

On the outer circumference of that weighty circle old John Sax had been revolving like a comet of broken orbits, in order to see and hear all he could; and when he heard his chief's words his mouth tightened momentarily as though his economic spirit protested at such munificence of patriotism. But before Mr Pitt left the room that night he was assured of the success of his suggestion, and that the City would rise to the occasion.

And the other matter of moment that night!

'I have known great affairs carried through, even in such places, M. le Marquis,' John Sax had said but an hour or two before; and M. le Marquis had chuckled and cast a quick glance at him, in search of personal application in the remark, and had found none.

All the evening M. le Marquis had been enjoying to the full this return to his natural state in life; though, *parbleu!* this assembly was not within measurable distance of what he had been accustomed to at Versailles. Still, it was an approach thereto, and decidedly a pleasant break in the monotony of life in Queen Street.

It was after dinner, when the buzz of talk in the great drawing-room was at its height, that chance—which in skilful hands is but a deft control of circumstance—brought him alongside his hostess.

She was chatting with Lady Mary Howe, who had been dilating on the delights and terrors of the Royal wedding—the heat, the crush, the faintings, the lovely music, the dresses—when M. le Marquis joined them, with a gallant, 'Ah, mademoiselle, and who is to be the next? For one such wedding always preludes more. Is it not so?'

'Let us hope so, at all events, M. le Marquis. But who will be first it is hard to say,' laughed Lady Mary.

'Ah, ha! All the same, little birds whisper in the trees, and the passing breeze picks up the pretty whisper and carries it along. And why wait? Time flies, and we shall none of us ever be as young again as we are to-day.'

'That is true,' said Lady Mary, with a pretty blush and a quick *riposte*. 'But we—we—M. le Marquis? Am I to congratulate you also, then? Ah, pardon! There is my mother wanting me. All luck to you, monsieur!' and with a laughing nod she was gone, and for a moment Miss Lauriston and the marquis were alone.

There was a great inquiry in his eyes as he looked at her.

'Mademoiselle has done me the honour to consider the proposal made in my letter?' he asked quietly.

'I have, M. le Marquis;' and her face was as Lady Mary's a moment before.

'And'——

'*Soit!*' she said softly, and M. le Marquis gently squeezed the hand that hung by her side.

'I will call upon Sir George to-morrow,' he whispered.

'Very well. But, remember, I am my own mistress.'

'You think he will object, then?'

'One never knows,' said Aunt Charlotte, with a shrug that would have graced even the shoulders of a Marquise de Montessonne.

### CHAPTER XII.—HOW AUNT CHARLOTTE LOOKED TO THE FUTURE.

'WELL, well!' said Sir George, with his eyes fixed musingly on Aunt Charlotte's face. 'If you have quite made up your mind'——

'I have quite made up my mind, sir.'

It was the evening after the dinner—a Saturday—and they were sitting in Sir George's small room where he sat and smoked and thought things out. Captain Lauriston had ridden over to Ealing, to spend the Sunday there with his wife and the children.

'It will be a great change for you. What may happen over there it is impossible to say. But there are one or two things I would suggest—nay, I would most strongly urge upon you—in your own interest. We may take it that one of the attractions to M. de Montessonne in the matter is your money. You are wealthy. Your money should be settled on yourself.'

Aunt Charlotte nodded. She had thought of that herself.

'And if you will take my advice, you will keep the control of it in your own hands. It means power. You may need it to hold your own if you should ever return to France.'

Aunt Charlotte nodded again. The common-sense of that appealed to her.

'And, in the last place, I would beg of you to see to it that none of it follows the remnant of M. de Montessonne's own fortune in futile efforts to rehabilitate the Bourbons—unless, and until, France shows plainly that she wants them. Madame de Montessonne with one hundred and eighty thousand pounds absolutely under her own control may become a personage—either here or in Paris. Madame with nothing but a pocketful of Bourbon promises, and her husband teaching French, would be a very different person indeed. You understand?'

'I quite understand, sir, and I quite agree. Perhaps you will arrange all that for me. It would hardly be seemly in me to discuss such matters with the marquis.'

'Will you leave it to me to make matters as safe for you as I can?'

'If you will be so good, sir.'

'Then I will put the whole matter into Pennefeather's hands, and he will see to it all for you.'

'I thank you, sir. Is there anything else?'

'Nothing, I think. You will be getting married at once, I presume. M. le Marquis, at all events, will not wish to dally over the matter.'

'Nothing is fixed, of course; but, as you say, there is no reason for waiting.'

'And afterwards? You will take a house, I suppose?'

'We will settle all that now that everything else is arranged. We shall want a house, of course, until'——

'That may be a very long time of coming,' said Sir George, with a dubious shake of the head. 'I doubt if some of us will live to see it.'

'M. de Montessonne seems hopeful.'

'Hope is long of dying. When a man gives up hope it is time for him to go.'

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### CHAPTER XIII.—HOW THEY MADE HOLIDAY WHEN ALL THE WORLD WAS YOUNG.

H the rapturous delight of those rare days when, as now, Captain Lauriston came cantering up the drive, and caught first a flash of the eager child-faces at the window as they sprang up to look, and then their cannon-ball exit from the front door as they captured him and dragged him, a laughing prisoner, to the waiting mother upstairs!

And how her eyes shone and her face kindled at the sight of him! Captain Charles found her sweeter and fairer each time he came, and the sight of her great joy in him more than compensated for the career he had given up. For it had been no light matter to snap all his hopes at a moment's notice, and to check the tide of his military fortunes just as it was rising to the flood. He was a born soldier, and had looked to die one. It was only sternest necessity, and a high sense of duty, and a will that knew no turning when sense of duty had once fixed it, that tamed his spirit to the banking stool. But there, beyond all question, his duty lay. For his father, though wonderfully hale and vigorous, was getting on in years—had even shown signs of the weight of them at times, Captain Charles thought; and the welfare of the bank required that a Lauriston should be ready to take the helm whenever necessity called.

For these five years he had worked manfully at his new calling, fitting himself for the headship by patient and careful mastery of all that lay behind. He had, of course, all the advantages of guidance and instruction that could be afforded him, so to compass in as short a time as possible the knowledge that another might spend half a lifetime in acquiring. And these five strenuous years had taught him almost all that even John Sax knew of banking matters—without, however, the hard practical experience which only the years could bring. Ay, he knew almost all that even John Sax knew of banking matters—almost all, almost all, but not quite!

Sir George still held the reins firmly in his own hands, and John Sax held the slack ends. There were inner mysteries of high finance to which Captain Charles had not yet penetrated; but if he, as a unit, was a born soldier, the Lauristons as a race were born bankers, and he was no whit behind the rule in his assimilation of knowledge and grasp of commercial principles. He was universally liked for his genial bearing and quiet courtesy, and the wide and influential clientèle of the bank—West End drones and City bees alike—were satisfied that

Lauristons was in safe hands in spite of Sir George's years.

When the opportunity of release from matters financial offered, Captain Charles welcomed it as a schoolboy an unexpected holiday, and he behaved as such. His horse would be waiting for him the moment his last stroke of work was done, and every beat of its hoofs struck something off his years and as much off his mind. And so by the time he reached the Red House on Castle Bear Hill he was young enough to cope with the wildest demands of the annihilators of Redskins, and just the right age to set the love-sparks glowing in Mrs Charles's eyes and to fill her face with the radiant joy of his presence. Then it was holiday-time for them all, and every moment of his stay must yield its precious honey.

When the weather and Mrs Lauriston's health would permit, they drove far and wide over the country-side—to the Royal Gardens at Kew; to the Royal Park at Richmond, with dinner at the quaint old 'Star and Garter,' and an exploration by boat of the winding reaches of the river; to Windsor and a possible sight of the King and Queen and the Princesses on the terrace, and even a possible graciously exalting word from them.

On days when their mother found more enjoyment in the thought of their pleasure than in active participation in it, they roamed afoot, laughing, chattering, leaping ditches, scrambling through hedges, eating at any wayside inn that took their fancy; lying for rest in hillside nooks, or in some glad new discovery of woodland dell, carpeted with bracken and pine-needles and acorns, and roofed with shimmering green, where tricksy, bright-eyed original inhabitants played at hide-and-seek with them among the branches. And, but for the lack of the sweet-faced, radiant-eyed mother, these were the days they enjoyed the most.

Over the dinner-table that day Captain Charles gave them very full and particular information about the great doings in Grosvenor Place the night before; described the ladies' dresses to the best of his powers for Mrs Lauriston's and Mavie's benefit, and got drowned in bursts of merry laughter at times by reason of his obvious mistakes; told them some of the stories he had heard about the royal wedding; and discoursed lightly on some of the best-known people who had been there.

'M. de Montessonne was there,' he said, with a nod to Etienne, 'to touch our English manners to the standard of Versailles. And John Sax of course'—at which little Jack's honest face flushed with ingenuous pride, and still more when Captain Charles added, 'Whatever should we do without John Sax?'

Then he must hear all they had been doing since he saw them, and Etienne's hair began to feel creepy-crawly about the back of his neck when Charles launched instantly into a voluble description of their meeting with the soldiers by the little church.

But Captain Charles quite understood how impossible it would have been for them not to follow so vast an attraction, and he was greatly interested in all they had to tell about his old regiment. He simply reminded them of the need for caution and the observance of the bounds that direful experience had set for them, and left the matter to their goodwill and common-sense.

'And what shall it be to-day now?' he asked, as exuberantly as a schoolboy planning the brief scheme of his holiday. 'The Princesses are at Windsor. Shall we go and peep at them through the railings? Or shall we drive to Richmond and take the river there? Or what would you like best, my dear?'

'The thought of your enjoyment will be quite enough for me to-day,' said Mrs Lauriston gently.

'Oh mother!' from Mavie and Charles.

'Really, Mary?' with a look of concern from Captain Charles.

'Yes, dear. I am sorry; but journeying of any kind to-day would be no pleasure to me, but the reverse. Why not do the walk to Harrow and Stanmore you have been talking so much about? You have none of you been this year yet, and Etienne here has never been at all, and the country is just at its best.'

Captain Charles looked doubtful, but she knew his thought, and said quickly, 'Do take them, Charles. I know they are all aching for that walk. It will do me more good than anything to think of you all enjoying yourselves, and you shall tell me all about it when you get back;' and she smiled on them as sweetly as though pain and weariness were absolute strangers to her.

And so, since he knew her so well, and what would please her best, Captain Charles gave the word, and presently they were streaming away through the sloping meadows to the Brent.

Just a glance into the frontier fort and an excited explanation of the advantages of the tunnels through the thicket, and they crossed the stream by the plank.

And the plank, of course, recalled the fox and the hounds, and Mavie's irrepressible tongue was in the middle of the incident almost before she knew it.

'It's a good thing none of you got bitten,' said Captain Charles off-handedly.

'Oh, but I did!' chirped Mavie.

'You got bitten! Where, child? A dog's bite is not a thing to trifle with,' he said with concern.

'She's all right,' said Charles weightily.

'Yes, really, it's nearly quite all right now, daddie. It's got back almost to its proper shape and colour, and we didn't tell mother, lest it should worry her.'

'Let me see it;' and Mavie began to turn up her sleeve, chattering all the while.

'It was only a teeny, tiny hole the dog made, and he didn't mean to,' as Captain Charles examined the arm and felt it carefully. 'And it doesn't hurt

the least little bit. It was John Sax sucked it all out of shape, and made it look like a plum, and three times as bad as it really was, and then Hepsy put some stuff on and tied it up.'

'That was very clever of John Sax, and we are very much indebted to him;' and the kindly pats he bestowed on little Jack's shoulder covered that young man with confusion and made his face warm again.

'And I won't go mad, will I, father?'

'Not a bit madder than you are now, I hope, Mav. I don't think we could stand it. Who's been making game of you, child?'

'Charlie brought a great big mug of water to me before I was out of bed this morning, and stood watching me like a—like a baslik—till I'd drunk it all up.'

'She didn't kick a bit, so that shows she's not going mad,' said Charles complacently. 'You see, I'd been thinking of it all night, 'cept when I was asleep; and it was horrid to think of, and I wanted to make sure.'

'Well, I wouldn't think any more about it, either of you, if I were you. It'll be all right in a day or two, and I'm glad it's no worse. I've had heaps of bites, and I'm not mad yet,' said Captain Charles.

'There! I told you so, Mav, and you needn't have cried,' said Charles triumphantly.

'It was being wakened up all of a sudden, and made to drink all that cold water, and your great big, horrid, staring eyes. I declare I'm all cold and swimmy inside yet. And you're a nasty, horrid thing, Charles Lauriston, so there!'

'Just think of all the changes this little church has seen,' said Captain Charles, by way of diversion, as they passed under the shadow of the little Norman tower. 'Who was King of England in the year 1200, John Sax?'

And little Jack drew his wits together with a start at so searching a question, and sent them off hurriedly in quest of the answer. 'Would it be John?' he asked doubtfully. 'There were such a lot of them just about then, sir.'

'Yes, they were lively times those in some respects, and deadly dull in others. Some young knight may have kept his vigil in this tiny place, and mail-clad Crusaders may have knelt here before setting out for Palestine. If old walls could speak what tales they might tell!'

'Old houses would be horrid!' said Mavie with decision. 'The only way to do would be to pull them down as soon as any one died in them.'

'Then the stones would be used for other houses, and they'd all be telling bits of tales without beginnings or endings, and that would be worse,' said Charles. 'The only way would be to burn 'em all up and build with new stones every time.—Has there ever been any fighting round here, father?'

'Over at Brentford there was some hot work between Prince Rupert and the Roundheads.'

'Which won?'

'Rupert won, and cleaned the town of its last crust. Ealing was cleaned out too.'

'Which side would you have been on, father, if you'd been there?' asked Mavie anxiously.

'Ah, now, I wonder! Which side would you have been, Mavie?'

'Oh, a Cavalier, of course. They looked so splendid, with their big hats and curls.'

'I'd have been with Prince Rupert. He was a dasher!' said Charlie.

'And you, John Sax? Etienne would have been for the King, of course.'

'The Montessonnes have always stood by their King, monsieur.'

'John Sax would have been a Roundhead, and worn a tin pot on his head,' scoffed Mavie.

'I think I would have been a Roundhead,' said John Sax, with a warm face again. 'And an iron cap was more use in a fight than feathers and curls. Besides'——

'Roundhead! Roundhead!' chirped Mavie, dancing in front of him.

'Besides what, John?' asked Captain Charles, with a friendly hand on his shoulder.

'Well, I'm always sorry for the King, and his head having to be chopped off, but he was in the wrong, you know.'

'Roundhead! Roundhead!' and Mavie danced scornfully about him.

'Never mind her, John. She's a minx,' said her father, laughing at her excitement. 'Always stick up for your principles, my boy, and don't be led astray by curls and feathers.'

They scrambled over hedges and ditches into the dark little wood, because, as Mavie said, woods were 'so 'maginative,' then crossed the new canal and climbed Horsington Hill, because—according to mademoiselle once more—'hills always make you feel wider and bigger,' and so through Sudbury End to Harrow, talking, talking all the way, and unconsciously revealing themselves to the watchful eye which seemed given wholly to laughter and enjoyment.

Charles and Mavie, indeed, did most of the talking, for to them the presence of Captain Charles was a rare delight, and their spirits were out of bounds with their bodies. Etienne was always inclined to reserve in the presence of the powers that be—one of the results of his training; and John Sax's modesty ever set him more towards thought than speech.

*(To be continued.)*

# TRADE TRICKERIES.

By Algernon Warren.

'IF an angel were to come down and offer him drugs from elsewhere he would say, "I get all mine from London."' Such was the rejoinder of a commercial traveller for a much-respected provincial firm of wholesale druggists, when asked how it was that he could never succeed in securing a drug-order from a certain pharmacist. Keen competition nowadays has modified the old conservative tendency towards restricting purchases to one locality under all circumstances; but to this day numbers of merchants and traders are prepared to 'pay for trust' where drugs and chemicals for medicaments are concerned. They will take no chances. Another firm's goods may be all right; but the house that they have dealt with for years has their confidence, and they will not risk peace of mind by changing, their mental attitude being that the possible saving of a few shillings in a purchase from a new source may be more than counterbalanced should there be the slightest inferiority connected with it which might possibly affect their reputation for supplying the best of everything only.

The standard of purity of drugs and chemicals as supplied both by metropolitan and provincial British wholesale firms to retail pharmacists is now immeasurably—this is no exaggerated term—higher than was that of fifty years ago. But importers of foreign commodities have still to walk warily on occasion, as certain cases of adulteration and sophistication which have come under personal notice within the last twenty years should serve to evidence. 'That's the first time I have ever known it occur,' said a merchant when his warehouseman reported that a large piece of stone had been found in the centre of a barrel of imported cakes of African beeswax. 'I must say I've been a bit surprised not to have had a case of the kind before, after reading so much about the dodges that the natives out there are up to.'

In a few years' time, however, he had a more vexatious experience, which savoured of those 'gold brick' tricks that were recorded as having been played upon the 'greenhorn' in Uncle Sam's country. He was supplied, through a firm of London wholesale druggists bearing a well-merited reputation for scrupulous honesty and high-mindedness, with a parcel of what was understood by both consigner and consignee to be 'guaranteed genuine beeswax.' There was not a cake thereof which lacked the proper flavour and outward appearance. It was being disposed of to retailers in the regular way, when there came the surprising intelligence that one of these recipients had been summoned under the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act for selling impure beeswax. A very interesting contention arose out of this as to whether beeswax could properly be denominated a 'drug' or not. The merchant immediately had some slices cut off one or more of the cakes and tested. He found these cuttings were perfectly free from adulteration. But, alas! the indictment proved only too true; the impurity lay in the centre. Blocks of composite paraffin-wax had been thickly coated with perfectly genuine beeswax, so that neither the tell-tale odour nor the different consistency of the adulterant was perceptible until more than an inch of the surface wax was cut through. Thus the importer, the wholesale dealer, and the retailer were alike taken in for the time being.

The Oriental exporter of the odoriferous musk-pod not infrequently causes the British purchaser to discover that he has bought a pig in a poke, for on cutting the pods open to extract the grains of musk for various medicinal and perfumery requirements, it is no uncommon thing—the writer has seen cases of it repeatedly—for him to find that pieces of flannel have been stitched into the insides to add to the weight of the pods. Were anything heavy introduced the fraud would be detected by the first experienced handler; but a little flannel just adds pleasantly to the manipulator's profit. To be fair to such sophisticators, their customary practice is not to scoop out the grains of musk embedded in the pod, so the buyer is usually only swindled to an extent calculated to make him 'smile a hard, set smile,' and then feel thankful that it is no worse.

'I know,' said a trader, holding up a bottle of otto of roses to the light, 'what is said about there being no really pure otto on the market. But when I pay the price for the article classified as "virgin" I don't expect to get something with spermaceti in it like this. I wonder at them being such fools as to put in an article that takes so much higher a temperature to liquefy. They had better have stuck to geranium-oil' (a common otto of roses adulterant).

Sometimes unfounded accusations of adulteration are made by tradesmen whom fears of possible prosecution have made nervously suspicious. The following instance is rather a laughable one. A new-blown young chemist and druggist wrote to a methylated spirit manufacturer in a strain of virtuous indignation, saying: 'Your spirit is abominably adulterated with naphtha; it simply reeks of it.' Whereon he had to be informed that the methylator had not the slightest interest in putting in one drop more naphtha than the Excise officials compelled him to utilise under their inspection to meet the Board of Inland Revenue's requirements; inasmuch as the value of this article was at the moment something like three times that of the

spirit into which it was required to be mixed so as to produce an unpalatable liquor.

On the other hand, there are cases where sophistication has been resorted to deliberately as a means of 'getting even.' 'How do you get on with F. & Co.?' said a merchant to a traveller for a firm of colour manufacturers. 'Oh,' he replied, 'they are mean scamps. They screwed me down to give them special terms for a parcel of goods, and then, when I called on them for settlement, instead of paying by cash or cheque they said, "Draw on us at two months." But I did them,' he added triumphantly. 'When they gave us their next whitelead order we put a lot more whiting into it.' His face glowed with pride at the thought of his Roland for an Oliver. Whiting is known to be an adulterant of whitelead; and sellers of the latter commodity ground in oil for painters' purposes are wont to offer a guaranteed genuine quality to those who will pay the price, and a No. 1, No. 2, and so on, not so guaranteed, to others who want something cheaper. But in the case referred to it was evident that the buyers did not know what they were getting.

Sicily is the chief source of exports of lemon-oil, more generally termed 'essence of lemon.' At one time this was seldom shipped in coppers containing less than seventy or a hundred pounds avoirdupois. In course of years, however, smaller packages, such as thirty to forty pound coppers, were adopted. Then followed twelve-pound coppers, and subsequently five, two, and one pound coppers came to be sold. These smaller packages somewhat facilitated fraud and adulteration, for they could be handled and perforated more readily, and required closer supervision on account of their number. A consular official, who drew attention to the increased Sicilian imports of lemon terpenes and turpentine for this purpose, stated that the lemon-growers customarily passed on genuine expressed essence of lemon to dealers, who in some cases were guilty of adulterating it. But sometimes it was the fault of neither the grower nor the exporter—save that the latter exercised insufficient supervision before actual shipment—that the essence reached the consignee in an impure condition. Cunning thieves were in the habit of boring tiny holes in the bottoms of the coppers (the present writer has noted many a trace thereof), withdrawing a quantity of the lemon-oil, replacing the same by introducing a terpene substitute, and then soldering up the apertures. He recommended purchasers to be cautious as to how they passed coppers which bore marks of soldered-up holes at the base, and not to assume that these were so treated before the completion of the original filling.

Essence of lemon itself used frequently to be employed as an adulterant of the at one time very much dearer citrus product of essence of bergamot. In like manner, many a consignment of the best foreign oil of lavender which comes from southern France, and is termed *sans tiges* as a guarantee that it is derived from lavender-flower distillation only, is blended for cheapening purposes with commoner lavender-oils such as are now much in demand for soap-perfume.

It is recorded that some persons were burned alive at Nuremberg in the fifteenth century for the crime of adulterating saffron, then more used in edible consumption than now; it has to some extent been superseded by aniline colouring, although the saffron-bun is still a speciality in some parts of Devon and Cornwall. Had the penalty been revived in this twentieth century a good many roastings must necessarily have ensued; for, according to an abstract of current work which appeared in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, October 21, 1905, German authorities found that of one hundred and twenty-six saffron samples submitted to analysis during the last five and a half years, only 56·35 per cent. (not much more than half of the total number) were genuine; 34·13 per cent. were weighted with barium sulphate; 1·59 per cent. with barium sulphate, borax, and nitre; and 3·97 per cent. with borax and nitre. A British pharmacist reported to the same journal some two months later that he had examined samples of saffron which were evidently adulterated with the old-fashioned remedy Rochelle salts.

It is a common saying that the shoemaker's wife goes the worst shod, and to some extent this applies to olive-oil in Italy. What is ordinarily met with on hotel dining-tables there—the writer can speak with more than a year's experience—is far more adulterated than, and inferior to, the better qualities which are shipped in casks to England from Bari and various other ports for distribution through the customers of wholesale druggists and high-class oil-merchants. The latter hear from their customers of zealous inspectors' seizures of samples with equanimity rather than otherwise, knowing that the result will act as an indirect advertisement of the excellence of their shipments; and they are pleased but not surprised when, after receiving a first letter in high-strung tone warning them that they will be held liable for the consequences should any trouble arise out of a recent official analysis of samples which had been taken, they get a second one begging them to be sure to supply a precisely similar article in future, because (this is no supposititious case) the inspector says that 'it is the best quality oil that he has met with in his twenty years' experience.' Still, it cannot be denied that much of the so-called olive-oil which is imported in small flasks, packed ordinarily to the number of thirty in what are termed half-chests, is sadly adulterated, as unlucky housekeepers find, to their cost, when, having ordered oil for salad-dressing, they chance to get served with common flask-oil of a coarseness and odour which ruin the best culinary effort.

Forty or fifty years ago there were many pharmacists who declined to buy olive-oil in any package except the imported earthenware jar or half-jar, containing twenty and ten gallons respectively. Twenty years later importers were wont to say that the jar-purchasers could be counted on their fingers,

so universally had the convenient cask superseded the more picturesque receptacle which druggists of the older school long associated with superiority of contents.

Scientific investigation and testing facilities are now so perfected that the sophisticator may well tremble at the reflection, 'Be sure the analyst will find you out.' This year the centenary of that public safeguard Mr Jacob Bell, founder of the Pharmaceutical Society, will merit celebration; for ever since the formation of that association there have been strenuous and effective workers for the suppression of neglect and carelessness where the handling of poisons is concerned, and the accepted standards of chemical purity are totally different from those which were tolerated formerly.

# THE FORGOTTEN ROCK.

## CHAPTER VI.

We spend our lives in learning pilotage.

HEN he awoke, the sense of rest and a mercifully bright morning clarified his mood and lifted the gray vapours from his mind for an hour; but the day wore on, and the letter from the Bank loomed up again, its sentences in black half-text. By midday the dreary refrain sang again in his mind, 'Three hundred and seventeen pounds within one month! within one month!'

He could see no way out of it. He must start for the North as soon as he had interviewed Lord Criffel. It was curious and characteristic of him that no thought of reward for returning the jewels to their owner occurred to him. He had a trust to carry out. There was an end of it. He must hasten to Cromdale Square, and then get away North as soon as possible. Feeling the now familiar clutch of the belt, he thought ruefully of the irony of the position. Here was a fortune in little, shining stones in close embrace to him, yet the want of money was darkening the horizon, souring the wine of life. 'Twas a strange and difficult world, he thought with a sigh, as he set out on his mission to Lord Criffel. Two out of three of the passers-by had the same thought.

He turned into the Park, slackening his speed as he joined the stream of Sunday idlers. Loud voices of orators with infallible recipes for the housekeeping of humanity reached him, the most of them apostles of revolt against existing affairs, discussing science, the creeds, unbelief, politics, the sexes, peace and war, the millennium, taxation, labour, capital; all sorts and conditions of men listening, some idly langhing at interruptions and their counters, others hanging earnestly on every word. Flett walked on, until a chance phrase, flung over the heads of the crowd, hit him, and he stopped to listen. 'Let us be done with parties of plunder and promises and electoral carrots. The Unionists show their teeth, an' the Liberals slobber over us, but they both 'ate us and are afride of us, and we 're sick—sick—sick of 'em both! Comrades, what we want for every one is the 'old of production and exchange. Then, and not till then, we 'll 'ave a fair division of money, and to-day's rotten system swept away.'

The words came from a gaunt man in a red tie. Here it was cropping up again; the same thought, 'a fair division of money,' voiced at his two casual meetings with the sponger on the Embankment and the friendly policeman. The speaker went on, his raucous tones and unfinished gestures redeemed by the certain savage sincerity in his voice, the passionate conviction in his glowing eye. He rated the crowd, bullying and cajoling them, now calling them comrades, now blind fools, traitors to themselves and their children, harking back and emphasising again and again the millennium for the masses, the control of production and exchange.

A great deal of it was unintelligible to Flett, and indeed to the majority of the crowd; but he listened until the man finished his harangue. It was true, he reflected dully as he went on. There was something wrong with the distribution of wealth. The fallacy that money means happiness was creeping into his blood. The phrases tingled in his ears. Why, the value of even two or three of the rubies in the belt would alone be sufficient for an ordinary man, for himself, for instance, to—— He suddenly stopped, as though some secret pain touched him, a slow pallor mounting in his face. The voices suddenly seemed far away, the crowd blurred and unreal moving figures.

He went slowly forward to a seat, and the thought he was half-afraid of came stealthily nearer. He remembered Westwater's voice: 'Eighty thousand pounds—Amsterdam,' where the jewels could be easily sold. The sweat ran down his face. Instantly he felt a racing ebb-tide in his blood. Two or three of the rubies would mean to him independence, education, prospects for his children. So whispered the velvet-pawed thought, still creeping closer. He saw the vulture of the Bank hopping nearer, his savings gone, the black, uneasy future. He sat staring at the ground, his breathing laboured.

A policeman hurried past with a handcuffed pickpocket, and the sight struck him like a blow between the eyes. He rose quickly, wiping a wet brow, and squared his shoulders. He would go straight to Lord Criffel and fulfil his trust.

He hailed a hansom, and ordered the driver to drive anywhere for ten minutes, and then to Cromdale Square. He would compose his nerves before his interview. Still, there would be no harm in looking again at the rubies, to see if they were safe. Indeed, rightly regarded, it was his

duty. So he convinced himself. Inside the cab, cautiously, vaguely angry with himself, he unloosened the belt, his pulse galloping, and counted the gems. They were safe.

He held the last of them, five bright little devils, in his hand for a moment. So small and trifling they seemed, so—so easily carried. He hurriedly signalled the driver to stop near Cromdale Square, got out, and dismissed him. He was deathly pale, and his face that of one suddenly grown old, for the five rubies were not now in the belt. They were in his pocket. In a dreadful second of time, swift and as sudden as the stroke of an adder, he had stolen them. Even as he rang at the door of No. 9 in the Square a wild, futile desire to replace them in the belt seized him, but it was too late. The door opened, and he found himself inside. He was shown into a waiting-room by a bored-looking footman, and shortly afterwards told that his lordship would see him in a few minutes.

'Captain Whiffler, or some sich nyme, so 'e said, though 'e suttingly didn't appear to me to be a military man; you cawn't tell nowadays. There might 'ave been a touch of the third battalion about 'im,' so the first footman loftily summed up afterwards amid the respectful admiration of the females below-stairs. 'Leastways,' he added tolerantly, 'that's 'ow 'e struck me;' and having thus delivered himself, took up his interrupted study of starting-prices in *Paddock Snips*, while Hugh waited, his heart drumming, until he was shown into Lord Criffel's room.

Gavin John Louis Philip Beaufin, fifth Earl of Criffel, Secretary of State, sportsman, traveller, humanist, owned a rectangular mind, and a soft heart carefully entrenched behind the habit of silence and a horror of advertisement. He also owned half a Scottish county, and wished that he didn't. He raced a little, and worked a great deal. Paradox, epigrams, and grace-notes were absent from his few public speeches, but no human being could read more than one meaning into anything he ever said or wrote. 'As clear as Criffel' said his friends; and the phrase, ringing true, passed into the coined speech of the British public, who believed in the man, his aims, and his horses. The Order of the Thistle was his, and a famous salmon-fly was christened after him. It is doubtful which of these guerdons he valued the higher.

Hugh found himself beside a man of about his own age. The captain was pale and unnerved, and the room spun round once and back again before it steadied. Lord Criffel looked at his visitor kindly, curiously. He liked his looks, but a child could have seen that the man was under the heel of some masterful emotion. Hugh, for the first time in his life, was in the agony of trying to avoid another man's look. He failed, but the other man's kindly brown eyes eased his taut nerves a little. The gentleman whom he intended to cheat motioned him to a chair and sat down beside him. At the sound of his well-bred, friendly voice Hugh breathed more freely, and his tongue no longer felt one with his parched mouth. Then his native instinct for direct speech came to his rescue.

'My name is Hugh Flett, my lord,' he began—'master o' the steamship *Covesea* of Findburgh. I have a—a message to deliver.'

There was a pause. Lord Criffel was a man of few words. He nodded. 'From?' his eyes asked.

'I don't know his real name, but he gave me for you what I've good reason to think are your lost rubies.'

Lord Criffel was, and very nearly looked, astounded; but he said nothing, searching the other's face. The light from the window fell full on Flett. Lord Criffel looked at him steadily. A monomaniac? A thieves' emissary? A commonplace, easily dealt with blackmailer? The man looked none of them.

At last the Earl broke the silence. 'This is an extraordinary statement,' he said.

'No doubt, my lord; but I've brought them wi' me. They're here,' blurted out Hugh, and slapped his side. 'I'll show them to ye.'

He unbuckled the belt with a sigh of relief, his hands trembling, then took it off, unlaced it, and held it up by one end. A bright trickle of gems ran out, settling into a glowing pool in the light, sparkling joyously in their freedom.

Their owner looked at them incredulously. Then he turned them over, one by one, as though he feared that his senses were playing him a trick, and that the twinkling points of fire would vanish to join their fairy comrades in the sunbeams. But they were real, and he recognised them. They were his. At last he laid them down, and turned again to the captain.

'This is an amazing piece of good fortune,' he said. 'We had given up hope of them. My wife will be delighted! Delighted! I wish she had been at home, but she is in the country. Tell me the whole story. We shall not be interrupted.'

Flett began to tell him the story from the beginning of Westwater's coming to Findburgh, his sailing for Finland, the scene down the cleft on the lonely isle, and the dying man's message. The Earl listened intently, taking a few notes, breaking in with a salient question here and there. Flett's voice steadied as he talked, and the story was soon told, down to the last scene in the wild North Sea. Lord Criffel rose and held out his hand.

'I cannot thank you in words, captain. Fortunate for us that they fell into such good and honest hands.'

Hugh winced and allowed his hand to be shaken. He was perhaps at that moment as miserable a man as there was in all London. But he had to dree his weird, and went on hurriedly, scarcely believing his own ears.

'So, my lord, there they all are, just as I got them from him. And—I nearly forgot—he asked

me to give you this.' He handed the Earl the little book. The other man looked at it for a moment, and opened it. It was a well-worn pocket Horace, and on the inside of the cover, in his own boyish writing of twenty years before, the words: '*To Larry. "All rising to great place is by a winding stair." Christmas, 1887.*'

'He said you would know who sent it, and that no one else would,' said Hugh.

'I do,' said the Earl, an infinite sadness in his voice. He rose and looked out of the window, the book in his hand. The dusty Square vanished, memory winging back to the shouts of the playing-fields, a boy-comrade, and the cloudless skies of youth. After a long silence he turned round again to Hugh.

'I do not give you his name, and I ask you not to try to discover it. Let us keep this to ourselves. You are a man in ten thousand, and I trust you. He was, as he said, my friend once; but—he steered first recklessly, then badly, then drifted to the forgotten rock.'

'The Forgotten Rock!' exclaimed the captain. The other looked at him.

'My lord, that was the very name in Finnish of the island that I found him on.'

'A coincidence. Curious enough. I used it figuratively of course. Most of us think we know our charts, and leave out of account some forgotten rock until we graze it or crash on to it,' the Earl went on musingly. 'Who knows? Ambition. A pair of bright eyes. A horse. Who knows? Ah, a voyage is never over until one's foot is on shore.'

He unlocked a drawer in a cabinet and brought out some papers.

'This is the description given to Scotland Yard, and a jeweller's sketch of the settings,' said he. 'The settings are not there, of course.' He counted the stones. 'Only five missing. Well, I cannot grumble; I'm lucky to have had such an upright man as yourself as trustee for me.'

Poor Flett winced again. It was well that the Earl, bending over the paper, could not see the other man's face.

'I shall give you an acknowledgment for the rubies, and a little—souvenir of to-day. By the way, captain, another coincidence. This is the Fourth of July. A great many people call it "Independence Day." I hope and think that you will.'

He sat down again at his table for two or three minutes, put what he had written in an envelope, and sealed it. Hugh took the envelope mechanically. He was scarcely conscious of the other's voice. A wild desire to get away from the kind brown eyes seized him. The very presence, wholesome and transparent, of the other man, the sense of sincerity in his fibre, stung Flett like a quiet, accusing voice. 'Good and honest hands!' 'A man in ten thousand, and to be trusted!' 'Upright man as a trustee!' the words rang within him, searing his heart. *His* word, his worthless, lying word, had been taken! He had been honoured at sight.

Lord Criffel saw his face working. He put it down to embarrassment at the hint of reward conveyed in 'Independence Day,' some admirable delicacy of organisation in the captain, and thought it kinder to shorten the interview.

'You're a little overwrought now, captain. You must have felt the strain of carrying the rubies about for so long; but come back and see me next time you are in London.'

He shook hands heartily, and in another minute Hugh was out into the misty brightness of the streets.

It was a warm summer day, but he shivered, a cold rain in his blood. He quickened his steps, hastening away, anywhere away from the neighbourhood of the kind voice and the steady brown eyes that had lit up when their owner called him an honest man. Crowds passed him, with the Londoners' quick, interested glances at every one and everything; and to his mind, sensitive as a weather-glass in its misery, their careless, cheerful voices jarred on him—almost, he thought, questioned him. He felt desolately alone, yet pointed at, in a world of imagined mocking faces; a man apart, in the midst of his brethren. The new strange chains of his shame rattled. He almost hoped they would soon become mercifully intimate. His shoulders gradually lowered, and a sulky, cowed voice, his own, whined within him. Why had Fate thrown him in the way of temptation? It was scarcely his fault, was his bitter thought, as he reviewed his life, in a pathetic last salute to his murdered self-respect.

Till then he had been so happy, so unconscious of it. Till then no one could accuse him. Till then he had been loyal to his employers, to his home, to himself. He had been more upright than the average man, said the hidden Pharisee in him. He had been tempted unfairly. The value of the jewels, a bagatelle to their owner, meant freedom to him. No one would know, and it would be his one and only stumble. He would swear that.

So he temporised; and even as he trifled with these poor mental anæsthetics he felt the burden of his shame settling like lead on him. He strangled a cry. It was an unjust and monstrous world. The sponger on the Embankment, the policeman, the man with the red tie in the Park, were right. They were right, he repeated, jaws and hands clenched. Ease, power, money for a few; care, temptation, poverty for millions. Wounded at the heart by himself, he cursed the universe. A flower-girl, offering shining blossoms, looked on his face and shrank back afraid.

Suddenly he remembered the unopened letter in his pocket, and as he took it out there slowly came to him the remembrance of Lord Criffel's words: 'Independence Day.' He had not thought of them at the time; indeed, his wits had been benumbed, but now the sudden truth flashed on him. The gentleman whom he had cheated believed him, trusted him, rewarded him. Here, in his hand, was doubtless the evidence. He saw black ingrati-

tude marching along with his cowardice, as he looked at the unopened letter, and at the thought he stopped dead, slowly shedding the thin rags of his self-deception, his soul hanging in the balance.

Comes there sooner or later to every one (except the complete and unlimited fool) at least one swift moment in his life when there is revealed to him as in an uncompromising awful mirror his own startling image. The vast majority of men shut their eyes or flee from the sight. Hugh saw himself, and as he looked there was borne to him on a freshet of memory Westwater's sudden question on a white northern evening: 'Do you find it easy to be honest?' His self-sufficiency became a breaking wreck, his poor sophistries scurrying like rats before a sudden light. A wave of humility, shame, and understanding surged over him. His manhood triumphed.

He put the letter back in his pocket unopened, turned on the instant, and walked without hesitation, drunk with resolve, straight back to Lord Criffel's. He would weather this black day, come what might.

The bored-looking footman admitted him again, and looked at his face curiously. 'Drinking,' he thought, with the glib verdict of his class.

Lord Criffel was busy over some papers when the captain entered, but looked up quickly on hearing Hugh's changed voice.

'I've come back,' said Flett grimly, almost in a whisper. 'I've come back to tell ye somethin'. First of all, my lord, ye must take back this envelope and whatever it holds. I have not opened it.'

He put his hand into his pocket, brought out the envelope, and along with it a little twist of paper, and laid them both on the table. His hand shook, but his voice was under control, and his eye, too bright, met the other man's steadily. Lord Criffel waited, wondering at the trouble in his voice. Hugh pointed to the twist of paper.

'There are the missing five stones, my lord,' he gulped. 'I—took them—I took them. I 'm a'—— He sank into a chair, his face in his hands.

'And you came back with them!' said the Earl.

Flett nodded, without looking up.

There was silence for a minute. 'I suppose,' Lord Criffel soliloquised—'I suppose I ought to send for the police.' He looked again at the crushed man. 'The Forgotten Rock again,' he thought.

There was a long pause, then the touch of his hand on the captain's shoulder, and his voice near him.

The two men sat for long together.

. . . . . .

At the end, 'Good-bye, captain,' said the Earl. 'I called you an honest man before, and I do so now.'

He held out his hand. The other man grasped it without words, went out again to the London streets, but with sunlight in his heart, head and shoulders erect, and the light of struggle and achievement in his eye. Hugh carried with him, in addition to the blessed sense of duty done, a cheque that spelled 'Independence Day' for him and his. Lord Criffel, looking out of the window, watched him stride across the Square.

'Few men could have done it,' he said to himself.

He took up the little Horace, and looked at it, then locked it in the cabinet with a sigh, and plunged into his day's work.

. . . . . .

Next day, speeding northwards in the Highland train climbing the steep slope of the Grampians, Hugh watched gratefully the stately unfolding of the hills. The warm, wild scent of the peats reached him as the train stopped at little wayside stations; and hard accents fell on his ear, sweet and friendly. He was at peace with the world. The first glimpses of the early heather (so dear to the returning Scot); the song of hill-burns pelting in changing flashes, white, tawny, crystal; the popping rabbits in the bracken; the careering, chasing cloud-shadows sailing on the green rollers of the hills; the climbing terraces of woods; remembered sounds, remembered landmarks, wardens of the Northland welcomed him, and saluted his entry. 'Pass, friend; all's well!' This was 'his ain countrie.'

Farther north, and here were the bright shields of Loch Garry and Loch Ericht, there the dark, swift dots of a covey of grouse skimming along the line of empty butts on the hill. The familiar snow-fence ran along beside him, bordering the brown stretches of the moors. Still north, and the Spey sang a song of old glens; then down through the leafy western gate of the Garden of Scotland, until he saw, in a quick lift of the green arras of the pines, waving battalions of barley, a bright, gleaming scarf of sand, and beyond, the blue welcoming eye of the Firth, red sails, and the moving neighbourhood of home.

. . . . . .

He bound his wife to secrecy, and told her the story, except the part of it relating to his dark hour in London. His courage had limits. Jean had listened to the narrative in a maze of astonishment and joy, tempered by her vow of secrecy, that barred her from a royal progress with the news among her neighbours. Their own good fortune had been discussed, appraised, and duly wept over by her; and now, two or three days afterwards, the first excitement over, Hugh and she were in the garden.

'I hope the siller winna be a snare, Hugh,' she said.

'I'll risk that,' answered Hugh promptly; 'the want o' money is a worse snare, I'm thinkin', than a bank account.'

'Isn't it a providence that the jewels got into sic safe hands as your ain, my man?' she went on.

Hugh was silent. There was a pause. He looked

seawards, his mind speeding back to a white northern evening, then to a man's wide resting-place in the North Sea.

'Lord rest his soul!' he said.

'Hugh!' broke in his wife, following his thought, 'that's surely prayin' for the deid. Forbye, he was a bad man!'

'He'll be the mair in need o' prayers maybe. I canna tell. An' ye'll obsairve, Jean,' he continued with a hint of authority, 'that I'm on my ain hearth-stane. There's worse faults than prayin' for the deid. Keep a lookout for the Forgotten Rocks.'

'Forgotten rocks?' said Jean.

'Ay! they're whiles one danger, whiles anither. They're often blind Conceit o' oorsels, and Want o' Charity for our neighbours, my lass.'

He went forward alone to the brow of the hill. Something huge, ceaseless, and inevitable in the regular crunch of the waves on the beach beat on his senses, marking off in the mystery of its escapement the relentless passing seconds of Time. Below him lay the mean place, raucous wrangling voices rising from it; the kirks staring sullenly at each other, smoke hanging like a miasma over the featureless streets.

But beyond them stood the strong, abiding hills; the bright, white column of the lighthouse arose straight and definite in the sun; and far above the snarling town the top-gallant yards of an anchored schooner engraved a Cross on the clean skyline, where the great wheel of the heavens met the sea.

THE END.

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# PHOTOGRAPHING THE HEART-BEAT.

We have become so accustomed to the wonders which modern science has been enabled to accomplish by means of photography that we are no longer surprised when some new and important discovery is announced. The service which photography has rendered by its application to science within recent years has proved so invaluable that one may now with truth say that photography is become the handmaiden of science. However useful photography may be as a pastime or as an art, there can be no doubt that in conjunction with science it has rendered such invaluable service to mankind as to have become practically indispensable; and in no other branch has it proved more valuable than in medical science. In this field it has added considerably to the lot of human happiness, since by its means operations have been made possible which were once considered impracticable, and it has been of considerable help in the alleviation of suffering. In this connection one need only mention the discovery of the Röntgen rays and the various inventions to which it has led. The latest of these is a contrivance for photographing the beating of the human heart, which is in itself almost as astounding as was the original invention. Although the new contrivance is of quite recent date, its practicability is proved by the fact that it has already been introduced into most of the important physical laboratories on the Continent. Before proceeding to describe the method of photographing the heart-beat, it may be as well to initiate the reader into some of the mysteries of the invention. The patient whose heart is to be examined is ushered into a pitch-dark room from which every ray of light is excluded. Without removing his clothes or making any other preliminary preparation, he is invited to sit down on an ordinary chair before a large glass bulb. Then the operator switches on the current, and in response the electric sparks hiss in the glass bulb, filling it with a pale-green light. Then the operator holds in front of the patient a plate which has previously been prepared with a compound of barium platinum. On to this is thrown a clearly defined image of the heart, and the electric rays are so arranged that the shadow of the rib-bones is scarcely perceptible, and does not in any way interfere with the examination of the fleshy mass forming the heart. So distinct is the image that one can clearly observe the opening and closing of the valve as the blood is being pumped through it. Needless to say, the patient feels nothing whatever during this operation. So far no photographic emulsion has been discovered which is sufficiently sensitive to record the movements of the heart as seen on the barium platinum screen, though it is expected that before long it will be possible to transfer this action on to a cinematograph film. Because of this difficulty another means has had to be adopted, and the movement of the heart as seen on the screen is recorded on what is called an electro-cardiagram. In order that this may be obtained the patient has to place his bare arms in two large vessels filled with water. Into each of these vessels a copper wire is led which is charged with electricity. Where these wires meet a very thin platinum wire is attached to them, resting within a highly charged magnetic field. As soon as the contact is completed this platinum needle begins to move, its movement being regulated according to the strength of the electric current passing through it. Since the human body is a conductor of electricity, the contact-circuit is made whenever the patient places his arms in the vessels of water into which the wires are led. It naturally follows that the movement of the needle follows the contraction and expansion of the heart, impelled by the electricity generated by the action of the muscles of that organ whilst performing its function. When these contractions are strong the swing of the needle is much greater than when the contractions are weak. Under

this moving needle a photographic film is slowly passed, and the light above it so arranged that a faithful imprint of the beating of the heart is recorded on the electro-cardiagram. It is hoped that this new discovery will afford doctors the means of studying more carefully and closely the heart and its action, enabling them to treat more exactly the various diseases of the heart which have until now been more or less a mystery to them.

## THE SOLITARY GUEST.

### CHAPTER IV.

THE Boar's Head Inn was a very comfortable place, and, as Captain Compton had said, it formed a delightful contrast to his grimy London lodgings. He was sitting in its garden smoking his pipe in great contentment when a footman from Grangemuir brought him a note.

Captain Compton saw the man coming along the village street, and guessed who it was. 'Here comes the money,' he said to himself with a chuckle. 'What a precious ass I was not to say a cool hundred pounds while I was about it!'

The note requested Captain Compton to send the written statement he had promised, and enclosed a cheque for fifty pounds. Captain Compton called for pen and paper and sat down to write.

'What an innocent the old man is!' he said to himself. 'I suppose it never struck him that I might just take the money and go off. I might send a line of acknowledgment, and by the time this stately flunkey was back at Grangemuir I would be on my way to London. But I am not such a cad as all that. He says that I am to promise to be absolutely silent on the matter of his son's marriage until his son's return. No, no, Sir Leslie, I never said that. All I said was for two months, in which time his son was expected to return; but these Government Commissions have a way of exceeding their time, and I may quite hope to be having another interview with Sir Leslie at the end of two months.'

The unsuspicious old Sir Leslie locked away Captain Compton's note in the most secret recess of his safe, and felt that he had for the time averted the blow which was to fall on his beloved daughter-in-law.

Fifty pounds is not a very vast sum of money; indeed there are many thousands of people in the world to whom it would seem a mere bagatelle. On the other hand, there are many millions of people to whom an unexpected fifty pounds would give a feeling of absolute prosperity. Captain Compton was one of the millions, and this unexpected fifty pounds did great things for him. He astonished his landlady by placing a ten-pound note in her hands; he bought himself a new suit of clothes, in which he sallied forth to pay visits in hopes of picking up a few invitations to dinner; he began to wish that windfalls of this description would come a little oftener; and before the two months were over he was debating in his own mind whether or not the piece of paper with his written promise had any real binding effect.

'Supposing I broke the promise, what would happen? Could I be had up? I wish to goodness that I could find out. It would, of course, be a pretty caddish thing to do; but when a man is hard-up he can't afford to be particular. How much would Montague Howard give for this information?'

Captain Compton was careful to keep himself well posted in the movements of the South African Commission, and great was his joy when a small paragraph in the papers mentioned that, as the work of the Commission had turned out to be more complicated than was at first anticipated, they would be a month later than the original date fixed for their return. Captain Compton rubbed his hands and walked up and down his room, whistling in the exuberance of his joy.

'This makes it plain sailing,' he said. 'Having paid for silence during two months, Sir Leslie won't want the matter to come out at the last moment before his son's return. He will be all the more ready to pay down the money now that he sees he can really trust me. He paid his money, I kept my promise. If he pays again I keep it again; if he won't pay he takes the consequences.'

It was two months to a day from the time that Captain Compton had first visited the 'Boar's Head' when he again arrived there from London. The fact of the footman from Grangemuir having brought him a note the last time that he was there entitled him to greater respect on the part of the landlady, who began to relate the news of the place as she put an appetising lunch before him.

'You will perhaps be going to Grangemuir, sir; but you will find things sadly changed there, as perhaps you may have heard.'

'Changed!' said Captain Compton. 'In what way?'

'Poor old Sir Leslie is sadly changed, sir. A couple of months ago he was as hale and hearty a gentleman as you could find in the whole county, and now he is as haggard and white as ever you did see a man. The doctors they do keep saying that there is nothing wrong with him; but they can see that he is fading away. And his own man, who drops in here now and again, tells me that he seems to have something on his mind that keeps him from sleep, and he used to be such a good sleeper too, was Sir Leslie.'

'And young Mr Howard is not back yet?' asked Captain Compton.

'No, sir. It was a terrible blow to the old gentleman when he heard that his son was to be another month away. They say as how he took on terrible when the letter came with the news. And that poor, sweet young lady, she is fairly distracted, what with her husband away and Sir Leslie in such a sad state, and even the doctors not knowing what to do.'

Captain Compton set out to walk to Grangemuir, feeling a little guilty, but still determined to do what he could for himself without much consideration for any one else. When he had last passed through the heavy iron gates it had been summertime. The surroundings had been very beautiful then; but they were still more beautiful now, for the autumn leaves of the beeches seemed absolutely to flame under the bright sunshine, and the bracken formed a yellow carpet beneath the firs. The old house, with its rich covering of Virginia creeper, lay very still as Captain Compton approached and aroused the echoes by ringing the bell.

He was at once admitted, and when he entered the library he saw that the statements of the landlady of the 'Boar's Head' were no exaggeration. Sir Leslie was indeed sadly changed. Instead of the ruddy, stalwart old man he had seen before, a wan-looking, bent figure stood up to receive him.

'How are you, Sir Leslie?' said Captain Compton. 'I am afraid you are not very well.'

'Not well!' said Sir Leslie somewhat bitterly. 'How could any man be well after hearing such news as you brought me?'

'Oh, come, you take it too hardly, Sir Leslie,' said Captain Compton. 'I have kept my ears and eyes open, and assure you that there has not been the slightest whisper in any quarter of what you and I know. I need hardly say that I have been absolutely silent on the matter.'

'But the fact remains all the same,' said Sir Leslie—'the hideous fact! Would to heaven that I had summoned my son home by telegram immediately on seeing you! But his work was important, and it might seriously have affected his future career had he suddenly thrown it up; and I did not wish to upset his mind by telling him of what had transpired.'

'Oh, well,' said Captain Compton, 'your suspense will now soon be at an end; there are but four weeks before Mr Howard will be home. Have you spoken of the matter to any one?'

'To no one but my family lawyer, and that of course in the strictest confidence. To tell the truth, I was in hopes that he might be able to tell me that it was a false alarm; but I regret to say that he only confirmed your information. There appears to be no doubt that the marriages performed at that church at that particular date did not constitute legal ceremonies.'

'Of course not; you might have rested assured that I would not have alarmed you without making myself quite certain of the facts. Now, Sir Leslie, what about the future? The two months for which I promised to keep silence are at an end.'

'At an end!' exclaimed Sir Leslie. 'Surely you promised to keep silence till my son returned?'

'No, no, not at all,' said Captain Compton quickly. 'If you will read the written promise I sent you, you will see that it is clearly stated that I was not to mention the matter until the end of two months, when Mr Howard was expected to return. If Mr Howard does not return, that is his affair; the two months are at an end.'

Sir Leslie sank back in his chair. 'Do you mean to tell me,' he said, 'that you consider yourself no longer bound to silence?'

'I am certainly no longer bound, and, as I told you before, some newspaper will pay me for this bit of society gossip. Your son is becoming a prominent man, and the public will be interested to hear of the curious state of his family affairs—his son not his legal heir, his wife not his legal wife.'

'You scoundrel!' burst from Sir Leslie.

The two men were so intent on their conversation that they never noticed that the heavy *portière* which hung over the library door had slightly moved, and was being held aside by a woman's hand.

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## CHAPTER V.

'YOU are pleased to call me a scoundrel, Sir Leslie,' sneered Captain Compton; 'but if you were in the circumstances that I am in you would probably act in just the same manner.'

'No, I would not,' said Sir Leslie hotly. 'No man with the slightest claim to being a gentleman would try to make money in such a way. What is it you want now?'

'Same terms as before,' said Captain Compton; 'fifty pounds, or I go to the Press to see what they will pay—not so much as that, I grant you; but you are a rich man, and it is worth your while to pay well to keep your family affairs from being dragged before the public.'

'You mean that you want another fifty?' asked Sir Leslie.

'Yes,' said Captain Compton; 'and you are getting off cheap with that. Most men would have made you pay up a hundred. I advise you to give me the money, Sir Leslie; it would be a poor home-coming for your son to find his wife's name in the papers.'

Sir Leslie sat for some moments with his face in his hands. 'You shall have it,' he said slowly, rising to his feet.

'No, you shall not; not one single penny shall you have,' said an angry voice from the end of the room.

Both the men turned hastily with faces of blank

amazement, and by the door they saw standing Sibyl Howard. She advanced into the room, the face that was generally so smiling and happy now set and angry.

Captain Compton was the first to recover himself. 'Delighted to see you, Mrs Howard,' he said; 'though I fear you have heard what must be painful to you.'

She took no notice of him, but going up to where Sir Leslie had dropped on to his chair, overcome with surprise, she laid her hand on his head. 'You poor, dear old dad!' she said; 'I understand it all now. While we were consulting doctors and trying to find out what was wrong with you there was nothing whatever the matter except that this wretched man had been worrying you. Why did you not tell me, instead of fretting over the matter yourself? You really should have told me, dear.'

'Sir Leslie and I have been most anxious to keep this painful matter from you, Mrs Howard. I have been very careful that no hint of it should escape from me.'

'You have been careful of nothing but your own pocket,' she said haughtily.

'Well, well,' said Captain Compton, 'we naturally look at the matter from different sides.—Now, what is it to be? Do I have that fifty pounds or not, Sir Leslie?'

'Not!' broke in Mrs Howard. 'Certainly not.'

'Then you must not be surprised if you see your own name in the papers in a day or two. I don't know how much you overheard of our conversation. Permit me to state the position to you in a few words. It is clear that your marriage was not a binding ceremony; therefore you are not Mr Howard's legal wife, and your children in the eyes of the law are bastards.'

Mrs Howard grew scarlet. 'How dare you?' she said. 'For that I shall send for the police and have you taken up.' Crossing the room, she laid her hand on the bell.

'Taken up!' laughed Captain Compton. 'Because I tell you an unpleasant fact you think that I am a criminal! But we all know that logic is not a strong point with ladies. I suppose you think that the law will make an exception on your behalf.'

'I want no exception made for me,' she replied hotly.

Captain Compton felt a little surprise at her attitude.

'May I ask you a question, Mrs Howard? I saw you married in the church at Yokohama, but were you afterwards married at the Yokohama Consulate?'

'No,' said Sibyl Howard, 'we were not married at the Yokohama Consulate.'

'Then,' said Captain Compton with a smile, 'I am afraid that I was quite correct when I said that the law would look upon your children as bastards.'

When Mrs Howard rang the bell the butler had appeared at once at the door, where he stood with a face like a stone image, but eagerly listening to the remarkable conversation, which was indeed a tit-bit for him to relate in the servants' hall.

Mrs Howard now turned to him. 'Forrest,' she said, 'send a groom on horseback to the village, and ask the constable to come up here at once.'

Sir Leslie, who had been listening in a dazed sort of way to the conversation, now roused himself.

'Stop, Sibyl, my dear,' he said.—'Stop, Forrest, stop!—There is nothing that can bring Captain Compton under the law. He has taken advantage of his knowledge of a painful fact.'

'Painful fact!' she interrupted. 'There is no painful fact at all.'

'I am afraid that there is,' said Sir Leslie, 'for I went and laid the matter before our lawyer, and he confessed that Captain Compton's information was quite correct, and he is waiting as impatiently as I am for Leslie's return.'

'There is no painful fact at all,' she repeated positively; 'and I want this man taken up, for he has given you no end of unnecessary suffering.'

'My dear,' said Sir Leslie, 'don't keep me in suspense. I am not able for this strain. Is there something about the matter, that I don't know, that alters it?'

'Yes,' she said, 'there is. But I did not mean to tell you the facts of the case before Captain Compton; but since you wish it I will tell you now. After our marriage Leslie received a note from the clergyman to say that though he believed the church to be properly licensed for marriages, yet he considered that it was better for us to avoid any difficulties by going to the Consulate. We did not wish to go back to Yokohama, but we gave proper notice and were married at Kobe Consulate. We have always considered that our church marriage was our real marriage, so there was no need to speak to any one of the other ceremony; but in case of any question Leslie has the papers.'

Sir Leslie gave a great sigh.

'Oh you foolish old dad!' said Mrs Howard, 'why did you not come to me instead of going to lawyers?'

Captain Compton stepped quickly to the door.

'Shall I stop him, ma'am?' said the butler, who was still stationed like a carven image at the door.

'No,' said Mrs Howard with a laugh; 'he is not worth it. Let him go.'

He went.

THE END.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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# BOY SCOUTS.

## HOW GENERAL SIR BADEN-POWELL'S SCHEME MAY BENEFIT THE NATION.

By Basil Tozer.

'THE nation that loses self-control,' President Roosevelt remarked recently, 'is lost.' Though not an original observation, this statement of the President's was widely quoted by the American newspaper press, owing probably to its being one of those platitudes which, almost forgotten, sound like philosophical utterances when suddenly revived. There is no reason, however, to suppose that President Roosevelt had the British Empire in his thoughts when he repeated it. On the contrary, he had, according to the newspapers, just made complimentary comments concerning the British nation. Several of the Continental journals, nevertheless, at once made the President's statement a peg upon which to hang adverse criticism of Britain and her ways. They compared those events which immediately preceded the fall of Greece and Rome with events that have occurred in Britain in this century. Such criticism is, of course, not pleasant to listen to; for, say what we will, we cannot deny that a vast section of this nation has for years been steadily degenerating, and that through the very causes that brought about the Roman Empire's fall. Rome, led by Cicero, it will be remembered, grew from being a nation composed of practical men of action into a nation that merely talked. Can it be denied that we appear to be, by a similar course of evolution, developing into a race that talks rather than acts? Then, one of the most remarkable occurrences that took place in Italy in Cicero's time was the sudden influx of the rural population into the cities, and the decay, in consequence, of the agricultural industry. We read that 'the vigour of the country people seemed all at once to depart from them;' also, that 'in place of taking part themselves in the sports popular at the time, the people of Rome quickly acquired the habit of becoming spectators only.'

We in Britain to-day have not far to seek to find instances almost similar among our own people. An eye-witness has stated that he saw 'a dozen men of the Guards Brigade fall out during a review at Aldershot when their duty consisted merely in standing at attention for rather a long period'—reference to this incident is made by Mr Elliott E. Mills, the well-known authority and writer upon questions relating to sociology; and many similar instances of physical degeneracy could be given. Indeed, but few years have passed since the standard height and chest-measurement for recruits for the British army had of necessity to be lowered; and yet we know that even now many thousands of would-be soldiers are unable to reach the level of physical and mental soundness necessary to qualify them to serve their country.* Consequently it was more than time that practical and decisive steps should be taken to improve the failing stamina of the British race in Britain, first by dispelling the feeling of lethargy, lack of ambition, and disinclination for action that has been taking so firm a hold of us of late years; and, secondly, by strengthening the nation's gradually dwindling power of self-control which makes it seek in life only personal gratification and pleasure. In order to bring about this change it was necessary, in the first place, that the youth of the whole country should be stirred into activity, that their moral fibre should be stiffened, their energy, mental and physical, renewed. There was but one way thoroughly to effect so radical a transformation. It lay in generating in the great mass of the youth of this country an *esprit de corps* that should make it appear to them shameful for Englishmen individually or as a body to lack either moral or physical courage, self-control, or self-respect; shameful also for them to be unenterprising, unintelligent, or discourteous, or to be wanting in patriotism, loyalty, and honour.

* The manœuvres of some weeks ago have revealed an improvement in this respect.—B. J. T.


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Attempts to create these changes and stir up public spirit had been made by clergymen, philanthropists, and individual reformers at intervals for years past, but with inconspicuous success. Some of the schemes advanced lacked practicability. Others were too 'pronounced.' Several were hampered by what can only be termed 'religious disabilities,' while in almost every case the boys' own instincts and inclinations—'boy-nature,' if one may call it so—were not taken into consideration. We have to thank Sir Robert Baden-Powell for initiating at last a system which combines the advantages of practical secondary education with health-giving recreation, and that promises to revolutionise the youth of this country by stamping out the spirit of idleness, disinterestedness, false democracy, passive insubordination, and general hatred of anything in the least resembling authority or discipline, while at the same time fostering industry that comes of true interest in occupation, developing self-respect, self-control, consideration for the feelings of others—the truest form of courtesy—ambition, physical and moral courage, and cheerfulness.

Seven questions of importance have repeatedly been asked during the past year by persons in sympathy with the movement and seeking information prior to enrolling their sons, as well as by sceptics antagonistic to it. These questions are: (1) What is the true *raison d'être* of the scout movement? (2) Are the boys being taught only what it is desirable that they should know? (3) Is not the training they receive calculated to unsettle their minds—that is to say, make them wish to live an outdoor life, whereas the majority will never have an opportunity of doing this? (4) Does not the curriculum tend to militarism, to which so vast a section of the nation is opposed? (5) Is any thought given to the question of religion? (6) Is the information the boys receive, or any of it, of true educational value? (7) What practical good can come of the scout movement? Will its training and instruction actually prove beneficial to the boys in after-life, and consequently to the nation indirectly; or is it, when 'stripped of the talk,' only a game enjoyed by the boys but unlikely to make a lasting impression upon their characters?

For the *raison d'être* of the movement we have not far to seek. Proof has just been given that through lack of self-control, strength of character, manliness, and general intelligence, the nation's military supremacy, her leadership in commerce—in short, her greatness—are declining. The question, 'How is this decline to be arrested?' has already presented itself, and up to a point it has been answered; for the inception of the scout movement, so far as can be seen at present, seems about to solve the problem. Every boy upon being enrolled promises on oath to do three things: (1) Be loyal to God and King. (2) Help others whenever they need help. (3) Obey the scout law.

The scout law he thus solely pledges himself to observe is as follows: Never under any circumstances will he break his word. Differently put, this means that every scout trusts implicitly the word of honour of every other scout. He is to be loyal to his King, to his officers, to his country, and to his employers. His duty is to be useful, and to help others. He is to be a friend to all, no matter of what standing or social rank. He is to be courteous always. He is to be a friend to animals. He is to obey instantly, and without question, the orders of those in authority over him. He is to be cheerful under all circumstances, or strive his best to be. He is to be thrifty, but never mean. Lastly, the motto of the Boy Scout is, 'Be Prepared'—he is always to be in a state of readiness, mentally and physically, to do his duty. By being prepared mentally he will know the right thing to do in any case of emergency. By being prepared physically he will be sufficiently strong and active to do the right thing at the right moment.

Here, then, we have the true object of the scout movement. Briefly summarised, it is to raise the moral tone and increase the physical fitness of future generations by training up the boys of the present generation to be manly, honourable, loyal, patriotic, brave, intelligent, self-reliant, and courteous, and thus help materially to restore Britain's dwindling greatness. Only two years have passed since the scheme was inaugurated, and already there are in the United Kingdom alone no less than one hundred and fifty thousand scouts, while recruits continue to pour in every week. In addition, the popularity of the movement has spread by leaps and bounds, not only among the boys themselves, but among boys' parents of all classes and in other countries besides our own. The beneficial effect the movement is having upon the nation is already being felt. In our great cities, as well as in provincial towns and country districts, the scout movement is being talked about, and everywhere the manliness, the resourcefulness, the utility, and the courtesy of the lads have been observed. How useful some of these boys have proved themselves in cases of accident and emergency, the number of lives they have—thanks to their knowledge and general intelligence, and in some instances to their personal bravery—been instrumental in saving, reference to statistics filed at the scouts' headquarters will show.*

The question, 'Are the boys being taught only what it is desirable that they should know?' can be answered almost as easily. This is best answered by enumerating the principal things the boys learn. They are taught scoutcraft, which includes the art of stalking wild creatures and following their tracks, camping and outdoor life, woodcraft, the names and ways and peculiarities of animals and birds and insects, the calls of animals and birds, interesting facts about trees and plants, how to find the way by

* The number of lives saved by the Boy Scouts during the last six months has been, on an average, five a week.—B. J. T.

the sun's position during the day and by the position of the stars at night, pioneering and general resourcefulness, deduction of the kind that appealed to Sherlock Holmes, how to be observant, knot-tying, hut-making, bridging, cooking and bread-making, the right way to fell trees, how to judge heights and distances, how to identify fish and reptiles of various kinds, and many items of information of the same nature which interest most boys and that may some day quite possibly prove of use to them. In addition, the curriculum, if it may be so called, comprises instruction in life-saving and first-aid, general campaigning, signalling with flags and by Morse code, the right and the wrong way to fly British flags, how to gain health and strength and retain both; also narratives of chivalry, endurance, and bravery, instruction in the right way to harness horses, in exploring, watermanship, mountaineering, weather-wisdom, path-finding, finding the north, boat-making, how to rescue from fire and from drowning and from a runaway horse, how to tell if a dog is mad, what to do if met by a mad dog, how to treat snake-bites, how to carry an unconscious person, what to do to a person in a fit, how to stop bleeding, simple ambulance-work, marksmanship with crossbows and air-guns, boxing, and a very great deal more of the same nature.

Against this the threadbare argument has been urged that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. In connection with these scouts and their work, however, we have proof in plenty that a little knowledge, if of the right kind, may upon occasions prove a valuable asset. Certainly the critic who can assert with conviction that boys of any class would be better left in ignorance of the information just catalogued must possess peculiar views. No mention has been made of the many outdoor and indoor games that the boys are taught, all of which, besides appealing to the lads' tastes, convey instruction or tend to increase a boy's intelligence, strengthen his memory, inspire him with self-confidence, make him patient or painstaking, or in some other way or ways help to form his character. And it must be remembered that all the time the boys are playing or working they are enjoying themselves heartily and healthily.

Bacon long ago declared play-acting to be 'one of the best means of educating children;' and apparently Sir Robert Baden-Powell, himself a clever actor, holds the same opinion, for in his volume, *Scouting for Boys*, he lays stress upon the advisability of encouraging in scouts the histrionic taste, and goes so far as to set down several simple plays eminently adapted to a caste composed of scouts. Another form of pastime that he recommends for winter evenings is debating; for, as he points out, practice in debating not only gives boys self-confidence and helps to dispel shyness and self-consciousness, but in addition it trains them to collect and concentrate their thoughts, also to argue and reason logically and rationally, while unconsciously they thus acquire general knowledge of the procedure at public meetings and in courts of law.

Whether this kind of training and secondary education is calculated to unsettle boys' minds by making them wish to live an outdoor life when in all probability they never will have an opportunity of living other than sedentary lives, it is as yet too soon to say. In some cases it may have that effect; but if, on the other hand, it should lead to more of our lads remaining in rural districts instead of settling in towns already overcrowded, future generations will benefit. In the same way, good will come if a large proportion of the lads of the rising generation, who in the ordinary course would go to swell the unwieldy population of Great Britain, are, through this novel course of training, induced to emigrate to our sparsely populated colonies. In parts of Canada, also to some extent in Australia, the idea is prevalent that an Englishman cannot or will not work, for which reason thousands of English —not Scottish or Irish—would-be settlers who are able and willing to work have been looked at askance in these colonies and refused the labour they sought. How the false impression spread the writer of this paper is in a position to state, having travelled extensively in the Dominion to inquire into the emigration question. The blame attaches solely to the body of people here in England who for years persisted in sending out to Canada their wastrel friends and relatives and turning them into 'remittance-men'—namely, men who depend for their means of subsistence upon remittances received periodically from home, and who won't attempt to work. The people of the colonies, to use the common American phrase, have 'no use' for such wasters. But now in Canada, Australia, and other of our colonies news has begun to spread that the system of secondary education introduced by the Boy Scout movement is going in the near future to create a race of young men of energy and determination, who will be equal to holding their own in any walk in life they may adopt either in the Old Country or its colonies. Already the Church Army and similar organisations have shown how quite poor lads can be trained expressly with a view to their settling abroad, and the prosperity now attending a great number of the men who as boys were sent out to our colonies and started in life by these philanthropic institutions may be held up in proof of the good work that has up to now been done in this direction. In such cases, however, the boy's career generally was carved out for him without his being seriously consulted one way or another. With Boy Scouts who may emigrate in the years to come the choice will be entirely theirs, and if they elect to settle abroad it will be owing chiefly to their having during their training grown to prefer a career in which they can themselves take the initiative. Nor can there be doubt that owing to the all-round training they will have received they will have little trouble in any colony in obtaining regular employment in the

event of their not being at first in a position to acquire land of their own.

A not unimportant fact which the scout movement is bringing home to the British boy is that lack of skill in playing cricket or football, indeed even lack of fondness for these games, does not necessarily constitute him a 'slacker' or a 'muff.' There are, for instance, hundreds of boys who at school are laughed at because they dislike cricket and football, and play it only under protest, yet who can row well, ride well, shoot well, and do plenty of other things needing fully as much skill, and calling for at least as much manliness, as are required for either football or cricket. Indeed, it would be interesting to see what would happen if some of the lads who are so ready to jeer at those among their schoolfellows who are not obsessed by a passionate devotion to these games were set astride the horses that plenty of the boys they deem to be 'muffs' and 'slackers' are able to sit with ease. It is to be regretted that even many schoolmasters consider a liking for football and cricket to be the only hall-mark of manliness in a boy. Now, at last, Sir Robert Baden-Powell has revealed to schoolmasters as well as to boys that there are pursuits in which lads who may know nothing of cricket or of football can none the less excel —pursuits needing manliness, perseverance, pluck, skill, quickness of decision, and far more intelligence in the player than cricket or football could call forth under even the most favourable conditions.

Another feature in boy scouting that constitutes a sign of the times is that boys who enrol as scouts have to undertake never to destroy life unnecessarily or cause needless suffering. Had such a rule been set for the observance of boys half a century ago, its framer would, if a civilian, have been held up to ridicule, while if a soldier had advanced such a proposal he would then and there have been pronounced to be of unsound mind. And in this connection the fact that the organiser of the scout movement is known to be a sportsman has given rise to the question, 'How, being fond of sport, can he consistently advocate the encouragement of strictly humanitarian principles amongst his scouts?' Probably, if the truth were known, it would be found that Sir Robert's views upon this question of sport and the destruction of life for amusement are, in common with the views of hundreds of modern sportsmen who at heart are serious thinkers, in a state of gradual transition. What proportion, for instance, of the men who to-day ride to hounds care in the least whether a fox that has shown good sport is killed in the end or not? In point of fact, if the vote were taken it would probably be found that the majority were in favour of a good fox being allowed to live to run again.

The next objection raised to the scout movement is that it encourages militarism, to which a vast section of the nation is opposed. Whether this section does right in condemning militarism need not be considered here. The statement may be made, however, without reservation, that the scout movement discourages militarism in every way it can. For the Boy Scouts are peace-scouts, and not war-scouts. All that they are taught, from the stalking and tracking of animals down to the ways of saving life and of rendering first-aid, comprises qualifications that are essential in the peace-scout. They receive instruction in self-defence and in the defence of their country, but not in the art of offence. No man who has witnessed the horrors of war once ever wants to witness them again; but all who have been in action are unanimous in declaring that the nation that values its safety and wants to avoid war in the future must above all else be prepared for war—'Be Prepared,' the motto of the scouts. In one respect only can the movement be rightfully charged with fostering the spirit of militarism. It does foster this spirit to the extent of enforcing discipline and obedience, the two cornerstones of successful militarism.

'Is any thought given to religion?' This inquiry has been made frequently of late, and owing to the impression having spread among a section of the clergy as well as among a body of the church-going community that the question of religion has been wholly 'shelved,' the movement is encountering mild opposition from a group of the Church party. Religion has been 'shelved' only in this way, that bigotry and prejudice are not tolerated in the ranks of the scouts. Lads of any creed or denomination may enrol, and in every case their tenets are respected. A firm believer in the dictum that Christianity alone is true religion, the founder of the scout movement is satisfied with the lads if they do their duty, fear God, serve King and country to the best of their ability whether as soldiers or civilians, are honourable in all their dealings, charitable, considerate, and straightforward. Sectarian religion does not appeal strongly to him, for he is too broad-minded to be swayed this way or that by any one particular doctrine. 'Let practical Christianity come first,' he remarked recently to the writer; 'sectarianism is a matter of individual opinion or personal conviction, and can follow later. Doctrine depends, after all, largely upon environment and upon what each lad has been brought up to believe.' Thus it is that no scout, being a Protestant, will think less of a companion if the latter be a Roman Catholic, and *vice versâ*, any more than a Churchman's son will take exception to the son of a chapel-goer, or a Protestant or a Catholic to a Jew or a Christian Scientist. To do so would be deemed bad form and irrational. All the boys are, however, expected to act up to the teachings of whatever particular creed they may belong to.

Whether the general knowledge acquired by boys enrolled as scouts is or is not of true educational value the reader will decide for himself from the list already given of subjects taught. The amount of learning acquired may not be great, and its standard may not be high, but the whole of it is practical, and no fraction of it is dull. That the

training, considered from every standpoint, must directly affect a boy's character, and so in after-life prove beneficial to him, few assuredly will gainsay. A distinguished mental specialist with whom the writer has the privilege of frequently conversing has declared emphatically that the movement is bound in the near future to lower our roll of suicides; for, in his opinion, a small proportion only of the men who take their lives are insane even temporarily. The rest commit the act through cowardice and lack of control. 'Little bravery,' he points out, 'is needed to pick up a pistol and pull the trigger if you don't wait to reflect upon what you are about to do.' More especially is the act that of a coward because the burden of which the suicide seeks to rid himself must necessarily be transferred to the shoulders of those to whom he was nearest and dearest.

It may be only natural, therefore, that under such conditions a scheme for the formation of a corps to be known as Girl Guides should already have been formulated. Some six thousand applications for enrolment have been received, and by the time these lines are published the code of rules for the Girl Guides will have been definitely drawn up. The intention of the organisers of the new movement is that the corps of Girl Guides shall be affiliated to the Boy Scouts. It will be interesting to see if this affiliation will ultimately lead to a development of the suggestion so warmly advocated by many earnest thinkers that boys and girls should be educated together. How widely this plan of educating the rising generation has been adopted in America, and how satisfactory it has proved up to the present, is well known. Indeed, when some years ago the writer visited the Leland Stanford University, in California, out of the twelve hundred students working there side by side no less than five hundred were girls or young women.

The steps to be taken to become a scout are simple. The boy, or whoever has charge of him, has only to make application in writing or personally at the scouts' headquarters in London; or the boy may directly join a patrol or troop raised by any gentleman in the neighbourhood of his home; or he may join one of the several other organisations for boys which include the Boy Scouts' scheme in their curriculum; or, with not less than five other boys of about his own age, he may form a patrol under the control of a senior boy or young man as patrol-leader. The age for joining is nominally between ten and eighteen, and boys between these ages may become patrol-leaders. Officers, called scoutmasters, must be over eighteen. It is well to remember, however, that red-tape is entirely taboo in the scout system, for which reason the exact ages are not strictly adhered to, and boys under ten are to be found enrolled among the scouts. The cost of joining is merely nominal, and there is no other compulsory expense of any kind. A hat, haversack, staff, and shoulder-knot constitute the compulsory uniform. The rest of the uniform is optional. When funds are required for any specific purpose the scouts set to work to earn them in one of the various ways that are explained to the lads in the course of their training. Thus the movement is self-supporting, and begging for subscriptions for any purpose is discountenanced. The spirit of cosmopolitanism becomes in a sense second nature to the Boy Scouts, and this has the effect of preventing the growth in their ranks of anything in the least resembling snobbery.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XIV.—HOW CAPTAIN CHARLES TOLD THEM THE STORY OF DUNKIRK SANDS.

TO some of them that walk was to be a treasured memory as long as life lasted, though at the time it seemed but as the many that had gone before and as the many that might follow it. But the future lies beyond the thin, white, merciful veil which no man may lift by a hair's-breadth, and the present is past with one's thought of it, and so it is only the past that man may hold as a sure and certain possession. Thrice happy they who, by full right use of the moment, lay up certain treasure of happy memories, for these shall be their very own. And, sure, no crown of sorrows should such memories be, but rather healing balm for life's sharp wounds, and seeds of faith and hope that may take root again, and push through crust of heavy circumstance, and in God's good time bear flower and fruit once more in upper air.

Stoutly they climbed the hill on which the weathered gray church stood like a beacon, laughing and chattering with what breath they had, and flung themselves down at last on the top of the western slope, below the churchyard wall, and lay looking out over the wonder and beauty of the widespread landscape below.

'There's Windsor!' said Charles. 'I can almost see the flag.'

'Peep through the railings and you'll see the Princesses,' suggested his father; and Etienne, who was hardly yet accustomed to their flights, stared hard at the distant bump on the horizon, and cautiously at the speakers.

'Now, daddie, a story!' ordered Mavie—'a fighting story, and then we'll go down to Mother Goose's and have cherry-jam and cakes.'

Many a wild memory had Captain Charles of those final furious months of the war in America, and many the times he had held them spell-bound and breathless while he relived, and at times almost redied, them.

But this time, perhaps by reason of little John Sax being there, and because he had a great liking for the shy little lad, and mighty reason for doing him honour, he told them again the story of Dunkirk sands, and they hung on his words with fixed eyes and parted lips.

'My horse was down,' was the climax of the story, 'and I was struggling to get free of it, when the French lancers came down on us like a whirlwind. I thought of Mary—your mother, I mean—and you two little ones, and wondered quickly how you would all get on without me. I can see the long line of gleaming lance-heads joggling up and down, but all coming straight home, and the wild eyes and red nostrils of the horses, and the grim, tight faces above, and I knew that I must die there. And then—the lance that should have ended me drove into the body of a man who had flung himself suddenly in front of me; and before the Frenchman could withdraw it my sword had cleft his head right down to the chin. The rest swept on after our men, and I pulled the lance out of the body of the man who had given his life for mine, and took him in my arms and tried to stanch his wound. But he just smiled up at me and died. And that man was John Sax;' and Captain Charles put an arm round little Jack's neck and patted his shoulder gently.

'And we'll never forget it!' jerked Mavie, with a sob in her voice and a face full of tears.

And suddenly, without warning, she turned in her quick, impetuous way, and put her arms round John Sax's neck and kissed his burning cheek.

And little Jack, in the surprise of it, and the natural confusion of the moment, wiped off, with a surreptitious hand, a proud drop from his eye and Mavie's frank kiss. But he never forgot it.

'No,' said Captain Charles, in a voice that came from farther down than usual, 'we'll never forget it.'

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### CHAPTER XV.—HOW MAVIE TOLD THE CHERRY-STONES.

'ND now,' said Mavie, when her feelings had had time to settle again, 'we'll go down to Mother Goose's and have cakes and cherry-jam.'

And down the hill they went, racing and laughing, for the emotions of childhood are short, if at times their memories are long. But Captain Charles and little John Sax went down somewhat more soberly than the others, I can imagine; certainly more soberly than Etienne, for he caught his foot in a tuft and rolled three-quarters of the way, to the tune of Mavie's delighted jeers.

Mother Goose, who dwelt at the sign of 'The Cherry-Tree,' was one of their institutions, and they never visited Harrow without a levy on her cupboards or her orchard, and a corresponding addition to the capacious pocket which she wore suspended somewhere among her very expansive petticoats. It would have needed a past-master in the art of pocket-picking to discover even the whereabouts of that pocket, and it taxed the old lady herself to lay her hands on it at times.

Mother Goose, according to Mavie, was an old dear, and Mavie knew. She lived in a dear little house embosomed in an orchard of the loveliest cherry-trees that ever were. She always wore a very large and spotlessly white mutch-cap on her head, and over her shoulders, pinned on her ample bosom by a massive gilt cameo-brooch displaying the chubby features of Queen Anne, a gaily-coloured silk handkerchief which grew more and more brilliant with every year that passed. So that each time they saw her she was more and more like a huge, soft old butterfly fluttering slowly about among her cherry-trees, every one of which she knew and loved and called by their own christened names. And here and there, on the outer edge of the orchard, were other dear little wooden houses where you could sit and eat cherries—and other fruits in their seasons, but especially cherries—all day long, if you were so minded and had the money and the natural capacity. And if, as now, you came before the fruits, you could sit in a glorious white world of cherry-blossom which now and again would come fluttering down in soft white showers, so that all above and all below was redolent of the beauty and fragrance of the cherry-trees.

Sitting there, you saw cherry, smelt cherry, felt cherry, and ate cherry in one form or another. For Mother Goose was always ready for all who came; and if they came, as now, out of season, there were still cherry-cakes and cherry-jam for the young folks, and even special mildly brandied cherries which were very delicious; and for the elders brandied cherries of a more substantial flavour, or—if their old stomachs could not stand the cherries—they could have the brandy alone and still get the flavour of them.

And since the reduction of the duty on tea Mother Goose had always been ready to brew a dish for any one who called for it. But, like the clever old financier she was, she had bricked up three windows in her little house, and for light knocked holes in the walls between the rooms. So that, when the King's gentlemen put down the tax on tea and put a tax on windows, the national Exchequer did not benefit materially by Mother Goose's contribution, for she could not rest till she had got the better of them.

She was a very old lady, for she was born in the reign of Queen Anne, and she had once seen the Duke of Marlborough, and King George the First twice, and expressed herself, on occasion, in anything but flattering terms concerning his personal appearance.

She welcomed our party with the large, motherly smile which was part of her stock-in-trade, and bustled away in front of them to the largest of the

little green wooden houses, with a duster in one hand and a clean white tablecloth in the other.

'And is it brandied cherries the little lady and the young gentlemen will have, or cherry-pizzervæ, with their cherry-cake? And will the gentleman have a dish of tea got ready, and some of the double-brandied cherries? No indeed, then, there is nothing like a cup of tea after a long walk.'

'Well, mademoiselle, give your orders!' said Captain Charles.

'Brandied cherries!' whispered Charles threateningly to the mistress of the feast, and dealt her an admonishing kick under the table.

'We'll have cherry-cakes for everybody, and cherry-pizzerve—all right, Charles, you needn't kick my leg off!—and brandied cherries for us, and double-brandied cherries for father, and tea for everybody,' announced Mavie regally.

'Bless your big little heart! You shall have the very best the house can give you, my dear! Last year's Annes and Sarahs was uncommon good, and I kep' a jar or two special for the daintiest little lady as should come. And the brandied Williams is the nuttiest ever was, and your papa shall have the double-brandied Jameses. They *have* a flaviour;' and she smacked her lips in anticipation of their enjoyment, and bustled away to prepare the feast, while the boys licked their lips hard because their mouths were watering so. And Captain Charles, after solemnly requesting mademoiselle's permission, lit a cigar and puffed the smoke up into the white firmament of cherry-blossom, through which the blue sky peeped in patches, with great enjoyment.

And presently the table was spread with bright array of twinkling little jars and bottles through which the plump little Annes and Sarahs and Williams and Jameses ogled the hungry youngsters seductively, and with golden brown cakes, out of which the fiery red-coats seemed to be bursting in their haste to see who could get eaten first.

'You boys can each have a Sarah III., and William I., II., and III. I'm going to have Anne VII. and William IV.,' said mademoiselle with decision.

'Bless her heart! Now, how did she know?' said Mother Goose admiringly.

'Anne VII. winked at me,' said Mavie solemnly, 'and William IV. I've had before, and I know they're sweet and juicy. I hope they don't mind being eaten; but those names on the bottles always make me think they've been alive and can feel.'

'Bless you, my love, they likes it! You'll hear them chirp and laugh when your little white teeth goes into them.' And so the feast proceeded merrily.

But all things come to an end, and there is a limit even to the capacity of youthful stomachs for cherry-cake and brandied cherries; and so, in due course, they were lolling replete and happy on the wooden seats in the little green house, unable to dispose of another crumb or suck another stone.

The boys showed signs of the pleasant lassitude which follows upon unusual accomplishment. Through the smoke of his cigar Captain Charles's eyes rested soothingly on the blue line of the distant Surrey hills towards which the sun was sinking.

Mavie alone was busy with her own devices. She was sitting on her hands, rocking gently to and fro, with nodding head and lips that muttered inaudible incantations. She was a firm believer in omens and white magic, and the necromantic arts in general, and in the prognostications of cherry-stones in particular. Her eyes passed slowly from plate to plate as her lips told the tale of the stones.

'Tinker—tailor—soldier—sailor—gentleman—lady—beggar man—thief!'—twice over. Then—'Tinker—tailor—SOLDIER! There, Charlie is all right!'

Charlie had thoughtfully seen to that little matter himself. He scoffed contemptuously at any belief in cherry-stone omens; but, all the same, it was as well to be on the safe side when the flick of a finger could manage it.

Another series of silent nods from Mavie, and John Sax stood indisputably labelled 'gentleman' by the record of the stones, and she counted them again to make quite sure.

Etienne by some inscrutable twist of fate came out 'beggar man.'

And she herself, in spite of all her efforts, was plainly destined to be a tailor.

Captain Charles's record was a short one.

'Oh daddie, do please eat one more,' she begged earnestly—'just one!'

'Why, then, minxie? I don't want any more.'

'But you can't stop there. Tinker—tailor—soldier—sailor—gentleman—lady—beggar man—THIEF! Do eat another one, daddie, or you'll make me mis'able! I'd ever so much sooner have you a tinker than a thief.'

'Oh, very well!' and he got out another cherry from James VII. 'But suppose this one too many makes me seriously ill?' he asked, holding it dubiously in the spoon.

'Oh, but it won't!' and Mavie watched eagerly for its disappearance and the righting of the record.

And then, to her dismay, he suddenly spat out the consummation of her hopes with a wry face.

'A grub in it, Mavie, upon my honour!' and he took a spoonful of the nutty brandy to take away the thought and taste of it.

'We'll count it, anyway,' said Mavie seriously, 'though you're not allowed to throw any of them away. I s'pose there was a stone in it?' she asked anxiously.

'I expect so, but I only got as far as the grub. I'm surprised at Mother Goose giving us grubs. James VII. sinks in my estimation.'

'That makes you a tinker—or half a tinker at all events. Charlie's a soldier. John Sax is a gentleman'——

'Hear, hear!' cried Captain Charles.

'Etienne's a—next door to a lady,' she said tactfully, as it struck her suddenly that, under the circumstances, his rightful appellation might be distasteful to him. But the other boys grinned.

'And I'm a tailor. I don't mind'—fiercely, as she caught sight of the smiling faces opposite. And then, suddenly spying stones under Charlie's seat, 'Charles Lauriston, I'm s'prised at you. You know it's not fair to throw stones away. You're a cheat!'

'Pooh!' said Charles scornfully, stamping the stones into the ground. 'It's better to make 'em come as you want 'em than to be so silly as to believe you'll be what they say.'

'Beggar man, I believe,' said Mavie when he removed his foot from the burial-place of the stones, and she was able to study the holes. 'And that's what you'll come to, no doubt, for your—your—du-plexity. I think boys are just horrid sometimes.'

'Never mind, Mavie,' said Captain Charles. 'There's something to be said for Charlie's view too. Come along and help me to settle up with Mother Goose, and then we must get home, if those boys can walk after all those cherries.'

Trifles, you say. But some of them never forgot that walk, and one of them never ate a cherry again without a pang at the heart like the thrust of a two-edged sword.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE MOA: A NEW ZEALAND PERPLEXITY.

By R. W. Reid, New Zealand.

NEW ZEALAND is troubled about its moa. Scientists and laymen are engaged debating many subtle questions touching that immense and mysterious bird. The discussion has been proceeding mainly in the Dominion newspapers; and if the facts produced have been few, slender, and shadowy, deductions and theorisings have been many, varied, and ingenious. Perhaps it may be well to state at the outset what is known with some degree of certainty respecting the moa. There are stories in plenty as to its great size and its uncanny habits. These, however, it may at once be confessed, belong largely to the category of things doubtful and debatable. The average Maori possesses a marvellously vivid imagination. Like the Japanese gentleman in the opera, he is not given to the recital of bald and uninteresting narratives.

Fortunately for the sake of sober science, the skeleton of another moa was put together not long ago in New Zealand. In October of 1908 a party of workmen, engaged in draining a swamp at a place rejoicing in the name of Sloven's Creek, in South Island, came upon a rich deposit of moa bones. From these the fairly complete skeleton was constructed. The bones conform with respect to size and state of preservation, and the present writer believes that most of them belonged to the one bird. And a bird of no mean proportions it must have been. From the ground to the head, with the neck arched, the height of the skeleton is seven feet six inches; the neck is five feet six inches in length, and the bones of the leg four feet six inches. White men who claim to possess particular knowledge of moas hold that the Sloven's Creek specimen, judging by the bones, was full-grown and perhaps aged. 'No,' reply the Maoris; 'that moa was small, not nearly full-grown.' The Maoris, you see, are always anxious to maintain the reputation of their country for things weird and wonderful.

The moa, according to my Maori friends, was dark brown in colour, and had an enormous beak; of wings it had none, and its legs were as thick as the thighs of a very big man. When standing erect it would measure, from beak to claws, a good deal more than twenty feet. The largest South African ostrich would be but a pigmy beside a full-grown moa—that is, if all I have heard in the *kaianga* and at the *pa* was in strict accordance with fact. The writer has never been able to say precisely where errors lay in Maori dissertations such as these. The colossal dimensions given may, however, be accepted in their entirety or subjected to reductions according to the ideas and tastes of the reader. Moas possessed many remarkable attributes—so say the Maoris. For example, they had 'cemeteries,' to which old and sick birds retired when they realised that their days were numbered; and, stranger still, they lived at times on wind—not the wind of hyperbole, but the real, refreshing breezes from the Pacific!

That the moa existed at some period in New Zealand, and in large numbers, has been amply demonstrated. Everybody is agreed that it was a gigantic and a fearsome bird. What remains to be settled to-day is the question, When did the moa become extinct? Here we find ourselves in a region of bewilderment. One scientific expert says with authority—all experts speak with authority—that the last moa died in New Zealand more than a thousand years ago. The writer has an impression that he has read somewhere of another scientific expert who placed the demise of the latest survivor so far back as the early days of the Christian era. But the thousand years will suffice for present purposes. Opposed to the thousand years theory are Maoris who seem to think that the bird is not yet extinct. Extremely interesting

letters have been written to the Dominion press, and from these contributions to the literature of the subject the writer takes the liberty of borrowing a few items. One correspondent, Mr H. C. Field, declares definitely that he has met Maoris who had seen and hunted the moa. When he went to live at Wanganui in 1858, he found whites and natives of opinion that stray moas were living in the larger forests and in the more isolated districts of the North Island.

Mr Field many years ago interviewed a number of Maoris respecting the moa. Apparently with confirmatory objects in view, he thoughtfully supplies the names of the principal men from whom he sought information. They included Te Marae, Kawana Paipai, Tamati Pana, Pehi Turoa, Aperahama Raniera Ngarangi; but time is limited and space is valuable. All the Maoris named—and a great many more—had hunted and had eaten the famous bird. As late as 1830 the moas seem to have been numerous, at all events near the west coast of North Island. Aperahama remembered seeing a grand and ever-to-be-remembered fight between two moas. It appears to have been a well-contested encounter. The birds, said Aperahama, did not jump at each other and tumble about as do combative roosters; they stood firmly on one leg, and with the other dealt each other terrific blows. This unique mode of giving battle, somehow, strongly appealed to the imagination of the Maori. In the earlier days the moas lived in the bush, perhaps more in the scrubby outskirts than in the dense forest, and they were strict vegetarians.

Mr Field, in the course of his investigations, further learned that about the year 1830 a Taupo chief, bearing the euphonious name of Te Heu Heu, gave a great feast at his *pa* near Tokaanu, and that the flesh of a moa on that occasion was cooked for the delectation of his many guests. A Maori who joined in the festivities said that the bird's skin was as large as the hide of a huge bullock. Maoris in the olden days, Mr Field was told, tamed the moas and kept them as pets. There is, he states, in the Wanganui Museum the skeleton of a small moa. Not only are all the bones perfect, but in addition it possesses the horny tracheal rings of the windpipe. These, it is argued, would not have been in existence had the bird been long dead. Again, some one is responsible for the information that a moa chick was captured near Moawhango in 1865. What the subsequent career of that forlorn chick was nobody in New Zealand can tell. Such are some of the facts adduced by the defenders of the recent-extinction or still-surviving theory—a theory which appears to find most favour in the North Island.

In the South Island a correspondent, who is described as 'a member of the Ngai Tahu tribe,' made a brave effort to secure the annihilation of the North Island theory. No less an authority than Sir Julius von Haast—a name which commands respect in New Zealand—once wrote an article entitled 'The Moa and Moa-Hunters,' in which he contended that the Maoris were not the moa-hunters, but that those hunters belonged to a prehistoric race which occupied the country long before the advent of the Maoris. The member of the Ngai Tahu tribe confesses that he considered that the contention of Sir Julius von Haast was not sufficiently based on truth—and people say the Maoris are not progressing!—and for that reason he examined many Maoris to enable him to decide what, with regard to moas, was fact and what was fiction. Of all the aged Maoris he met he inquired if they or their forefathers had ever seen a moa. Every answer he obtained was to the same effect: the moa had never been seen by the Ngai Tahu, by the Ngati Maamoe, or by the Waitaha tribes. It was doubtful, said the veterans of the *pa*, whether even the Haweas had seen the moa. The full significance of those averments may seem somewhat obscure to readers at home; there are people in New Zealand to whom also they are not too clear. In Maori eyes the reference to the Haweas appears to be conclusive evidence. It is satisfactory, however, to relate that the member of the Ngai Tahu tribe now considers it safe to abide by the teachings of Sir Julius von Haast.

One correspondent, who claims to have a good memory, contributes to the discussion the intelligence that 'the late Mr Alexander Murray, of Day's Bay, Wellington, heard the roar of the moa early in the 'forties, as, some years later, did the late Major Lockett at Collingwood.' 'This roaring of the moa must have been but a mere figment of the brain,' retorts a rather sarcastic letter-writer. He puts the pertinent query, 'If the roar of the moa was listened to near Wellington in the 'forties, why did the Maoris, who occupied all that district, never hear it?' The correspondent with the good memory, taking for granted that these Maoris never heard the moa exercising its voice, has not yet returned to the charge. Another occasion has likewise been alluded to when a moa—in a manner not stated—made its presence known. 'A boy,' it is alleged, 'was frightened by such a bird at Mangatipona, in the Wangaehu Valley, soon after Beard took up the sheep-run there.' But as the writer never before heard of the places mentioned, has asked no questions as to their precise location, and does not know when Beard took up the sheep-run, he is afraid that the information will fail to provide much additional enlightenment. However, like the 'cemetery' and the 'wind-eating'—the only 'peculiarities' of the moa the writer has had sufficient courage to mention—the story of the frightened boy is given with hesitation, and must be taken for just what it is worth. Meantime there is much to learn about the moa. The weight of evidence seems to be on the side of extinction; but the query remains unanswered, When did the last moa die?

# AN 'INDIFFERENT' CHARACTER.

By P. L. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CAPTAIN JACK CUTHBERT flung himself down on the ground before the dying embers of the camp-fire.

'They 're all fairly fagged out to-night!' he exclaimed to his subaltern, who was superintending the cooking of a supper of rice and goat's flesh over the glowing faggots. 'There 's not a kick left in 'em. If it hadn't been for Clements they 'd have got no dinner. He arranged the bivouac and set the fires going whilst the cooks and the quartermaster-sergeant were sleeping like hogs under the trees.'

'Clements is a ripper!' said Dering laconically, stirring the mess in the pot.

'The very best, on service,' his captain agreed. 'The pity is he can't keep straight in barracks. He 's worth all the non-commissioned officers in the company when it comes to a pinch. Isn't that stuff about ready? I 'm famished.'

Dering took the pot off the fire and ladled out the contents into two enamelled-iron soup-plates.

'It 's not exactly "Savoy" form,' he said apologetically; 'but we 'll call it *filet de chêvre à la Irawaddy*, and here 's a *chupatty* to help it down;' and he handed him a round of unleavened dough which had been baking on a flat stone in the midst of the ashes.

For some minutes they ate in silence, as men will eat who have tasted nothing from dawn to the setting of the sun, and have herded eighty men on as many ponies, to say nothing of the transport, for five-and-forty miles through the swamps and jungles of Upper Burma.

The Burma war was over — officially. King Theebaw was a prisoner; the Burmese army had laid down its arms at Ava; to all intents and purposes Burma was already part of the British Indian Empire; but the business of the British regiments in the country was only just beginning. The defeated Burmese army melted away, and in its place sprang up bands of Dacoits led by enterprising Bohs, who terrorised the country and bid defiance to the conquerors. It was impossible to say who were peaceful inhabitants and who were not. The villages succumbed to the Dacoits or to British rule indifferently. The first in the field gained their allegiance, only to be thrown over in favour of the other when circumstances rendered a change of policy advisable. The only recourse was to capture the Bohs, and thus effectually put an end to their influence. To this end the British force was broken up into companies of infantry, mounted on the sturdy little ponies of the country, and despatched in pursuit of the various Bohs; and, as an inducement to speedy operations, rewards were set on the heads of the more mischievous members of the Boh fraternity.

Cuthbert and Dering, with their company of eighty mounted infantry, had been in pursuit of Boh Choung for six months. They had hunted him from village to village, through the dense jungles, over hill and vale; by forced marches they had endeavoured to overtake him; by ruses they had sought to trap him; by threats and promises they had striven to outwit him with the inhabitants of the country. But Boh Choung was elusive. His trail through the jungle was blazed by crucified Burmans who might have given information to his pursuers if they had been allowed to live. The villages welcomed him and his Dacoits with open arms, and passed them on as speedily as possible to their neighbours in time to obliterate all traces of their visit before the arrival of their pursuers. When Cuthbert and his company arrived, the villagers never knew anything about Boh Choung — they had never even heard of him! They were peaceful people, longing for the strong rule of the British; and the arms which were concealed beneath the floors of their picturesque habitations were, of course, kept solely for defence against the pestilent Dacoits. Time and again Cuthbert had been at the very heels of Boh Choung. He had skirmished with the Dacoit rear-guard; he had even captured two of their old bronze *jingals*, which had hurled chunks of iron and stones at his company at intervals throughout the entire rainy season. But Boh Choung and the five thousand rupees upon his head were as far off as ever.

The meal was over in a few minutes, and Cuthbert and Dering filled their pipes, whilst the soldier-servants, who had been making a bivouac for the officers of bamboo saplings covered with teak-leaves, removed the enamelled plates and cutlery. The sun was down, and already the chill night-air crept upon them, laden with the germs of fever and malaria. Dering shivered and stood up.

'I 'll go round the pickets,' he said, drawing up the buckle of his Sam Browne belt. 'Have you any special orders?'

'Tell Rogers to send out a patrol along the river-bank. They might fall in with a native. We can do nothing without information. Friend Choung may have crossed the river, or he may have held on to the village on this side. A patrol might be able to pick up his tracks. If not, I 'll send you out with a reconnoitring party to-morrow morning.'

The bivouac was unusually silent. Men and ponies, exhausted by the long march, had fallen asleep as soon as the cravings of hunger were appeased. Only at the outpost picket, a quarter of a mile

away on the rising ground overlooking the Irawaddy, was there any sign of life. Corporal Rogers, in command of the picket, was relieving his sentries when Dering visited the post. He accompanied the relief, pointing out to the new sentries the extent of ground they were to watch, and giving them instructions to make prisoners of any inhabitants who chanced to approach the line.

'You know what you are here for,' he said to the corporal—'security and information; and it is information we want most just at present. If your sentries don't get hold of any one, you must send out a patrol along the river-bank.'

The corporal saluted, and Dering turned back towards the bivouac. It was the same old story, he reflected bitterly—the hot scent, the rapid dash across country in pursuit, and at the end an empty village or the lost trail. He was beginning to be sick of it, and he was conscious that the men were sick of it too. If Boh Choung and his Dacoits would only put up a respectable fight now and then, they would have been willing to overlook his elusiveness. But Boh Choung never fought if he could possibly run away without a shot being fired. It was only when he was cornered that he showed fight, and then the angle always fell out of the corner and the Boh slipped through.

As Dering neared the bivouac and the picket-lines of tired ponies, he suddenly became aware that some one was approaching him in the darkness. He loosened his revolver and waited; and then, as two figures emerged from the trees on his right, he challenged and called to them to halt.

'It's Sergeant Clements, sir, with a prisoner,' came the answer.

Dering went to meet them, and the sergeant explained, 'Seeing that all the company was asleep, sir, and nothing doing, I thought I might as well take a turn outside the lines. I hadn't gone five hundred yards before I came across this'—he pushed the reluctant Burman forward for the inspection of the officer. 'He was skulking about in the trees, and I'm certain he was up to no good; so I just laid hold of him and brought him to camp.'

Now it is one thing to capture a prisoner, but quite a different matter to extract information from him. The reticence of the Burmans was remarkable. The terror of the Bohs was over them, and nothing would induce them to give information of the whereabouts of the Dacoits, though they suffered severely from their raids. When a prisoner was brought in he was questioned by Cuthbert, the native apothecary from Rangoon—the sole medical attendant of the company—acting as interpreter. When Cuthbert failed to extract information from him, the prisoner was handed over to the persuasive measures of the sergeants' mess; and finally, before he was dismissed, one or two of the old soldiers of the company would try their hands upon him. Altogether it was not a pleasant experience for a Burman to fall into the hands of that particular company of mounted infantry, and they generally managed to avoid it.

Cuthbert was asleep when Dering returned with Clements and the prisoner, and the native apothecary was asleep too. So Dering told the sergeant to take the prisoner away, and to find out what he could from him before midnight, when the captain always went the rounds of the picket and would be able to judge for himself the value of the prisoner's information.

Nobody knew what passed between Sergeant Clements and his prisoner during the three hours that they spent in each other's company, nor did the absence of an interpreter appear to embarrass the flow of ideas between them. The British soldier is a wonderful linguist in his own peculiar way; it is dangerous to misunderstand him, and worse than folly to be unintelligible to him. At midnight Sergeant Clements reported himself, with his prisoner, outside the captain's shelter, with information of such importance that the whole company was in the saddle before dawn, with the prisoner, mounted on a spare baggage-pony and in leading-strings, between Sergeant Clements and an old soldier of his section.

If that prisoner was worthy of belief, there was a stockaded village within a dozen miles of the bivouac, and behind the stockade was Boh Choung with his merry men. The leading-strings and the muzzle of the sergeant's Martini tilted suggestively in the prisoner's direction were not necessarily for use, but simply as a guarantee of good faith.

Cuthbert and Dering rode at the head of the column, and extolled for the hundredth time the energy and excellence of Sergeant Clements; and for the hundredth time Cuthbert regretted that the enervating influence of the barrack-square should always prove fatal to the disciplinary rectitude of so fine a man.

'If ever we get out of this cursed country and back to the cantonments of an Indian station I know what it will be,' he said mournfully—'Clements will be broke within a month. He would have been sergeant-major years ago if he could only have kept straight. Sweat him from morning to night, and he is the best non-commissioned officer that ever stepped; give him an easy billet, and he'll make a fool of himself inside a week.'

Then he went on to recount the numerous acts of folly which had resulted in the several degradations of Sergeant Clements, and the signal services for which he had been restored step by step to favour.

'He's never slack, and he's never a blackguard; but feminine influence and fermented liquor are too much for him at times. Not constantly, by any means; but every now and then a break-out and a break-down, and Sergeant Clements reverts to private until he makes himself indispensable again.'

Boh Choung was in waiting for them a few miles farther on. He had laid an ambush, which the advance-guard of the mounted infantry had passed

unnoticed, and his Dacoits opened fire from the cover of the rank grass thirty yards from the head of the column. The bullets kicked up the ground in front and whirred overhead, and one or two found a lodgment in the ponies of the leading sections. There was a momentary confusion, and then Cuthbert turned round, laughing, to the men behind him.

'How badly the beggars shoot!' he exclaimed coolly. Then the men of the leading sections laughed too; and in a trice they were dismounted and skirmishing in admirable order through the jungle, driving the unseen enemy before them.

Sergeant Clements looked ruefully at his prisoner. 'So that was your little game, was it?' he asked, unslinging his rifle. The Burman, ignorant of the charge which was brought against him, but well understanding the meaning of the sergeant's action, fell forward on his pony's neck, imploring mercy. Clements pulled down the lever and slipped a cartridge into the chamber. He was anxious to have done with his prisoner and to join in the pursuit of the retreating Dacoits.

'Get the beggar off, Ambridge,' he said to the man who was assisting as escort.

Ambridge stooped down, and taking the Burman by the leg, tipped him off, and he fell, still clinging round his pony's neck.

'Sergeant Clements!' It was the captain calling.

'Just you look after him until I come back,' Clements said, turning to answer the summons.

The captain had orders for Clements. The Dacoits had retreated behind a high stockade, which evidently surrounded a village. Sergeant Clements, with his section, was to make a detour round the stockade to see if there were a gap where an entrance could be effected.

'What about the prisoner, sir?' Clements asked when he had received his orders. 'Shall I shoot him?'

'Shoot him! Why? He has brought us up with Boh Choung.'

'But the ambush, sir? He must have known of that.'

'We will give him the benefit of the doubt. Leave Ambridge in charge of him, and take the rest of your section round the stockade.'

Now, a stockade ten feet high, loopholed for rifle-fire, and constructed of solid timber balks, is a serious obstacle to infantry unsupported by artillery. You may charge up to it valiantly; but you can't do much good when you get there, and it is more than probable that you will incur a great deal of damage. So Jack Cuthbert held three sections of his company in extended order, lying opposite to one side of the stockade, whilst Sergeant Clements with the fourth section rode round to find the weak point in the enemy's defences. Meanwhile a brisk fire was kept up on both sides, which was rendered more impressive by the loud explosions of half-a-dozen *jingals* loaded with stones from behind the stockade.

Sergeant Clements had not gone more than half-way round the fortified village before he discovered a weak spot in the defences. The stockade sank to about eight feet in height, and the loopholes were but feebly defended. Without waiting for reinforcements, Clements assaulted, and in a few minutes found himself and three of his men within the village, cut off from the rest of his section. The Dacoits defending that portion of the stockade beat a hasty retreat on the entrance of the sergeant and his three followers. On the other side a tremendous fusillade was being kept up against the main body of the company, so that Clements found himself and his little party practically unopposed.

In the middle of the village was an important-looking structure with a pagoda; it might be a palace or it might be simply a temple. But, whatever it was, it attracted Sergeant Clements's attention as he looked hurriedly around him; and without further delay he started towards it, followed by the three men who, alone of all his section, had succeeded in scaling the stockade. They reached the building unopposed, and the sergeant drove in the door with the butt of his rifle and entered. He found himself in a large apartment, decorated with heavy carved pillars, in which were about a dozen men. They were armed with swords and antiquated firearms, and in their midst was a middle-aged man, whose distinctive dress and the deference showed to him proclaimed him the leader of the party. Clements's sharp wit jumped at once to the conclusion that he was in the presence of Boh Choung and his 'general staff.' He dropped on his knee and covered the Boh with his rifle.

'You three keep the door,' he said, with his eye along the sights. 'The captain and the rest of 'em will be here directly.'

The men posted themselves at the entrance, and Clements remained alone in the great room, still covering the Dacoit leader with his rifle. Not one of the Dacoits stirred; they stood helplessly round the Boh, gazing at the tiny muzzle of the sergeant's rifle as though it possessed an irresistible attraction for them. And there, for a quarter of an hour, he held them all at bay until word was carried to Cuthbert that an entrance had been effected, and half the company came tumbling over the stockade to finish the work which Clements and his three men had begun.

With the capture of Boh Choung the troubles of Captain Cuthbert's company of mounted infantry came to an end. They rejoined the headquarters of their battalion at Mandalay, and drew the five thousand rupees which the Government had assigned for the capture of the rebel leader. Of course neither Cuthbert nor Dering touched an anna of the reward, which was divided amongst the non-commissioned officers and men, and Sergeant Clements's share of it amounted to two hundred and fifty rupees.

Then they returned to India to be quartered in a quiet little up-country station, where they could get

rid of campaigning kit and customs and settle down into a respectable unit of British infantry once more; and in due course the medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field was presented to Sergeant Clements by the General Officer Commanding at a parade of the whole garrison, and he was held up as a shining example of soldierly qualities and intrepid coolness. Then, within a month, he was tried by court-martial and reduced to the ranks for absence without leave.

When the sergeant's stripes were off his arm, and the full significance of his degradation was borne in upon him, he sought out his captain in the seclusion of his bungalow. 'I think it's about time I retired from the service,' he said diffidently. 'My twelve years are up, and I'd thank you, sir, to get me my discharge.'

'Look here, Clements,' said Cuthbert, pushing a chair towards his old sergeant; 'take a seat and let's talk it over.'

Clements sat down on the edge of the chair, fumbling uneasily with his helmet. 'There's only myself, sir, to blame, I know,' he muttered. 'I knew better, and I ought to have acted according.'

'Never mind the past—that's paid for; I want to talk to you about the future,' said Cuthbert. 'You're a young man yet—younger that I am, and there's a future before you in the army if you will be sensible. You will be a sergeant again in a couple of years if you keep straight, and then in another five or six you can retire on a pension.'

Clements shook his head. 'There's too many "ifs" about it, sir, asking your pardon,' he said. 'I'd rather go now.'

'But what will you do when you get home?'

'I expect I'll find something to do, sir.'

'But it's not so easy. And then your discharge will stand in your way. The colonel can't give you a good character just at present. You know the rules as well as I do.'

'I've got friends at home, sir, who will help me.'

'And you have got friends out here too, Clements—friends who know you better than your people at home. You had better stay with us.'

But Clements had made up his mind, and was not to be dissuaded from it. All the arguments of his captain availed nothing, and when the trooping season came round Private Clements took his discharge and sailed for England.

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PART II.

YEAR later Jack Cuthbert went home on leave. He had not seen England for five years, and he was filled with the emotions which home and country awake even in the dullest breast as the P. & O. steamed slowly up the river to the India Dock. Behind the veil of mist and smoke ahead lay the great enchanted city whose voice goes out to the uttermost parts of the earth, calling her sons back to her. He was returning; and the East, with all its gorgeous colours and all its glowing life, was forgotten.

The ship came alongside the quay, and the business of disembarking the passengers and their baggage began. A crowd of seedy-looking fellows surged in upon handbags and portmanteaus as they were put ashore, and bore them off to the Custom-House in the expectation of earning a shilling or two for their services. One of them plucked at Cuthbert's sleeve.

'Is this your bag, sir?'

Cuthbert started and looked round; the voice was strangely familiar. It carried him back eight thousand miles, to the swamps of the Irawaddy.

'Yes,' he answered mechanically.

'Anything else, sir?'

'Yes, Sergeant Clements, there are a lot more.'

The porter dropped the bag, stood to 'attention,' and saluted. 'Beg pardon, sir. I didn't see it was you, Captain Cuthbert.'

Cuthbert glanced at him hurriedly. He knew that Clements would not thank him for too close an inspection, for he looked half-starved and out-at-elbows. There was a hump on his shoulder, where the long planks from the Baltic shipping had brought the muscles up into a knot; his feet were bulging out of the sides of his boots, and there was a ten days' growth of beard on his chin.

'Never mind the kit. I want to have a talk with you,' said Cuthbert. He led the way to a low parapet guarding the edge of the basin and sat down upon it, out of hearing of the crowd of passengers and porters.

'Now tell me all about it,' Cuthbert demanded.

At first Clements demurred; but finally, with an outburst of confidence, he told his tale. 'I ought to have taken your advice, sir, and stopped with the regiment,' he said dismally; 'but I couldn't bear the shame of it after all the general said to me on parade. If it hadn't been for the Distinguished Conduct Medal, I'd have stayed and worked my way up again; but I couldn't face it.'

He paused, and Cuthbert threw in a question as to his doings since he had come home.

'What with my deferred pay and what was left of the reward for collaring Boh Choung, I had over fifty pounds when I got home. I thought it was a fortune, and that I was going to start in a business of my own. Then I got among friends—and it was all gone in a fortnight. After that I started to look for work. My friends couldn't help me to find that, though they had been ready enough to help me through my bit of money. I tried the agencies which lay themselves out to find employment for old soldiers; but the first thing they asked for was my discharge documents, and when they saw the word "Indifferent" against my character they told me straight that they couldn't hold out much hope of getting me a situation. After a bit I stowed away my papers, as they only seemed to stand in my way, and passed myself off as a

civilian; but of course I had no references to give, and I couldn't get steady employment. I got a job at last at the Surrey Dock as a stevedore. It's left its mark on me, as you can see, sir'—he laid his hand on the hump on his shoulder; 'that would take a drill-sergeant three months to work off. But I stuck to it for six months, and should have stuck to it for good, I suppose, only there was a slump in the timber trade, and half of us were turned off. Since then I've been trying all the docks in hopes of employment, but I can only get odd jobs.'

'Are you married?' Cuthbert asked.

'No; thank God, sir, I have only myself to provide for.'

'Look here,' said Cuthbert after a pause, 'will you come with me? I'll undertake to find you work if you will give me your word to stick to it.'

The man's face lit up with something of the old spirit, and he drew himself straight as he answered simply, 'Thank you, sir; I'll do my best to deserve your kindness.'

'Then you will have to start as my personal servant until I can make other arrangements. Go and collect my baggage and take it to the Custom-House.'

A few days later Cuthbert, with his new servant, arrived at his father's house in Warwickshire. They had both spent the interval in fitting themselves out for polite society in England, for which the fashions neither of Upper Bengal nor of the Mile End Road are appropriate.

Mr Cuthbert, senior, was a man of business and of influence—a director of extensive ironworks, a Justice of the Peace, and the proprietor of a considerable estate in the county. Jack Cuthbert waited until the fatted calf had been duly disposed of, and the aroma of tobacco wafted perfect peace and contentment to the soul of his respected parent. Then he laid the case of ex-Sergeant Clements before him.

'You see, dad,' he explained, 'I don't want the expense of a servant whilst I am at home, and in a year I shall be going back to India, and I can't take him with me. If you can find him a billet, I'll undertake to say you won't regret it. Give him a job which requires a head as well as a good pair of hands; and sweat him—sweat him hard! He is a beggar who thrives upon sixteen hours' work a day.'

Mr Cuthbert was not in a mood to refuse his son anything, and the fact that his protégé had materially contributed to his boy's success in capturing Boh Choung—a source of vast paternal pride—made it impossible for him not to accede to his request.

So ex-Sergeant Clements took up his duties in the ironfoundry at Birmingham, in a position unaffected by the restraints of trade-unionism and with freedom to work from dawn to eve. When Jack Cuthbert returned home again four years later, he found his old sergeant at the head of his department, and regarded by his employers as quite indispensable.

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## MACHINERY IN MOROCCO.

THE Moor cuts a shallow furrow with his wooden plough and slowly moving team of oxen, trusting to a rich soil, a seldom-failing rainfall, and brilliant sunshine to mature the seed which he sows. He has secrets of tanning in yellow and in red. He can dye in fast colours and weave a carpet which is well-nigh everlasting. He can work cunningly in hammered copper, and can produce pottery. Tiles glazed in blue-and-white, with ornament in stucco, still form part of his decorative art, descendant as he is of Alhambra builders. It is his deft hand which aids him in these industries, and his muscular arm which supplies the motive-power to grind his corn, thresh his wheat, and spin wool and weave it into cloth. He knows no need of machinery.

Who that has toiled up the steep streets of Tangier has ever once sighed for a wheeled vehicle or wished that his means of locomotion were other than the willing feet of his donkey or his mule? One is safe to answer, 'No one;' for the visitor, in crossing the Strait of Gibraltar and entering Morocco, feels that he has slipped back through six centuries of time. He hardly expects to hear the whir of machinery.

Yet even Morocco begins to feel the effects of an age of steel. Here and there, on its borders which come into closest touch with a progressive world outside, mills begin to be turned by engines in place of mules, and Tangier has had its electric-lighting station these many years.

Needless to say, these evidences of the twentieth century are due to European influence, for it will be remembered that too keen an interest shown by the deposed Sultan Abd-el-Aziz in cameras and motor-cars helped to hurry him into obscurity. His successor, Moulai-el-Hafid, though believed to be at heart in favour of progression, outwardly keeps faithful to established tradition. For the Moor resents the touch of the iron finger. The Casablanca incident is still fresh in his memory. In 1907 some natives of that town took exception to the light railway which was built to transport sand and building material required for the harbour works at the port. Several Europeans were killed, and this gave the French the excuse to bombard the town. Again, the irritant in the recent rising

among the Riffians, a rising which has cost Spain dear, was a railway projected by a Spanish company, and partly completed, between Melilla and the mines of Beni-Bou Ifrouk, eighteen miles towards the interior.

In the spring of last year the Compañia Transatlantica, which owns the electric-lighting station in Tangier, purchased a gas-engine of one hundred and thirty horse-power. This engine was arranged to manufacture gas as the town required it, and worked for this purpose in conjunction with a gas-generating plant. The engine was made in Britain, and was substantial in character. For example, it required a fly-wheel weighing twelve tons, while the bed and cylinder weighed over ten tons. These were unwieldy and heavy pieces to handle when they arrived on the Morocco coast, where jetties are non-existent and cranes may be things of the future. One does not expect a jetty in Morocco; to land in pounding Atlantic surf in a boat which has dodged the waves where they broke is usual at the coast-towns. Although in Tangier better conditions exist, yet Borrow's description of his landing, in his *Bible in Spain*, is still substantially applicable. A jetty there is, but it has no equipment of cranes, and is only used for passengers embarking and disembarking by means of small boats.

The engine-parts were lowered from the ship's side on to lighters, and these were run as far up the beach as a high tide would permit. Then, when the sea receded, the fly-wheel was dragged on rollers and planks over the stretch of wet sand. Long before the parts were hauled high and dry the returning tide surrounded the wheel and heaped sand over it, so that before operations could be again begun at slack-tide the wheel had literally to be dug out. Slowly and painfully, with the aid of a band of twenty Moors pulling on rope-blocks, all the material was safely dragged beyond the reach of the waves. The confusion of packing-cases, cylinders, cooling-towers, and tanks lying on the beach formed a novel playground for tiny Moorish boys. They crawled into the cylinders and played what corresponds to 'hide-and-seek' with their fellows.

Finally, it was necessary to transport this material from the beach to the central electric-lighting station, where the foundations for the new plant had been already laid. A quarter of a mile of zigzag street had to be covered, three yards wide and paved with cobble stones, on the prevailing incline of the streets of Tangier. Again the only means to accomplish this was the muscle of the Moors and the factor of time. A band of twenty Moors, harnessed to the fall of a set of rope-blocks, hauled and invoked Allah, till after three long weeks the various parts reached the site of the installation.

So much for the difficulties of transport; but there were other ways in which trouble was met with. Hostility to innovation is deeply rooted in the patriotic Moor. On one occasion it was desired to run a pipe from a pump under the sand of the beach to a point out at sea where cold sea-water could be taken to cool the engine-parts. This work was vetoed till the consent of the Governor could be obtained. The Governor, in the hope of extracting a present from the promoters of the lighting installation, prevented the placing of a set of poles to carry the current-conductors to the houses of the consumers. Then, to crown all, when the installation was complete, the working of the plant was completely prohibited because the engine exploded rather noisily upon occasions, and the users of electric light must have had to betake themselves to their old-time rushlights.

Not always has it happened that the advent of the labour-saving device has been looked on with disfavour in Morocco. The town of Saffi has an oil-engine, and it may be called a popular institution. Saffi has a population of some six thousand inhabitants. It is a coast-town on the Atlantic seaboard, and lies, surrounded by crumbling walls and sheltered from land-winds, at the base of rugged cliffs. Inward stretches the trail to Marrakesh, two days' journey distant. This region is fertile, and its crops find their way to the sea for export through Saffi, so that the market-place or *soko* of that town is usually a busy one.

On the day of our visit an edict had just been issued by the Sultan that the Governor of the district should collect taxes. The Moor seldom has ready-money; but he has in his fields, stored in bottle-shaped cisterns, the crops which he has raised during perhaps the last two seasons. These he hastens to convert into money to pay his dues, for he knows that the edict will shortly be followed by an army to be quartered in the neighbourhood to enforce payment from the reluctant. Strings of laden camels are heading for Saffi from the country round. On the back of each is a balanced load, a double-ended sack bulging with wheat, and arranged pannier fashion. The narrow, cobble-paved streets, lined with booths, are choked with a double line of camels, mules, and donkeys, with their riders and drivers, the loaded making for the market-place, the unloaded going in the opposite direction. Let us thread our way between the steady stream of swaying, grunting camels and the booths which line the main street towards the *soko*. Arrived there, we look on a varied scene of movement. The square is six hundred yards long and about half that breadth. It is packed with moving beasts and men, yet there is room here and there for the packing-cases turned on end which serve as shops. Our interest centres round the unloading of the camels. With many complaints they have knelt down, and their drivers have deftly slit open the ends of the bulging sacks which the camels carry suspended on their backs. From both sides, falling over the camel's flanks in a golden shower, falls the grain; the animal is then coaxed to rise and stand till the last grain has trickled to the heap surrounding it. Then the unloaded camel gives place to the one that follows, till mountains of grain grow up before the eyes in

various corners of the market-place. In another part of the *soko* a merchant has bought a heap of grain. He has bought it as it lies on the ground, but will only pay for the number of quintals which the heap contains after he has winnowed it. A modern hand-turned winnowing-machine of British make swallows up the heap, full as it is of small stones, dust, and *débris* of the market-place, and gives it out again clean and measurable. At still another part of the market-place sits a row of veiled women. In front of them, stacked in piles on a board raised slightly from the ground, are the round, flat loaves of the country. There are two varieties—one coarse and baked of meal, the other lighter in colour but also coarse in texture. Round this group of silent, draped figures crowd the camel-drivers, who pick up from the piles a loaf, or tear one in half, leaving a *billon* or two in exchange.

Let us examine this bread and if possible find out where the flour of which it has been composed has been ground. We find it gritty. The stones are evidently native, and perhaps cut from those very cliffs which guard the seashore. We go to the one mill in Saffi to inquire. There we find a modern oil-engine; and it is perhaps natural that its owner, who has lately acquired it from Britain, is unable to make it go. He is a Gibraltarian, a Mr B. He explains that Mohammed's birthday and the Jews' Passover feasts are on the eve of being observed. He is losing custom, while the native mills, querns for the most part, are reaping a harvest. For milling a quintal (one hundredweight approximately) the owners of these mills are receiving one dollar (*hassani*). This is equivalent to four shillings at par value of the dollar, but to-day the exchange puts the dollar at a value of two shillings and sixpence.

We remember the grit which we had detected in the loaf during our walk, and we imagine that we now have an explanation of its presence. Probably the meal to make that loaf had been ground in a quern. It is our business to help Mr B. to start his engine. It is in perfect adjustment, except that he has screwed the admission-valve to the carburettor or vaporiser too tightly to its seat, and no charge is entering the engine. Soon the engine is exploding merrily, and great is the wonder of the community in Saffi. However, their wonder is changed to pleasure when a crier goes through the streets shouting, 'The engine now works. Bring your corn;' and at the same time the price for grinding a quintal is lowered from one dollar to three *pesetas* (*hassani*). We watch with interest the laden mules beginning to arrive. Rich men bring their grain in camel-loads; but there are those who have only a modest half-sackful. All are eager to be first, and we are besieged by men and women asking us to use our influence with the miller. One of these is the cook at the Saffi Hotel (named such, but it is only a name). She claims our aid, else we shall have no bread to eat; but yet the two millstones cannot grind one whit faster than they are doing. The crowd must chafe and even be locked out of the mill premises till such time as the first-comers have been served.

In the evening we stroll out of the town-gates, guarded by antiquated cannon, up the hill which looks down on Saffi. We enter the tiny cemetery which occupies the crest of the slope, and sit down on a tombstone. The sun is setting on the Atlantic, and we look down on the square of the city wall which encircles Saffi; on flat-roofed, white-walled houses, far enough distant to appear pure white; on narrow streets teeming with swarthy forms, the dark complexions contrasting with the whiteness of the head-dresses. Distance lends its glamour, and the filth and the odours of the streets are forgotten. All seems a picture culled from the *Thousand and One Nights* in the rosy light of the sunset, till the breeze wafts to us the noise of the rhythmic exhaust of the oil-engine. Then conscience smites us for our share in the anachronism.

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BABY.

To be sure it's rather nasty
To be put to bed at six,
To leave the nice, warm nurs'ry,
And my newest box of bricks;
But mother says that that's the time
When every baby goes;
So, after all, it must be best,
For mother always knows.

To be sure I'm getting rather tired
Of nursie when she coos
Those silly words she seems to think
Are what I ought to use;
But mother says that that's the way
A little boy's tongue grows;
So, after all, it must be best,
For mother always knows.

To be sure I'd like some other things
Than those I get to eat;
I'd like to taste a currant-bun,
And perhaps a bit of meat;
But mother says that little boys,
Who still wear ribbon bows,
Must eat just what is given them,
And mother always knows.

To be sure I'd rather not be washed
If I could have my way;
I really don't need soap at all—
At least, not every day;
But mother says unless I'm washed,
Not only where it shows,
I'd turn into a nigger boy,
And mother always knows.

And so I'm trying not to mind
What nursie makes me do;
I even kiss her now and then
(Last night I gave her two);
For mother says unless I try
Each day until its close,
I'll never be a hero-man,
And mother always knows.

EDITH L. ELIAS.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

AS the most thoughtless and indifferent people of this country have lately been made aware, we have a House of Lords, an Upper Chamber of parliamentary government which in most matters exercises a right of veto upon the legislative works of the Chamber below. Intensely interesting is this subject of the House of Lords, then; the debated questions of education, of Ireland, of the navy, and all such like are of faint colour in comparison. It is so great, so wonderful, that now when men come to approach it they seem sometimes to be afraid, and they are found asking themselves and others what the people of the past, who are dead and gone, would have done if they had been in like case with themselves, how they would have faced this most stupendous question, what line of policy they would have pursued. In particular do we find most curiously that in this present dilemma there has been some general disposition to speculate upon, or at all events to wonder, what Mr Gladstone would have done. It is as if they found some consolation for themselves in the knowledge that they are deprived of the assistance of his views, and so cannot be expected to move forward with determination and confidence. How futile must be all conjectures upon what those who have been long since dead would have done to-day, as if you could take a man of genius from his time and circumstances and his environment, and expect from him any likeness in thought and action when placed in others which are quite different! And let it be said that there is surely a greater difference between the circumstances and environments of to-day and twenty years ago than there was between that time in the eighties and a full century before. However, to some of us it will seem singular that it has been so little remembered during the violence of the recent political harangues that Mr Gladstone's very last speech in the House of Commons, this being in 1894, when he was eighty-five years of age, consisted of nothing but a vigorous assault upon the hereditary Chamber. Ten years before, in response to some fears that had been expressed by Queen Victoria, he had said that he hated the idea of organic change in the House of Lords, and would do much to avert that mischief. Time and circumstances had altered his view since then, and it was the Lords' amendments of the Parish Councils Bill which had brought him to propound the question publicly as to whether the work of the House of Lords is not merely to modify, but, as he put it, to annihilate the whole work of the House of Commons—work which had been performed at an amount of sacrifice of time, of labour, of convenience, and perhaps of health, but anyhow an amount of sacrifice totally unknown to the House of Lords. Speaking with some passion, he said: 'The differences, not of a temporary or casual nature merely, but differences of conviction, differences of prepossession, differences of mental habit, and differences of fundamental tendency, between the House of Lords and the House of Commons appear to have reached a development in the present year such as to create a state of things of which we are compelled to say that in our judgment it cannot continue. The issue which is raised between a deliberative assembly, elected by the votes of more than six millions of people, and a deliberative assembly occupied by many men of virtue, by many men of talent, of course with considerable diversities and varieties, is a controversy which, when once raised, must go forward to an issue.' Men of the Liberal way of thought had murmured against the House of Lords for long before that, but this utterance, deriving some extra force from being the subject of a valedictory speech, virtually marked the beginning of a more or less definite campaign which has slowly led up to the crisis of the present time.

* * *

Despite what has been said in high places about a 'single-Chamber conspiracy,' we may be well satisfied that there will be no ending of the Upper Chamber, although most certainly within a short



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period of time there will be some mending of it. The manner of this mending is a subject which has not yet been debated, for the good reason that so much depends upon what party will take the initiative in the matter—the 'mountain' party, who are bent upon having their new earth, or the gentler souls to whom the old one is neither as a hell nor as a wilderness of desolation and sorrow for all that lords walk upon it and have some small share in the ordering of its arrangements. At this time, then, it is of special interest and profit to take a brief glance at some different suggestions that have been made from time to time in recent years, backed by a good weight of authority, for the improvement of the Upper House as a part of our legislative machinery. One recalls how, as far back as 1856, there was some preliminary nibbling at the idea of reform in the way of an innocent proposal that was made to give a life-peerage with a seat in the House to Sir James Parke as Baron Wensleydale, the underlying object being to strengthen the House as a judicial body. The ultimate consequences might have been of the most important character; but it failed, and the upshot was that Lord Wensleydale was given a hereditary peerage. Then, towards the end of the next decade, Earl Russell made an attempt to induce the Lords to admit life-peers, never more than twenty-eight at any one time, and to be drawn from the best classes, men distinguished in science, literature, and art, to their assembly. This scheme also failed, as did another one brought forward a year later, the object of which was to exclude the bishops from the House. Seldom have any of the lords themselves been stirred to move in the matter of reconstructing their own House. Why, indeed, should they? But it ought not to be forgotten, as it may be, that Lord Rosebery and the late Lord Salisbury both made efforts in this direction. The former, after failing in 1884 to obtain the appointment of a select committee to consider what alterations were necessary to promote the efficiency of the House, some four years later made another unsuccessful effort, and a scheme was brought forward by Lord Kenry (the Earl of Dunraven), one of the features of which was the power that it was proposed to give the County Councils to recommend one person each to the sovereign as a Lord of Parliament. Of course the scheme failed, and that of Lord Salisbury which followed it and shared the same fate proposed that from the holders of the chief offices in the Empire there should be selected by the Crown fifty life-peers. This Bill got to the second reading, but was then withdrawn. In the more recent times it has been the scheme of Lord Newton, propounded some three years ago, that attracted most attention, even though, like all others, it failed. A reduction in the number of hereditary peers was the key to this scheme, and Lord Newton proposed that the English peers should, like the Scottish and Irish, elect a proportion—placed at one-fourth—of their number as legislative peers. To these were to be added a hundred life-peers, of whom not more than ten were to be appointed every year, and a certain number of qualified peers. The suggested qualifications included, first, the holding at any time of high judicial office, of any Cabinet or Ministerial office, including both Parliamentary and Permanent Under-Secretaryships, the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Viceroy of India, or Lieutenant-Governor of an Indian province, Governor-General, High Commissioner or Colonial Governor, Ambassador or Minister, Lord of the Admiralty or member of the Army Council, Vice-Admiral or higher rank in the navy, and Lieutenant-General or higher rank in the army. In the second place it was proposed that qualification should include election to serve in the House of Commons on at least two occasions before succeeding to the peerage. Those peers who were neither qualified nor elected were to be left free to seek election to the House of Commons. It may be remembered also that a little more than a year since Lord Wemyss propounded a scheme by which 'important national trading and other organised societies' should each name three peers in the current and each succeeding Parliament to speak and act on behalf of such societies on all questions in which they were interested, the names of the peers so nominated to be entered in the journals of the House, while the selection of them was to be left to the Lord Chancellor, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Crewe, and the Earl of Halsbury. With such a diversity of view already expressed as to the lines upon which reform of the House of Lords might be conducted to the best purpose, it is sufficiently difficult to hazard any guess as to what is likely to happen in the near future, and parlour politicians will probably find the construction of an ideal second Chamber a subject more diverting and affording more scope for the exercise of their ingenuity than ever Cabinet-making has been. There are two interesting points that may be borne in mind. One is that only on one or two isolated occasions in recent years has there been any large muster of peers in the House, and then a considerable number of those who went forward to vote were actually unknown to the doorkeepers and officials. It is held that for all practical purposes a working rota of about one hundred and forty Unionist peers carries on the business. The other point is that almost any scheme of reform must necessarily embrace the disqualification of a large proportion of English peers from the right to sit in the House, and it has been found that when a peer ceases to possess a *de jure* right to legislate, even though he seldom or never exercises it, his rank and position tend to become a mere matter of tradition and convention. He becomes considerably less of a lord than he used to be. We have seen that happen in other countries.

* * *

During these present weeks there are few avenues of escape for the British people from this incessant talk of politics. The stranger who sits opposite to

you in the railway carriage exhibits an expansive geniality, and is moved to ask for your opinion upon the situation; the man who serves you at the shop-counter ventures hesitatingly to suggest that the results of the elections are no doubt satisfactory to many people; the waiter who attends upon you at your favourite restaurant tells you as you finish the fish that they have just got the news of a sensational Conservative gain somewhere up in Scotland; the men at your club, which is ostentatiously described in reference-books as 'non-political,' fall into the way of guessing with impartial inaccuracy as to what Free Trade and Tariff Reform really mean; the guests at your table dare to express their wonder as to what will happen to the House of Lords now; go to the theatre, and unless the words of the play enjoy the sacredness of Shakespeare, the actor will 'gag' in something about the Budget; and on Sunday, in the church or chapel, the parson in the pulpit will draw thinly veiled comparisons between Job, Peter, Judas Iscariot, and other biblical celebrities and the eminent statesmen of our time who are the ringleaders in the election business. Oh these politics, how unbearable they do become at the centres of British civilisation! Art, literature, science, finance—all things must stay in their progress while the people vote and vote, and there is a majority established for some one. The music-halls being free of politics, and the theatres providing, as we have suggested, no absolutely certain means of escape unless *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* is staged, it is happy to remember, as many of the weary do, that there is in London one form of complete relief at any rate, and one that becomes weekly more popular. Our minds may float away on music from the harassments of the hour.

* * *

We British are a dull, stodgy people of the coldest and most phlegmatic temperament, and, unlike the Latin and the Teutonic and the Gallic, and most other races, we have no instinctive love and appreciation of art, music, or some of the other things of the soul; nor do we create to any worthy effect. We are quite good commercially, and that is the best that can be said of us. These are not the opinions of the present writer, nor probably of the reader, but they are what has been stated over and over again by the higher critics in the fervour of their denunciation of their own people and their works. And yet one might challenge them to tell us of another place in the world where the musical season—speaking of the winter season—is now, or ever has been, completer, more thorough, more extensive, or better artistically or in any other way than in London at the present time. For some years past there has been a very evident increase in the desire for a critical appreciation of good music, not merely by those members of the higher classes who possess or make pretence of possession of æsthetic feelings, but by the middle classes who are commonly understood to have less soul than others. It is indeed the middle classes—and not the higher section of them either—who have forced the pace in musical matters in London. The state of things is that London now attracts and obtains unceasingly the best talent of the world, and that such talent plays or sings to audiences that could hardly be bettered. On any day of the week there is a rich variety in concerts; and, most noticeable of all, on Sundays the extensiveness of the musical entertainment is remarkable. The Sunday concert, indeed, which is held at every available hall in London, afternoon and evening, and at some of the variety theatres also, is probably, to some considerable extent, responsible for the increase of interest in music. Looking at the list of announcements of concerts for the next Sunday in the Metropolis, we find that they number more than a score. They are assisted by some good singers; but for the most part the music is instrumental, and it is of a kind that would have been unintelligible to an audience of what we might call average people ten years ago. Now the listeners pick holes in the execution, speak of composers' intentions, and compare the interpretation just submitted to one that they heard a little while since. This music is not the simple, ephemeral kind of thing that is brought along with the new comic operas, but—to glance down the programme for one particular day—is made up chiefly of the compositions of Beethoven, of Tschaikowsky, of Mendelssohn, of Wagner, of Rubinstein, Chopin, Saint-Saëns, and the others who were greatest, and we find the public decided in its tastes and insisting on their gratification, not being obligingly content with whatever may be offered to it. In these pages it has already been said how at the present time there is some kind of public passion being displayed for the work of the melancholy Tschaikowsky, whilst in the way of lighter fare it is discerned that there is hardly a composer in these days who is better liked by the ordinary people than that man of marvellous musical memory and wonderful imagination, who for nearly twenty years was master of the keys of the organ in the Madeleine in Paris, Charles Saint-Saëns. The knowledge of this great, new musical public is not deep; it extends but a little way into the mysteries and intricacies of composition and execution; but, such as it is, it is keenly intelligent and quickly improving. By some of the higher patrons of music its origin may be considered a little mean, for there can be no doubt that the invention of and rapid popularity achieved in recent years by different instruments designed for the mechanical production of music, especially the gramophone to begin with, and the mechanical piano-players as something much better afterwards, have been responsible for the awakening of a better musical instinct in the people than that which was abundantly satisfied with the repetition of the old ballads. This public now wants knowledge and more knowledge, and gains it constantly. The lives of the composers are studied, and the peculi-

arities of their temperaments, their dispositions, and their works are inquired into. Superficial as this interest and knowledge may be, and regarded with gentle contempt as it may be by the learned musicians, it will nevertheless lead on to some great results. Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, keen student of the spirit of the times, was among the earliest to appreciate this new feeling among the masses of the people, and he achieved a well-deserved success with his recent production of the play *Beethoven*, which, as one imagines, would hardly have been so well gained only ten years ago. All this is spoken of as being in London and of London; but the tendencies, as in all such cases, spread rapidly from the capital through the country, and the effects are already being experienced in distant places.

# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XVI.—HOW THEY WENT TO CHURCH IN PEACE IN THE MORNING.

IN accordance with the wishes of Mrs Lauriston, who had been brought up a devout Presbyterian, Sunday morning in the country was always devoted to church-going.

It was not often she could go herself, indeed, for the walk was a long one, and she would not on that day make use of either Jerry MacClootie or his horses.

So Captain Charles always took the children—more, it must, I am afraid, be confessed for his wife's satisfaction than his own, since sitting still in church always wearied him.

As for Charlie, the sermon finished him completely, and the giving out of the text was the signal for him to wriggle comfortably into his own special corner of the high-backed pew and fall asleep at once.

The walk, however, was always a delight to them—down Castle Bear Hill, past the Duke's house and the General's, and across the open stretch of the Haven; across the high-road where the coaches ran to Uxbridge and Reading and Oxford; past the Green and its ponds, where the fair was held; and so into the village, with its odd little shops with their eyes all decently closed for Sunday.

When they got thus far Mavie always grew somewhat excited at the prospect of seeing the endless black stream of boys from Dr Nicholas's school, all in their Sunday tail-coats and hats, on their way to church.

They had got all the way to the butcher's shop at the corner by the church on this occasion without any sign of the boys, when Mavie, looking hopefully backwards, saw the head of the procession just coming out of the big gates.

'Oh daddie, do stop and let's see them pass! They *are* so ugly!' she cried, dancing with excitement.

So they drew in to the angle of the shop, and stood while the long, long line tramped slowly past. And the very big boys at the head only glanced carelessly at the sprightly little rosebud of a face, and scornfully at the boys, especially at Etienne, whose foreign hall-mark no residence in England could efface. But the middle-sized boys eyed her appreciatively, and some of them even looked back at her, and perhaps thought with sudden longing of similar sweet little faces at home.

The service passed off with no untoward happening. Captain Charles, in view of the strangers, no more than dozed, but Charlie slept quietly in his corner without apology or accident. John Sax found the methods of worship so different from what he was accustomed to that he was kept on the alert the whole time, and Etienne's wide black eyes rolled to and fro without ceasing at the strangeness of the whole proceedings.

When the service was over, they encountered, in the roadway just outside the church, four gentlemen who stood there laughing and talking, while the outflowing stream of worshippers parted and circled past observantly on either side.

One was tall and of a consciously fine presence, and very handsomely dressed, with a fresh, open face and short side-whiskers; the next was a thin gentleman in a straight black coat, with a heavy black stock; the third was round and stout, and of a jovial countenance; and the fourth had a foreign air about him and a somewhat subdued and less assured manner than the others.

They turned at sight of our little party and greeted Captain Lauriston warmly.

'Ah, here comes the man of wealth, with his treasures all about him,' said the tall man with the fresh face, and shook the whole party by the hand so cordially that Mavie proceeded forthwith and unblushingly to restore her fingers to their usual shape by straightening and chafing them with the other hand.

'But are these all your own, Captain?' he asked with interest on completion of the ceremony. 'Some of them seem much of a size, and the family likeness is not striking.'

'These are mine, your Highness,' said Captain Charles, indicating Mavie and Charles.

'Ah, ha! Now that we are properly introduced I must shake hands with them again,' said the Duke, and stretched a large, cordial hand to Mavie.

'Thank you, sir; if you don't mind I'd rather not. My hand is not quite better yet,' said she demurely; at which His Highness's jovial laugh waked the High Street.

'This is the grandson of the Marquis de Montessonne,' said Captain Charles, with his hand on Etienne's shoulder.

'Ah, I have met your grandfather, my boy. He is a very perfect gentleman, and sets us all an example in courtliness and manners.'

'And this is my little friend John Sax, whose father gave his life for mine at Dunkirk.'

'A noble record!' said the Duke. 'No man can do more than that. Live up to your father's memory, my lad, and you will do well,' and he shook John Sax's hand; and if the little lad's eyes twinkled quickly after it, it was perhaps not entirely due to the great man's grip.

'And here comes your regiment, Doctor,' said the Duke as the schoolboys filed past, all deferentially doffing their hats, for His Royal Highness was well known at the school, and was often round there for a game of cards with the Doctor.

'As fine a set of lads as ever I set eyes on, Doctor. If the Frenchmen come across, as they threaten, you must throw your young bulldogs at them till we are ready for them in London.'

'The young dogs have had one holiday out of me already on the strength of it,' said the Doctor with a quiet laugh. 'The smallest pretext suffices them.'

'Well, well, we were all boys once. Give 'em a whole day to-morrow from me, and tell 'em it's because they looked so well to-day.'

'A royal request is a command,' said the Doctor with a bow; 'and it will suit me very well to go to London myself to-morrow.—Captain Lauriston, it is about time your boy came to me.'

The other two, the jovial round man and the foreign-looking gentleman, had glanced quickly at one another at the mention of Etienne's name. They had reason to know it.

'How are you, Captain Lauriston?' said the round gentleman, and put the Captain's hand, after he had shaken it, into that of his companion, at the same time introducing him—'M. le Duc d'Orléans. He is living at Twickenham, but is good enough to visit me now and again at Rochester House. We were comrades in arms, you know, at'—— and he broke off abruptly, with a glance at Etienne, whose sharp black eyes were fixed suspiciously upon them, though it was not possible he could have known them.

'You find England agreeable, monsieur?' said Captain Charles.

'*Mon dieu*, monsieur, it is, at present, the only possible country—a refuge for all the distressed,' said the other quickly. 'It is good to be even permitted to live in these times.'

'Yes, the times are much out of joint over there; but perhaps they will mend.'

'Doubtless; but the people have felt their power. They will never be as they were.'

'Better, then, we will hope,' said Captain Charles, with his pleasant smile.

'Any change will be for the better, for they could not possibly be worse than they are.'

The Duke of Kent meanwhile was endeavouring to extract a promise from Mavie that she would come in one day and see his carriages and horses, of which he was very proud. But, so far, he had only been able to obtain a qualified acceptance, on the clear understanding that he would not shake hands with her again; at which his hearty laugh rang out once more along the High Street.

'At eight o'clock, then, General and M. le Duc,' said Dr Nicholas. 'His Royal Highness promises to join us in a rubber.' And he led the way towards the school-gates, while the stout gentleman and his friend went off towards Rochester House.

'Is he living with Dumouriez?' asked the Duke as they went along, Mavie dancing lightly at her father's side, and the boys discreetly in the rear.

'No; he only comes over to see him occasionally. He lives at Twickenham, and comes over here twice a week to teach my boys geography and mathematics,' said the Doctor.

'And is he a good teacher?'

'Better than he would have been five years ago, or than his father would ever have been. He has been learning in a hard school, and has taken his lessons to heart. If ever he should reach the throne'——

'*That* is not very likely,' said the Duke with conviction.

'Unlikelier things have happened,' said the old Doctor, taking a pinch of snuff, after offering his box to the Duke and Captain Charles, who both declined it. 'Life is made up of unlikely happenings. Who would ever have dreamt of a descendant of Henry of Navarre rubbing geography and mathematics into the thick heads of English boys in a school in Ealing?'

And who among them would have dreamt that the then unmarried Duke's little daughter would succeed to the British throne and see the century out? Some of them lived to see a part of it, but none of them the whole.

The Duke strolled on with them after they had parted with the Doctor, chatting pleasantly all the way, inquiring graciously for Mrs Lauriston, and discussing the late wedding, his new brother-in-law of Würtemberg's portion, and so on.

At his own gates he again offered his hand to Mavie, who curtsied very politely, but kept her own hands safely behind her, and he vowed if he had been in France he would have sent her to the Bastille for refusing the royal favours.

'There is no longer any Bastille, monsieur,' jerked Etienne dourly and half-unconsciously, so strung up was he with the gloomy thoughts that were rioting in his head.

'Well, it shall be the Tower, then,' said the Duke, laughing. 'We still have that.'

'Ah, but this is England!' said Etienne.

'And a much more comfortable country to live in than France, is it not, my little monsieur?'

'Truly, monsieur, in some respects.'

'We, at all events, wear our heads *on* our shoulders,' said the Duke, and raised his hat politely and went in through the great iron gates.

'Who was the stout gentleman, Monsieur Lauriston?' asked Etienne.

'General Dumouriez, my boy.' And the boy's face whitened and darkened. Dumouriez had commanded at Jemappes, where his father was killed.

He was too young to remember it, but he had heard.

'And M. d'Orléans—he must be the son of Egalité,' he said thoughtfully.

'Yes.'

'Egalité was a traitor. He voted for the King's death. I am glad that he was guillotined himself, and that his son has to teach in a school,' said the boy bitterly.

'It is best to judge no man too harshly,' said Captain Charles quietly. 'They were terrible times, and one never knows how much one could stand till one has been tried. In any case, Egalité paid.'

'Yes, he paid; and I am glad of it,' said the boy.

'What shall we do this afternoon, father?' asked Mavie, eager to pack every minute with delights.

'We will see what your mother says. I would like to get her out into the garden if possible. You youngsters can go for a ramble if you like.'

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CHAPTER XVII.—HOW A MESSENGER CAME TO THEM IN THE AFTERNOON.

BUT that afternoon's arrangements were in other hands.

They were still at table, Mrs Lauriston rejoicing in their high spirits and eager chatter, when the unusual sound of a horse's hoofs on the gravel outside carried Mavie at a bound from her chair to the window.

'A man! Why, I do believe it's grandpa's John; but he's covered with dust, and his horse is all frothy!' she announced. And Captain Lauriston rose hastily, and went to meet so unusual a Sabbath messenger with a premonition of trouble; for these were troublous times, both inside the country and outside. One never knew what a day might bring forth.

'The master, sir!' was the groom's brief message; and he handed Captain Charles a letter, which he broke open hastily.

It was from Aunt Charlotte, at Grosvenor Place, and was as short as it was disturbing:

'DEAR CHARLES,—Our father has had a stroke, and Dr Berkeley fears it is serious. Please come at once. CHARLOTTE.'

'Go round and tell Jerry to saddle the Devil for me at once, John. Then go and get something to eat and drink. You have no further news than this?'

'Nothing, Mr Charles. They do seem to think he be very bad.'

'I shall go at once. You take a couple of hours' rest and come on after me. Have they sent for Mr Sax?'

'He was just coming in as I left, sir.'

And Captain Charles went in to break the bad news.

Within ten minutes the Devil was devouring the road to London with the pent-up fires which had gained him his name, but still he lagged behind Captain Charles's thoughts and fears.

His father was an old man, and life to those who held the helms of great concerns in these stormy times had been wearing and trying, however stout and hearty their faces to the world; and he had fancied more than once of late that the strong, hale face had begun to show signs of the fierceness of the struggle. God grant his worst fears unfounded, for the thought of possibly having to grip the jerking helm with such comparatively short preparation as he had had somewhat appalled him.

The toll-gate man heard his coming from afar, and knew him as he drew near, and flung the gates wide, and wondered at his speed, but found ample satisfaction in his hasty largesse.

So through Acton and Shepherd's Bush, and at last round the corner of Hyde Park and down Park Lane, and so to Grosvenor Place, in thirty-seven minutes from the time he mounted at Castle Bear Hill, and the Devil for once had run his course unchecked.

Old Simmonds the butler opened the door as he sprang down. A groom was waiting on the steps, and led the panting horse away, with a watchful eye on the champing mouth and fiery nostrils, and Charles Lauriston went quickly upstairs to what awaited him.

*(To be continued.)*

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# REGIMENTAL PETS.

By HORACE WYNDHAM.

THE British soldier always has a soft corner in his heart for animals of all sorts, and a regiment without its complement of these would be almost like a regiment without rifles. In every barrack or camp throughout the Empire one may see numerous denizens of the fur and feather world accommodating themselves to military routine as though they were born to it. Every time the drum rolls or the stirring notes of the bugle peal out on a parade-ground there is a soldier's dog or cat or bird somewhere in the immediate vicinity. They are always treated with the utmost kindness, and often live to a good old age. At Edinburgh Castle to this day may be seen 'the dogs' cemetery,' a small plot of ground under the ramparts of the Argyle Battery, just below Mons Meg, where the canine friends of Highland regiments stationed there have been buried.

Army pets vary, naturally, with the particular quarter of the globe where the regiment to which they are attached may be stationed. In England, for example, one does not often see much beyond dogs and cats and canaries. When, however, troops

are abroad the range becomes wider, and barracks and cantonments will then be found to contain, in addition to the usual number of dogs and cats, all sorts of birds of rare and gorgeous plumage, mongooses, harmless snakes, monkeys, and even tame bears and lion-cubs. Of course, when these latter emerge from the cub-stage to something approaching maturity they have to be got rid of. As a rule they are then presented to the nearest Zoological Gardens, where their former masters visit them during their hours of leisure.

Should he be serving in the East, the soldier is almost certain to buy a monkey out of his first week's pay. He has probably heard extraordinary (and as a rule quite unfounded) tales of their ingenuity, and readily believes that with a little care and patience they can be taught to clean his rifle and equipment for him! Still, even when he discovers that this is an exaggeration on the part of the wily vendor, he is generally philosophic enough to make the best of a bad bargain, and will continue to share his rations with Jacko as though his purchase had not disappointed him. Sometimes Jacko, troubled by what may be a qualm of conscience, will seek to reward his kind benefactor by paying a surreptitious visit to the orderly-room and tearing up his defaulter-sheet! When this happens, however, a hard-hearted adjutant is apt to order poor Jacko's summary execution, or at least his confinement to a pole by means of a chain until the offence is purged. Of course the troops make a hero of the prisoner immediately, and reward him with so many tit-bits that a bilious attack is soon threatened.

After a monkey, a talking parrot is a soldier's most prized possession. He is generally sadly deceived in his bargain, for the artful native, who charges him many hard-earned rupees for such a treasure, does not hesitate to palm off upon him a bird which is no more likely to talk than to sing. However, his proud owner puts this down to natural shyness, and, having installed his new possession in a bamboo cage (procured from the nearest bazaar), patiently awaits results. Of course some parrots are great talkers—too much so at times, in the opinion of other occupants of the barrack-room—and chatter away from morning to night. But Polly, whether talkative or not, soon makes hosts of friends.

When troops are either embarking for or returning from foreign service there are apt to be a good many sad hearts among the owners of the numerous pets which the regiment has gathered together. This is especially the case where the canine contingent is concerned, for the War Office has laid it down that not more than eight dogs may be carried in any transport. Among a thousand rank and file this is naturally regarded as a very poor allowance, and great efforts are always made to smuggle a few extra ones on board. Such attempts, however, invariably fail, for the ship's officers keep a sharp lookout for canine stowaways, and closely examine kit-bags that appear too bulky. In these cases, of course, the only thing to do is for the soldier to say good-bye to his four-footed friend and hand him over to the care of a comrade who is remaining behind. Sometimes, however, the unauthorised dogs are so determined to follow their masters that nothing will stop them. A case in point occurred when the Second Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment was embarking for South Africa during the late war. As the transport began to move away from the quayside a black retriever that belonged to a sergeant jumped into the water and swam towards the vessel. A sailor lowered a noose, and, cleverly catching the poor animal, hoisted him on board.

There have been quite a number of veritable 'war-dogs' associated with the British army in many a hard-fought campaign all over the world. One of the first of which there is an authentic record was Dash, who accompanied the Royal Marines to Spain during the Carlist war of 1836. Then there was Sandy of the Royal Engineers, and Jack of the Scots Guards, each of whom barked like true British dogs at the battle of Inkerman and sustained wounds from Russian bayonets. On their return Queen Victoria presented both of them with medals.

Another old-time regimental pet was a black ram named Derby, belonging to the Ninety-fifth Foot. He was found in the streets during the assault on Kotch, in Rajputana, at the time of the Mutiny campaign. The officers' wives made him a scarlet coat embroidered with the regiment's battle-honours; and, thus apparelled, Derby marched proudly at the head of the band for the next five years. He then fell down a well at Hyderabad and was drowned.

In memory perhaps of the geese who saved Rome, the Grenadier Guards once owned a pet goose. His name was Peter, and he began his military career in Canada so long ago as the year 1838. He came back to England with the regiment, and settled down to what should have been a tranquil existence at the Tower. Unfortunately poor Peter had an adventurous disposition. This cost him dear, for one day he waddled out of the gateway and was run over by a cab. He was buried with military honours under the flagstones.

A full-grown billygoat has been associated with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers for something like two centuries. The regiment had one with them at the battle of Bunker's Hill. He seems to have been rather a warlike specimen of his tribe, for it is recorded that he killed a drummer-boy who was rash enough to ride him round a mess-table on St David's Day. In 1844 Queen Victoria presented the regiment with two goats, and since then others have come from the flock in Windsor Park as occasion required. The Seventh Hussars also adopted a goat which they found on the veldt while they were campaigning in South Africa.

The Seaforth Highlanders and the Royal Scots Fusiliers have both owned a deer as their regimental pet. Roderick, the property of the first-named corps, ended his days in the Dublin Zoological Gardens, where he had been sent for the unsoldier-like conduct of attacking a corporal. Another

regimental pet to meet with the same fate was a young tiger which the Dublin Fusiliers brought back to Ireland from India. The Seventeenth Lancers and the Nineteenth Hussars both adopted a bear-cub captured in the Himalayas. The one belonging to the former regiment was stolen by some natives, but was afterwards recovered. The military authorities are rather inclined to disapprove of wild animals as soldiers' pets. There is good reason for this, since sooner or later their natural instincts are bound to assert themselves, and they become a source of danger. When this happens they are either destroyed or else sent off to languish behind the bars of the nearest Zoological Gardens.

## WHO IS THE OLDEST READER OF 'CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL'?

FROM time to time communications reach the Editor—mostly from frank and kindly critics, and fewer from ill-natured ones—expressing pleasure and satisfaction with the reading matter in this periodical, or otherwise. Such frank expressions of approval or disapproval are always welcome, for they show that the writers are in earnest and have been thinking seriously about what they have read. It is impossible not to feel gratitude and satisfaction on hearing from a reader of many years' standing who takes the trouble to write: 'I am a great admirer of your *Journal*. I am sure it is the most entertaining and instructive journal published in this country.' Some write and mention that they have been interested readers for thirty, fifty, or sixty years, and are so still. It may not be easy to beat the record of Mr Thomas Wyles, M.C.P., late principal of Allesley Park College, who claims to have read this *Journal* for about seventy-four years, more than an average lifetime. We subjoin his letter, in which he asks if he is not the oldest reader. Mr Wyles must have started to read this *Journal* about 1835, three years after its foundation. It remains for our readers to say whether his claim is justified or not.

Mr Wyles, who was born in March 1818, was led to change from mercantile to educational work by the influence of James Simpson (1781-1853), advocate, Edinburgh, an enthusiast for better elementary education, who lectured and wrote books and pamphlets upon educational subjects. Simpson was a friend of Sir Walter Scott, and one of those who were consulted as to the publication of *Waverley*. Mr Wyles carried on a successful school for forty years (1848–88), and sends us two thoughtful and suggestive pamphlets with his views and experiences. One is upon 'The Duty of the Schoolmaster in Relation to the Function of Character,' the other on 'The Fitness of the Private School to British Wants and to the British Character.'

'CROSS HOUSE, KING'S NEWTON,
MELBOURNE, DERBY,
*Oct.* 23, 1909.

'To the Editor, or Messrs Chambers,
the Proprietors of *Chambers's Journal*.

'DEAR SIRS,—At the end of last century I wrote to Messrs Chambers suggesting that I was probably the oldest subscriber to their *Journal*. I then had a letter from one of the firm in reply; but I forget the contents, which were pleasant enough.

'Near ten years have since passed, and I am still a living subscriber to your *Journal*. My subscription dates from about the middle of the *first series* of the *Journal*. The sixth to the twelfth volumes of that series I had bound, and every volume since till two years past, since which I have not bound them. They have been *all* well read, and I cannot measure the advantages to me resulting from my reading them. I now commonly read them from cover to cover, except the serial novel. That I cannot read. Most of the earlier series have been read to ruin by my boys—I have had a large residential private school. Some volumes were given to village libraries; now I send them to a daughter for use in her family.

'I think I must be now the oldest subscriber, and shall be pleased to be so informed. I think the date when I began was about the middle thirties of last century.—I am, dear Sirs, yours most respectfully,

'THOMAS WYLES.'

## A RISING IN EMBRYO.

By Captain P. R. C. GROVES.

FROM an ethnological point of view, Sierra Leone and that portion of its adjoining hinterland which is known as the Protectorate hold perhaps a unique position in the African continent. Sierra Leone was once the seaboard terminus of a much-used trade route from the famous Timbuctoo—a town which, by the way, still remains one of the principal emporiums of Central Africa in spite of the comic press and the 'limerick' craze. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the above-mentioned route was one of the principal channels through which the slave-trade drained the heart-blood of Africa. When Britain declared war on this infamous traffic, slave-caravans from the distant interior were seized on

arrival and the slaves set free on the spot where Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, now stands. The human cargoes of numerous slave-dhows captured up and down the coast were also liberated and set on shore here; and in 1787, and again in 1791, large parties of negro slaves from America were planted in Sierra Leone to form a colony. In addition to this flotsam and jetsam of the slave-trade, numerous tides of invasion swept outwards from time to time from the interior, and the receding of these tides left behind human débris, the remains of various decimated tribes.

Generally speaking, the accumulative result of these vicissitudes is that the colony is to-day, from an African point of view, the most cosmopolitan spot on that continent. A sort of pidgin-English is fast becoming the Esperanto of all the British possessions on the coast, but a perfect babel of strange African tongues may still be heard in Freetown. Although in many cases languages appear to have survived intermarriage, the mingling of the ideas, superstitions, and religions of various races has produced some strange results. It is, I think, a remarkable fact, for instance, that so uncivilised a community should possess a perfect mania for secret societies. These societies are extensive and apparently well organised—a fact for which I can account only on the supposition that they borrow their organisation from Freemasonry, which craft was probably introduced into Sierra Leone by the Foulahs, a race of Moslem Arabs who founded an extensive empire in the West Coast hinterland at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Chief among West African secret societies may be mentioned the 'Bundu' (a female society), the 'Porrah' (a male society), and two cannibal societies. These have various native names, which mean either leopard or crocodile. We have endeavoured for years to stamp them out, but they die hard; and I am informed that in the possession of the Church Missionary Society at Freetown is a crocodile skin which was used by the crocodile society within the last decade.

The *modus operandi* of these cannibal societies is simple, especially as the country chosen for operations is dense bush or forest. A man with the skin of a crocodile or a leopard bound on him lies in wait at some suitable spot in the vicinity of a bush-path at dusk, and when opportunity offers, pounces out on his victim, who is generally stabbed, although in some cases steel claws have been used. The murderer then carries his 'kill' to some out-of-the-way spot where the local 'lodge' has assembled for the feast. The principal difficulty in stamping out these diabolical societies has undoubtedly been the secret protection and assistance afforded by some local chief in whose hands the society is a power which enables him to terrorise and squeeze the country-side to his heart's content. In a dark bush-land country such as the greater part of Sierra Leone and its hinterland, where fetichism prevails and superstition is rife, it is only natural that the people should invest these secret societies with occult powers; and it is in this connection that the somewhat strange incident I am about to relate occurred.

A short time ago, while I was serving with a West African corps, the company to which I was attached was ordered up-country to a place called Mabanta. The company consisted of two officers (of whom I was the junior), an English colour-sergeant, and about a hundred and thirty blacks; and the station, which boasted a small fort overlooking the Mobolee River, also included a miniature village of huts for the men, and a couple of more pretentious huts for the officers and white non-commissioned officer. The men's huts were built round the four sides of a quadrangle, about one hundred yards square, which formed the parade-ground.

The station had not been garrisoned for some years, and we were fully occupied for several weeks in rebuilding and repairing huts, clearing roads through the bush, and in constructing a rifle-range. When at last we found time to investigate the sporting resources of the district, we found from numerous spoors that game was plentiful, but that the all-enveloping bush was so impenetrable that the chances of getting a shot at anything were very slight. For weeks we sallied out daily and tramped the tunnel-like bush-paths, but almost invariably with no result. Sometimes a fleeting shadow crossed the gloomy path ahead, but a snapshot in the uncertain light was seldom successful. We then turned our attention to fishing. The Mobolee, we found, was a limpid, rocky stream, with numerous deep pools; and these, after we discovered the right bait, yielded very good sport. Only those who have experienced the deadly monotony and dullness of a bush-station in West Africa can appreciate what a godsend that fishing was to us; for weeks we spent our leisure-hours—which were many—by the side of a certain pool, and the fun was often fast and furious. Then came the 'rains,' as the wet season is called down there. In twenty-four hours the river rose some ten feet, and from what the natives told us—and from other indications, such as water-marks on trees—we knew it would rise at least thirty more. It seemed that fishing would soon be impossible, as the river would inundate several hundreds of yards of bush, and the main stream would be unapproachable except in a frail dug-out canoe—far too unstable a craft to fish from. Necessity is the mother of invention. We decided to make a raft, anchor it to a large tree which grew on the banks, and reach it by paddling down a submerged bush-path in a canoe. At this stage we received a letter from a big chief named Brimasanda, who lived in a village across the river, about five miles from our station. The letter was written in fair English, and was delivered by Brimasanda's Creole secretary, who was also the author. It was to the effect that, now that the river had begun to rise and the water had grown muddy, the alligators—as crocodiles are invariably miscalled on the coast—would be numerous and dangerous; that fishing would be very unsafe; and that, as these creatures were bold and

voracious there, it would be advisable to warn the men not to go near the river, especially after dusk.

We told the Creole to convey our thanks to Brimasanda, but attached little importance to his communication, as we had not seen a single crocodile during several months. The warning to the men rather amused us, as we knew that, in spite of stringent orders and precautions, some of them were given to little freebooting forays across the river by night. After discussing the matter, we decided to convey the chief's message to the men, not because we believed in the numbers and ferocity of the crocodiles, but because we thought it might act as a deterrent to the nocturnal raids referred to. The men received the warning with broad grins, evidently regarding it as a piece of bluff on the part of Brimasanda, and closely connected with the mysterious disappearance of sundry fowls, bananas, yams, and other articles from that chief's village across the river.

We dismissed the incident from our minds, but it cropped up again a few days afterwards in the shape of a deputation from the men of the company. The deputation complained that Brimasanda had threatened that he would call up a 'debil alligator' to defend the passage of the river and protect him from robbery. We were naturally rather amused at the credulity of those who took such an obvious 'bluff' to heart; and Captain R., who was commandant, told them in effect to 'run away and play.'

Meanwhile the river had fallen as rapidly as it had risen, and we spent much time at our favourite pool, and made the most of what we knew could only be a temporary respite. As it turned out, those few days ended our fishing in the Mobolee. During that period a rather peculiar incident occurred, which proved very significant in the light of after events. Captain R. had played a big fish for about half-an-hour. After repeated rushes, which grew gradually weaker and weaker, it was at last obviously nearing complete exhaustion. Its great green back showed above the water as he pulled it in, and I stood waiting with the gaff, when suddenly there was a swirl, and R.'s winch shrieked and sang as the line ran out irresistibly for about twenty yards. We were both amazed at this extraordinary demonstration of vitality; but the probable solution never occurred to our minds—namely, that the exhausted fish had been taken by a crocodile. After this violent dash the fish appeared to sulk at the bottom, and nothing we could do would move it. Finally we concluded that it had most probably got away and left the cast entangled in some submerged bush or embedded in the bottom. We were fishing across a shallow flat over which the water had only lately risen, and knew that the total depth was nowhere more than five or six feet. Our stock of hooks and casts had nearly run out, and this was our last salmon-cast. After weighing these considerations, R. decided to go in and get it. Strange to say, neither of us realised the danger of this proceeding; we had frequently waded in the river, and, if we thought of crocodiles at all, felt ourselves quite safe in the shallows near the shore. We did not know then, as we learnt afterwards, that a crocodile always attacks in the shallows, where he can stalk his victim under cover of the mud at the bottom, which also gives him a purchase for his spring. I firmly believe, in the light of subsequent events, that R.'s white skin alone saved him on that occasion from a horrible death. R. stripped, waded in, swam out, and dived repeatedly, but was unable to reach the cast owing to a submerged bush. Then, at his suggestion, I went up-stream to where a canoe was tied, and brought it down to the spot. He clambered in, and began prodding about with a long pole which was used for punting, in the hope that he might be able to stir up the fish if it was still on the hook and sulking at the bottom. The effect was magical: there was a mighty swirl, and the reel shrieked again as another fifty yards of line ran out. This time the fish (probably inside a crocodile) was in deep water; and after many vain attempts to stir it up again, we finally gave up, and as dusk was approaching, pulled the line until it broke, and returned home mournfully in the dark.

Next day I took a party of about twenty men down to the river to cut logs to construct the proposed fishing-raft. After several hours' work, a number of suitable logs had been collected by the river-side. The heat in the bush had been of the Turkish bath variety, and as the men were streaming with perspiration, I suggested that they should bathe before returning to camp. The majority fell in with the proposal with alacrity, and were soon splashing about in the shallows at the very spot where the fishing incident of the previous day had occurred. One or two of the men seemed a little afraid to go in, but the others laughed at them; and I, to my eternal regret, encouraged them by mentioning that R. had been in at the very same spot on the previous day, and had gone out nearly to the edge of the shallows. The men seemed to enjoy themselves immensely, shouting and splashing like a party of schoolboys, and were loath to come out. However, after they had been in for about half-an-hour, and I found it was past one o'clock, I gave the order to 'fall in,' and walked away a few yards to where my sun-umbrella lay. As I stooped to pick it up I heard a short, gurgling scream, and turned in time to see the yellow soles of two feet disappear in a swirl; while, at the same instant, nineteen men, with yells of horror, rushed out of the water in a cloud of spray. The tragedy was over almost before I had realised it; the unfortunate man was taken with a lightning snap, as a fish takes a bait. The crocodile had probably crept to striking distance, under cover of the muddy water, and awaited an opportunity. When one of the men ventured out too far, and the strange white object on the bank—namely, myself—retired, that opportunity came. The appalling suddenness of the catastrophe was staggering; it seemed incredible

that death had just snatched a fellow-being from before my very eyes and in the broad light of day. It seemed impossible to realise that nothing could be done, although the fact was only too obvious. The man had been near the edge of the deep water, and had been carried out into the broad yellow torrent.

While I was still scanning the surface of the river for some half-expected sign, my attention was suddenly attracted by the survivors. They had been dancing up and down the bank, yelling like a party of madmen; but now, as if by common consent, they came together, and started off in a body in the direction of the nearest village, with the intention, as I somehow realised, of setting it on fire and attacking it. The reason? They believed that the crocodile which had just taken their comrade was a witch-crocodile, or, as they put it, 'alligator debil;' that, in short, Chief Brimasanda had carried out his threat. Their first thoughts, therefore, were of revenge! In a land of thatched huts a match is a most effective and handy weapon; a village in flames is a village in confusion, and therefore an easy prey for an attacking party. I think I must have realised their intention through seeing several of the party produce match-boxes as they started off. I called on them repeatedly to halt, but no notice was taken. Finally, in desperation, I made for the man whom I judged to be the ringleader, threw him to the ground, and sat on him.

From this point of vantage I addressed the others. I pointed out briefly that Brimasanda could put twenty thousand warriors in the field, and that the absurd course they proposed to take would bring overwhelming numbers upon us before we had time to prepare. Our proper course was to go back to camp quietly, when perhaps Captain R. would take up the matter and order the whole company out. The subterfuge was a success; from their standpoint, I was taking a very sensible view of matters, as, instead of pooh-poohing the asserted complicity of Brimasanda, I apparently believed in it. Much to my relief, they returned to headquarters with me quietly, and even exchanged the usual greetings with several villagers we met *en route*.

On arriving I sought out R. and explained what had happened. Almost at the same moment a tremendous uproar from the men's lines told of the fact that the news had spread to the garrison. Soon after the colour-sergeant came over, surrounded by an excited crowd, who demanded ammunition, and within ten minutes of my arrival the whole garrison was jabbering excitedly outside our hut. The latent savage in the West African soldier had been stirred, and the outlook was becoming more serious every moment. We knew that if the men took the law into their own hands and raided Brimasanda's territory, reprisals on a large scale would inevitably result; and if once the torch of war was lit, and carried through a portion of the country, it was impossible to say to what extent the conflagration would spread. No element seemed lacking to ensure a very considerable rising.

That the rising was averted was due to the masterly and tactful handling of the situation by R. He called a bugler and ordered him to go to the parade-ground and sound the 'Fall in.' To our great satisfaction, the men obeyed the call with alacrity; they perhaps expected to be led forth against Brimasanda's nearest village at once. When we arrived on the ground, there was, contrary to custom, much excited jabbering in the ranks; but the colour-sergeant reported that every man was present, and when, on our approach, he called the parade to attention the order was well carried out. When R. stepped forward to speak there was silence, save for the wailing of the women in the surrounding huts. He began by calling on one of the black non-commissioned officers, who was the son of a chief, and therefore a man of standing, to step forward and explain to him, on behalf of the men, what their grievance was and what they wanted. The man stepped forward and spoke excitedly and at some length, the gist of his speech being that Brimasanda was well known to be the head of an alligator society, of which many neighbouring chiefs were members; that he (Brimasanda) had threatened that he would place a 'debil alligator' to guard the river and prevent any member of the garrison from crossing; that he had gone even beyond his threat, and had caused one of their comrades to be eaten; and that they now desired ammunition in order to attack Brimasanda's nearest village to avenge themselves. The men applauded the speaker at intervals with exclamations of approval.

When the non-commissioned officer had finished, R. asked if there was any other man who had anything to say on the matter. Several promptly stepped forward, and R. heard them in turn. Then he himself made a speech. It was in the pidgin-English of the coast, and lasted over half-an-hour; but I always look back upon it as a masterpiece of oratory. In brief, it was to the effect that what they had said only amplified and supported what I had already told him; that in other circumstances he could never have credited such infamous conduct; but, at the same time, did they imagine for a moment that he was the sort of man who would permit them to take the law into their own hands? Was it not obvious to any man in his sober senses that one hundred and thirty men could not fight twenty thousand? They were to understand distinctly that he would do nothing in a hurry. The matter would be thrashed out; Brimasanda and the other accused chiefs would be sent for and given a fair hearing, in accordance with the customs of the white man. Finally, when the guilty parties were discovered, justice would be done and adequate punishment meted out. A 'palaver' would be held in two days' time, which all the chiefs in the district would be required to attend. He called for volunteers to act as runners to carry summonses to the various chiefs; but in the meantime, in order

to avoid any possibility of friction, no other men were to set foot outside the camp.

When R. finished his speech we had been on parade for nearly two hours, during the whole of which time the men had been standing to attention, any tendency to relapse into a less rigid position having been sternly checked by the colour-sergeant. R.'s tactics succeeded admirably. When the men had assembled on parade they were in a state of excitement and anger which threatened open mutiny; when the parade was dismissed the storm had passed, and the men walked off quietly to their huts, tired, and eager for the evening meal awaiting them. That night runners went out in all directions to summon the chiefs to the 'palaver.'

The arrival of the chiefs with their followers was quite an interesting sight; they all apparently considered it a state occasion, and did the thing in their best style. Brimasanda, as paramount chief, arrived last. His retinue was really imposing, and quite put the others in the shade. He was preceded by a sort of native band, consisting chiefly of tom-toms of various sizes. The din from these was appalling, and announced his approach while he was still quite a mile away. He himself was carried, on the heads of four men, in an elaborately decorated hammock, surmounted by a gay-coloured cloth canopy; a string of similar, though less gorgeous, hammocks, containing court dignitaries and their wives, followed in the rear. Brimasanda was a striking figure—a big man, with the stately carriage of an Arab, which was accentuated by a splendid scarlet gown; in his right hand he carried an immense spear with a burnished steel head. When his followers had squatted down with the others on the parade-ground, the company was marched on, and sat down opposite them, and the 'palaver' began.

R. led off with a brief speech, in which he explained the situation, Brimasanda's secretary acting as interpreter. Brimasanda spoke next. He possessed a remarkably deep and resonant voice, and was evidently a born orator, as his lengthy address was attentively listened to, and at the close there were signs of appreciation and applause even from some of our men. Then came innumerable speeches by various chiefs and representatives on both sides. Finally, after a sitting lasting several hours, the 'palaver' was 'set,' as they say on the coast; in other words, a decision was arrived at. The Creole secretary, who had been educated in the mission school at Freetown, and who was nothing if not up to date, would probably have written up the minutes of the meeting thus:

'That, in the opinion of the meeting, a secret alligator society undoubtedly existed in the neighbourhood; that a certain native soldier had been foully murdered by this society; that it had been conclusively proved that no one present was guilty of or implicated in the murder, or in any way connected with the said alligator society. Finally, the meeting unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that medicine-men should be employed to "scent out" the members of the above-mentioned society, the culprits to be handed over to the white captain to be dealt with as he thought fit. The proposals of Chief A. to the effect that the said culprits should be burnt alive, of Chief B. that they should be thrown to the alligators, and of Chief C. that they should be bound down in an ant-drive were rejected by a small majority, and the above resolution at length carried unanimously.'

The 'palaver' lasted several hours, and, needless to say, we were very thankful when at length it came to an end. The result, we both agreed, was most satisfactory; verbosity and action seldom go hand-in-hand; every man had had his say, and tranquillity had been restored.

A fortnight passed. We fondly imagined ourselves out of the wood, and, in fact, had almost dismissed the affair from our minds, when we received another polite note from Brimasanda. It was to the effect that he had secured a number of persons of both sexes who had been scented out by the medicine-men as 'alligator people,' and he now proposed to send them over to us for punishment! This was an extremely unpleasant and totally unexpected issue, and placed us once more on the horns of a dilemma. We had acquiesced in the decision arrived at at the big 'palaver' a fortnight before—namely, to deal with the malefactors if they were discovered—because it seemed an easy way out of the difficulty, and we never dreamt that any so-called 'alligator people' would be discovered. Now we found ourselves confronted with a choice of two evils: either to repudiate the bargain, which was to break faith with all concerned; or to undertake the punishment of a number of people who were most probably innocent, and had simply been picked out by the wily chief as 'undesirables.' There was also every likelihood of renewed trouble among the men if the alleged murderers of their comrade were brought into camp. We thought of communicating with the district commissioner, but found on inquiry that he was away on a visit to a remote part of the country. Happily for us, he came back unexpectedly; and we were only too pleased to put the knotty problem in his hands. I never learnt exactly how he dealt with the case, as we left for the coast not long afterwards; but I believe he sent the unfortunate suspects out of the district for some months.

Last summer I visited the Naval and Military Tournament at Olympia in London, and found that one of the principal items on the programme was an exhibition of bush-fighting by a detachment of the very West African corps to which I was attached when the above incident occurred. I walked through to the rear part of the building, and came face to face with a West African witch-doctor, in full and gruesome 'war-paint,' chatting affably in broken English to a Bluejacket. I glanced at the face under the weird head-gear, and recognised, much to my surprise, the very man who had led the party which started to burn the village of Mabanta, and whom I had been obliged to collar and sit on. He

caught sight of me, started with surprise, and ran forward eagerly, frankly delighted to see me again. He explained shamefacedly that he was dressed up to take part in the performance, but that he came on later in his uniform. After a few minutes he ran off, and brought forward several other men I knew and certainly had never expected to see again. Their views on London, and the extent of their comprehension of our civilisation, were distinctly interesting and sometimes very amusing; but the conversation soon veered round to West Africa, to the old station on the Mobolee River, and thus finally to the alligator incident.

'Now,' I said, turning to the man I had first met, 'you surely don't believe, now that you have seen London, that Momo Kamara was taken by a "debil alligator" that day?'

He looked dubious for a moment, and his reply, when it came, was rather unexpected. 'Plentee debil lib dis country too, sah,' he said.

I learnt afterwards from the sergeant-major, who came up just then, that he was referring to a kinematograph show he had seen at the Coliseum. One can quite understand that the shadowy figures which move in the bright light on the screen must appear supernatural to a savage; but taking the remark in a more literal sense—well, perhaps he was not so very far out after all.

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# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### NON-ALCOHOLIC FRUIT-WINES.

N ideal non-alcoholic drink of distinct nutritious value is being made in Switzerland, where an extensive plant is engaged in the preparation of what may be termed non-alcoholic champagne and other unfermented fruit-wines, in their purest state, no deleterious substances being added for colouring, preserving, or any other purposes. The process by which the juices are preserved indefinitely in their natural condition and free from alcohol is by sterilisation. The fruit is brought from the fields, cleaned, and then dumped into huge electric presses each capable of holding five tons of fruit. Here the mass is pulped, and all the liquid is drawn off into a specially constructed sterilising apparatus, where, *in vacuo*, the juice is raised to a temperature of one hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit, and maintained thereat for half-an-hour. The result of this treatment is that all the organisms which set up fermentation and produce the fungi which convert the fruit-sugar into alcohol are completely destroyed. After being allowed to stand for a time, so that all sediment may subside, the wine is filtered and bottled, being subjected to a final sterilisation so as to destroy all lurking possibilities of fermentation in the bottle. To these juices no additions either of water or anything else are made, and during the whole process of manufacture the product is not touched by hand. The wines thus obtained are full-bodied, rich in proteid, and, as analysis has shown, there is not the slightest trace of alcohol or antiseptics. The beverages are inexpensive, and their variety enables the fancies of every palate to be satisfied. For tropical countries, where alcoholic beverages are so prejudicial to health, these drinks are of inestimable value, as experience in India has exemplified. Taken with aerated water or impregnated with a prana sparklet, they constitute a sparkling, refreshing, and nourishing drink.

### AN INVENTORS' EXHIBITION.

An example which might advantageously be followed in this country is the initiative displayed by the Royal Central Board of Trade at Stuttgart. The German Government, realising that national commercial supremacy is to a great degree inseparably associated with inventive enterprise, and that many an invention is lost because the inventor does not possess the wherewithal to exploit his idea and cannot enlist the attention of the capitalist, has decided to act as the go-between. An exhibition is to be held in which only inventions patented or in process of being patented within the empire will be displayed, and the attention of manufacturing and financial circles will be specially drawn to such ideas as should be commercially developed. In this manner the poor inventor who has spent his little all in protecting his pet idea will be brought directly and inexpensively before those who have the facilities for working the outcome of his ingenuity. At the same time he will be completely protected against the unscrupulous patent expert or heartless company promoter who profits by the ignorance or helplessness of such contributors to a commercial nation's prosperity.

### A NOVEL ELECTRIC WALL-PLUG.

Electric-light users who have wall-plug fittings realise the disadvantages and liability to unpleasant shocks incidental to the ordinary wall-plug. The flexible wire to the plug-pins passes through the front of the plug, and must come into contact with the user's hands. The cord is liable to fray and wear at the point where it enters the plug, and a short circuit is not an infrequent occurrence. To remedy this serious drawback there has been devised a novel plug which affords the user complete protection. The flexible wire enters the plug at the side, the front face carries a circular disc or shield of ample dimensions to protect the hand, and there is a short handle by means of which the plug is inserted and withdrawn. The wire is not brought

into touch with the hand at all, and should a short circuit ensue the fingers do not suffer. It is a natty and convenient device which should be adopted by all users of electric light who use such fittings. Ladies especially will appreciate its distinct advantages.

### STOVAINE, THE NEW ANÆSTHETIC.

Some months ago it was announced that Professor Jonnesco, of Bucharest, had successfully used in surgical operations a recently discovered anæsthetic, the remarkable property of which was that it rendered the patient insensible to pain without depriving him of consciousness. This new weapon of the surgeon, called stovaine, created considerable interest in the medical world, and its development was keenly followed. Professor Jonnesco carried out over seven hundred successful operations on the Continent, and at last came to London to demonstrate its remarkable possibilities and advantages over both chloroform and ether. The process, it may be pointed out, consists of hypodermically injecting a solution of stovaine and strychnia into the spinal canal, the effect being the temporary numbing of the nerves, so that the patient has no sense of feeling. Medical opinion is greatly divided as to its advantages in comparison with the more generally adopted anæsthetics. It is recognised that success to a great extent depends upon the skill and methods of the surgeon, the nervous temperament of the patient, and the character of the operation. For instance, the necessity of the syringe-needle being absolutely sterile is obvious, for should any foreign matter or organism enter the spinal canal thereby the consequences to the patient would be extremely serious. For abdominal operations it has the property of rendering the muscles of the abdomen perfectly flaccid, and thus facilitating the actions of the surgeon without affecting respiration in any way. Whether or not it is advisable for a patient to have his sense of feeling temporarily killed and yet be cognisant of the thousand and one little details attending an operation, and be a helpless listener to what is being said, is a point upon which medical opinion is very sharply divided.

### DAMP-PROOF FOOTWEAR.

An English inventor has conceived an ingenious idea for providing against damp footwear. Between the inner and outer soles is inserted a layer of rubber the full width of the sole, and tightly sewn thereto so as to render the whole solid. The point of such an arrangement is that although the sole may be thoroughly saturated with water, the moisture cannot be drawn through the leather by the heat of the foot within, as the rubber insulator arrests its progress. In order, however, to prevent the wet from forcing its way into the boot where the upper joins the sole—a vulnerable point of attack—a rubber feather is introduced, connecting with the sheet of rubber in the sole itself, and is continued for a short distance up the sides of the upper, being gradually tapered off so as to offer no obstruction to the foot. Within the boot—that is to say, the part of the sole encased by the upper—a layer of rubbered canvas is inserted between the inner sole and the rubber sheet beneath. The ingenuity of this simple idea, it will be seen, completely guards the foot against the entrance of water, and, moreover, the insulator is so perfect that it will outlast the boot itself. Another distinct advantage is also secured. The introduction of the rubber and canvas backing imparts a springiness and resiliency that is entirely lacking in the ordinary boot, and there is a complete absence of the disconcerting squeak in walking. The boot, being scientifically constructed, adequately coincides with the requirements of hygienic footwear, and, unlike many similar ideas, does not detract from smart appearance.

### A THOUSAND-DAY CLOCK.

Some months ago there appeared a horological novelty, the feature of which was the absence of the greater part of the mechanism incidental to ordinary timepieces, and the elimination of winding operations. The inventor's ingenuity has aroused considerable interest, including that of His Majesty the King. Weights and springs were displaced by a small dry battery such as one can purchase anywhere for a shilling or eighteenpence. Compared with the ordinary clock, its appearance at first is somewhat novel, especially in the skeleton types, where the familiar swinging pendulum is replaced by an oscillating wheel, the movement of which is controlled by regular intermittent magnetisation and demagnetisation action which alternately pulls the wheel round and then releases it so that it can swing back again, this cycle of operations continuing until the electric energy of the battery is exhausted. The oscillation is so timed as to occupy exactly a second each way, and once the regulation is effected the clock will go with unfailing accuracy. The average life of the battery employed is about a thousand days, and during this period the clock requires no attention whatever. Vibration does not affect its working, and it can be placed upside-down without any ill effects. The clock has been designed in a variety of attractive styles, with the battery concealed in the bed-plate or the pedestal, and has proved exceedingly popular. A few years ago the appearance of a clock which could run for four hundred days without winding created great surprise; but the evolution of a timepiece capable of running some three years without winding is a remarkable achievement of horological ingenuity.

### AN INDESTRUCTIBLE GARDEN-LABEL.

For years there has been diligent search for something new in the form of a garden-label which would be indestructible, whose inscription would be indelible, and which would be incapable of inflicting any injuries upon the trees from galvanic action such as attends the use of the

ordinary zinc label. Those who desire to avoid confusion in the names of roses, fruits, and so forth will consequently welcome the new porcelain tally that has recently been patented, and its innumerable advantages will compel interest. The tallies are made in various styles, according to requirements, in white porcelain, and are of substantial thickness, so that they cannot be readily broken, yet light, neat, small, and compact. It was found somewhat difficult to secure a porcelain body capable of withstanding all atmospheric variations, especially severe frost, and ordinary garden usage, but in this quest the inventors have proved completely successful. The fact that the inscription is absolutely indelible is the feature that will most appeal to the gardener, be he amateur or professional. The names are boldly printed beneath the glaze, and as the porcelain is fired at a very high temperature, chipping and cracking of the protective skin is impossible, and the name will preserve its pristine appearance indefinitely. The inscription is full, being, for instance, in the case of a hybrid perpetual rose, 'Sir Rowland Hill, H.P.' Another advantage is that the tally is always clean, and every shower of rain washes off any soil that may have become attached. Between eight hundred and one thousand names of roses, including all in the catalogue of the National Rose Society, have been prepared in this type of label; stocks of the leading fruit-trees, sweet-peas, and so forth have also been taken in hand, and the scheme is being gradually extended throughout the whole range of garden produce. The tree-tallies are pierced at one end with a small hole for attachment to the tree, and for this the inventors suggest a specially annealed aluminium wire they have secured, which is pliable, rustless, and will not cut the plants. Other labels for insertion in the ground or in pots are provided with a suitable end for this purpose. The tests that have been carried out prove that these labels are fully capable of withstanding the vagaries of the English climate, and the garden-lover will realise that they are the greatest advance in title-tallies that has yet been achieved. Moreover, special attention has been devoted to the question of price, it being realised that indestructibility, indelibility, and inexpensiveness are of equal importance.

### PRESERVING BODILY VITALITY.

While Professor Metchnikoff is advocating principles for lengthening the span of life, another scientist in the same field, Dr Doyen, is advancing means of retarding senile decay, or, in other words, of maintaining the human machine in its state of full activity during old age. It may be pointed out that this latest development is an off-shoot of the Metchnikoff theory—that is, the prevention of the self-poisoning, as it may be termed, of the body, and the continual warfare that is being waged between the white corpuscles of the blood and the harmful microbes which gain an entry into the system. For the preservation of vitality Dr Doyen uses therapeutic substances derived from ferments which possess the remarkable property of producing white corpuscles, so that the armies of the defenders in the body are overwhelmingly increased to resist the attacks of the poisoning invaders. This new energy-preserving medium he describes as mycolysine, and it is stated to be most energetic in its action, for it seizes upon and destroys the dangerous organisms before they can firmly establish themselves and thus extend infection. The learned scientist also states that owing to the quality mycolysine possesses of propagating the white corpuscles it is an excellent remedy for many of the maladies which attack the digestive and respiratory organs, such as bronchitis, colds, and so forth, and is even useful in assisting the body to combat such fell epidemical diseases as diphtheria by reinforcing the white corpuscle battalions. Though Dr Doyen does not claim that his treatment will lengthen life, as does Professor Metchnikoff, he maintains that it will lengthen the span of its effectiveness by preserving vitality. By reducing the period of inactivity described as old age it may be claimed as being practically a means of lengthening life, though not in the same way as the sour-milk treatment advocated by his illustrious brother scientist.

### MAKING CEMENT FROM BLAST-FURNACE SLAG.

Some months ago we drew attention to the activity in applied chemistry circles in the production of cement from the waste products of blast-furnaces represented by the slag. Many scientists have concentrated their energies upon the subject, and this country possesses the first complete practical works for the commercial utilisation of the idea. This factory is in Lanarkshire, and the process, invented by an eminent scientist, Dr Collescu, is being exploited by the Coltness Iron Company, who have vast quantities of the raw material immediately available. The slag is poured in its hot, liquid state from the ladles on to a rapidly revolving drum, and in so doing a solution of Epsom salts is sprayed upon the mass, which granulates the slag. The material is then taken up and deposited in the clinker-house, where it is left for several days. The clinker, as it is called, is then finely ground, after which the product is ready for the market. The process is very simple, and the cement is stated to be ideal, and quite as good as the ordinary Portland cement. The successful commercial exploitation of this process should prove of material value. Not only will it solve a burning problem in the vicinity of steelworks as to what to do with the waste slag, but it will tend towards cement manufacture being closely allied with iron production, and a new and additional source of revenue will be brought to the iron industry.

### A NEW ARTISTIC 'RUSTIC' FACING-BRICK.

Architects are proverbially fastidious, and rightly so, in all that concerns the artistic treatment of brick-faced buildings. For this reason great interest will

be centred in a recent production known as the 'ravenhead rustic.' This brick was first produced in response to a request of Professor Reilly, of Liverpool University, and therein that extreme of colour which is anathema to the architect is successfully avoided. In this material the smooth face is cut off, in which process, owing to special arrangements, a vibrating action is given, which causes thin, uneven lines to form an attractive, wavy, rough surface. When seen in the mass from a short distance, the colour-effects are distinctly artistic, there being an entire absence of any harshness in blending or overwhelming predominance of any one tone, while from a distance it has all the vraisemblance of well-preserved old brickwork. The brick has evidently caught the fancy of those responsible for designing buildings, for several important large undertakings in the north and centre of England are being faced therewith.

### PULQUE.

What is pulque? To this question it may without exaggeration be safely affirmed that not one person in a thousand could give a satisfactory answer, and yet in the country of its production, Mexico, it is as well known as beer is in our own. This refreshing and invigorating beverage is the fermented sap of an agave or American aloe, the *maguey* or century-plant of Mexico, a plant not unlike a kind of cactus, though it is neither a cactus nor an aloe. It grows to a height of from eight to twelve feet, and is cultivated principally for its sap. When the plant is about to bloom the flower-stalk is cut away and a deep excavation is made at its base, from which the sap is drawn daily for some two months; after which the plant dies down to the ground, making way for a new shoot, which requires several years to reach productiveness. The pulque or fermented sap has a somewhat milky appearance, and is both a food and a drink beverage, with a not unpleasant flavour. Though pulque (which should be pronounced *pool'kay*) is not intoxicating save in large quantities, a strong intoxicating spirit is distilled from it. Pulque is well known as a remedial agent, and its somewhat unique value lies in the fact that in kidney-troubles, such as dropsy, Bright's disease, &c., its use has been found to be very beneficial. Pulque is also said to be one of the few known substances that unite with and increase the volume of the gastric juice for the digestion and assimilation of food. These results have within recent years come more prominently under the notice of our own medical faculty, with the result that the consumption of pulque shows a considerable increase in this country.

### VENTILATING GAS-SUNBURNER.

A form of incandescent gas-burner has been evolved in Glasgow which is filling a rather unique position, being admirably adapted for halls, churches, theatres, &c., where it is desirable to control the lighting from a distance. It is designed to supersede the old style of gas circles or pendants which were suspended from roofs of large buildings, and which were fitted with a number of flat-flame jets. The new device is comparatively simple, being somewhat on the same lines as the old form of pendant, and having twenty-eight separate arms projecting from the centre pipe which is suspended from the roof. In each arm an inverted incandescent burner with mantle is fitted, while an enamelled reflector is placed at a convenient distance above. A guard underneath prevents anything falling from the burner on to those who may be below. An important feature of the arrangement is that the fitting is so made that the current of hot air caused by the burners passes up the ventilating shafts which are connected to the fitting, thus carrying off the products of combustion as well as materially assisting in the ventilation of the hall. An ingeniously arranged gas-tight cup-joint allows the whole fitting to be lifted up and then lowered to the body of the hall, thus entirely doing away with the use of dangerous and costly scaffolding. The burner has a lighting capacity of from fifteen to sixteen hundred candles, and only uses (at the Glasgow rate of two shillings per thousand cubic feet) about twopence worth of gas per hour. In some cases the burner has actually displaced pendants which unitedly gave not much more than half the illuminating power, and consumed about one shilling and tenpence worth of gas per hour. There is an entire absence of shadow with the new appliance; and as it is fitted with pilot or flash lights, it can easily be controlled from any convenient position in the hall, and is very convenient for kinematograph shows, &c. The capital cost is only ten guineas for the larger size, and thirty shillings less for the smaller.

### MIGRATION OF SEALS.

The migration of birds was discussed in these pages by Mr Harry F. Witherby in 1902, and last year the Hon. Gladys Graham Murray wrote upon 'Birds as Travellers.' Fresh examples are continually turning up, as, for instance, that of the stork shot in Natal with a brass ring round its neck bearing the name and address of a professor in Budapest. The migration of seals is not less remarkable. Last autumn it was reported from British Columbia that seals bearing the brand of the United States Government burnt into the skin of the animals at the United States branding-post on St Paul's Islands, in the Behring Sea, had been taken by sealers off the Falkland Islands. Captain Nicholas Brown, formerly a seal-hunter on the coast of British Columbia, wrote from the Falkland Islands stating that among his catch in Antarctic waters had been seals whose brands showed that they must have migrated from the Arctic Ocean to the waters surrounding the South Pole.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# WHEN WINTER CAME TO GREEN'S FERRY.

By Byron E. Cooney.

## CHAPTER I.

THE old man religiously watered and weeded the verbena and phlox beds every evening except Sundays. He was the Mayor of Green's Ferry; but he was his own gardener, for to him legitimate labour was a wholesome thing, and Wallace Buchanan was no shirker. And where could such verbenas, such phlox, and such hedges be found as at Lodgewinna? Even visitors from Ottawa had stopped to admire them—they who had their Parliament Gardens to boast of. Already the maples were turning scarlet and the Virginia creepers had changed their green for golden; but, sheltered as they were by the close-cropped cedar hedges, frost had not yet blighted the hardy annuals.

'Guid-evenin', Mister Buchanan.'

Mr Buchanan pulled a tiny pig-weed out of the flower-bed and flung it on the gravelled walk before looking up.

'Good-evenin', Donald.'

It was one of the accepted social conditions of Green's Ferry that the Mayor should be called Mister and the groceryman Donald.

'D'ye ken will it freeze the nicht?'

'It's long overdue, Donald; and when the frost does come it's ma posies will be sufferin'. What's the news o' the town? I'm so busy wi' the water-franchise it's little time I have for speirin'.'

'The campers are a' gane hame.'

'All, did you say, Donald?'

'A' but the Van Peldts. Percy Van Peldt's in nae hurry. He says now he'll stay for the deer-huntin'.'

'They're nice people, are the Van Peldts,' said the Mayor decidedly.

'They are that!—they are that! An' it's guid money they have too. Faith! it's little gowd Green's Ferry saw till the Van Peldts cam' frae New York to throw it amang us like sawdust.'

'I'll warrant you got your share o' it, Donald?'

'Lord forbid I'll be graspin', Mister Buchanan; but Donald MacPherson nor none o' his kith are wastrels. Every little mak's a muckle, ye ken. I'll be sellin' next week.'

'No' to the Greens?'

'Ay.'

'Donald, how c'u'd ye?' the old man almost appealed.

'Weel, ma title's no' clear, an' I'm doublin' ma money; an' if you're wise, Mister Buchanan, you'll tak' Green's offer an' sell. Your title's nae better than mine, an' they'll be showin' ye that in the coort some day. There's a meetin' o' the guild at the kirk. Guid-nicht.'

'Good-night.'

Wallace Buchanan ground the pig-weed savagely under his heel as he walked to the rustic seat beneath the clematis vines. So MacPherson had sold his homestead on the water-front to the Greens, as Barclay and MacTavish and a dozen others had done during the summer. Had they no pride in the homes that had reared them that they must sell their hearthstones? Day by day he had watched them raze the house of Barclay to the ground; yesterday they had begun on MacTavish's; and now MacPherson, whose land adjoined his, was about to sell to the millionaire lumberman, whose dream it was to pile his wares from the mill to the city dock. The Mayor of Green's Ferry rested his chin on his hands and gazed down at the lake, where a floating village of boat-houses lay motionless on the glassy surface.

A great tow-boat rode majestically at anchor, and the smoke from its funnels stretched like a banner to the Quebec side. A dozen Frenchmen in a great red *bonne* sang a 'Come-all-ye,' and the four pairs of oars kept time to their magnificent voices. From the mouth of Clyde Creek an Indian in a solitary birch-bark canoe shot silently forth to throw his night-line in some distant bay. From every direction skiffs were returning, tired from the rompings


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of the day. Subdued murmurs of evening drifted inland from over the water. Peace seemed to reign everywhere but in the heart of the lonely old Scot.

He was no sentimentalist, he told himself; but when his eyes turned landward to a group of pines, where white marbles marked the graves of Hector, of Gawain, and of Kenneth, his three sons, and of Maddie, his wife, and where a little plot was reserved in which he would lie some day, he clenched his teeth.

'Never,' he vowed—'never would the Greens pile their lathes and shingles on the consecrated ground!' And the Greens had acted fair with him—in justice to them, they had. They had offered him twice the value of the land; and now that he still refused, they had threatened him with a flaw in his title and a legal suit, which would give them possession of the land they claimed as rightly belonging to them.

Green's Ferry had an unexplainable charm for the Van Peldts. Of the dozen resorts haunted by the new-rich cult, or desecrated by the breath of commercial atmosphere, they had grown gradually weary, and they discovered Green's Ferry, glorious in the grandeur of a Canadian autumn, and very much as God had made it. Percy said he would stay for the deer-hunting, and there were no opposing voices. His mother, a quiet old lady, had six weeks to spare before leaving for Europe, and the opening of the New York season did not interest her in the least. Uncle Todd had found some specimens of nodular barite in the Laurentine Mountains, and would be content to hunt for more until the snow fell. So the storm-shutters were put on the house at Cromarty Head, the house the Van Peldts called a cottage and the villagers called a mansion.

Three-fourths of the population had left the city. They were mostly Government officials and their families who came from Ottawa to spend the summer months at Green's Ferry, where the river widens into Lake Lomond, one of the series of landlocked lakes of the Upper Ottawa, ideal for fishing, boating, and seclusion. The people here were new people to Percy Van Peldt, types he never knew were in existence. They had all the American cordiality, yet all the Old World dignity. Van Peldt was no student of conditions sociological, yet the people puzzled him. He had considered Maddie Buchanan a provincial maiden, and had found by gentle intimation that he was mistaken. She accepted his attentions with the rare grace of social experience, corrected his geography, smiled indulgently at the sadness of his attempted quotations, and told him the part the locality bore in the history of the nation.

He had played with millions almost from his boyhood, and was developing into a shrewd financier when he tired of the game of speculation. Society had been a fad until the futility of its objectless competition dawned on him; an unsuccessful love-affair with a woman several years his senior, which failed only because he had no title in addition to his wealth, occupied a year of his life, and made him a cynic for six months. Now he had returned to the primitive period of boyish enjoyment of everything in life, and he played golf or trolled for pike with all the enthusiasm of sixteen.

But somehow the people here were not impressed with his monster parade of wealth. His yachts, his dogs, his horses, and his men-servants they noted, but they seemed to value quality more. Here, on the very edge of the world, on the fringe of civilisation, where from the crest of the Laurentines, a few miles away, the unbroken timber-belt stretched to Hudson Bay, he found a race of people, quiet, educated, and cultured, and taking no odds from the great boasting world without.

It worried Van Peldt to find Douglas Craig Douglas so much with Maddie, for the man, himself, was something of a surprise. The Queen's Counsel and captain of the Strathmore Guards was a good man to look at in any country. He thought it all very strange—strange that these people could interest him even as the Laurentine's crystals of selenite interested his studious uncle Todd. Every one was leaving Green's Ferry; but he did not care—he was waiting for the deer-stalking.

To Wallace Buchanan fate had left nothing but Maddie and Lodgewinna. The two men were thinking, as she ran down to the golf-links in the crisp air of a November morning, what more could man want? She threw her cape to Percy as though he had been a lackey, and Douglas frowned. Mentally the men sparred for favours even such as that. She caught Van Peldt's eye admiring her costume, for he had the eye of an artist, and could not but appreciate the harmonious blending of the plaid.

'The Buchanan plaid—mine by right of birth,' she said proudly, and the game began.

Douglas Craig Douglas had told Maddie Buchanan the story of his love in no outburst of emotion. It had been unfolded to her in a thousand golden days of blissful association. It had been breathed to her in the message of a bunch of wild violets, and sung to her in his ballad in the parlour of Lodgewinna; she recognised it in the tone of his voice, the touch of his hand, and the look in his kindly eyes, which lighted to their full fire at the sight of her. He had a well-balanced mind, with an intelligent grasp of his emotions, but extravagantly learned, and lazy with the procrastination of the optimist.

The advent of the Van Peldts boded Douglas no good. He noted the girl's recent preference for the society of Percy, but his well-trained tongue gave no sign of the distress of his mind. He weighed sadly his personality against the wealth and attractions of Van Peldt, but his balance was not the balance of Maddie Buchanan. When the game was over he stepped into his birch-bark canoe.

Such lonely excursions were becoming more frequent. Van Peldt held Maddie's cape, absently watching the flight of a flock of waterfowl; the *garçon* laboured up the terrace with the clubs; and Maddie, kneeling by the edge of the floating dock, steadied the frail craft with one hand.

'Have a care, Douglas; there's a squall coming down the lake.'

'One yeoman of the Guard more or less matters little to the Queen,' he laughed with affected carelessness.

'If he were loyal to his Queen it would matter much,' she answered seriously.

'He has been a loyal Guardsman,' the answer came back firmly, 'but the Queen favours the navy;' and he glanced at the launch where she spent most of her time with Van Peldt.

'Treason—high treason and insubordination. You shall suffer for this.' She laughed merrily at the threat.

'I have suffered.' His eyes sought hers slowly and sadly, and a moment later he swung his boat's head into open water and far out with one muscular stroke.

Deer-shooting would not have held Percy Van Peldt long at Cromarty Head if Maddie Buchanan were not at Green's Ferry; but, in justice to the boy, he did not know it. Village gossips talked long and in detail of the attention the young millionaire was paying Maddie. They regarded Douglas Craig Douglas as a jilted lover. Some denounced the girl as heartless; others commended her as wise. The envious laughed derisively.

'The Buchanans are puir as kirk-mice, an' prood as the deil—the young ane is, onyway. She'll no' get the gilt she's dreamin' on. Van Peldt'll be aff wi' a laugh when he's tired o' playin' a mere game o' hearts. He's a summer-bird that gaes sooth whan the snaw comes, an' mates but for a season.'

'Weel, there's Douglas Craig Douglas to turn to if she doesna marry the Yankee.'

'There's nae skit o' a girl can break the heart o' a Douglas an' mend it again. A sair prood heart has Douglas got, an' it's nae second-fiddle he'll play to a dandy wi' muckle money an' little brains.'

'Weel, the Yankee can save Lodgewinna frae the graspin' o' Jerry Green's clutches. They say this Van fellow c'u'd buy the lumber company, an' never think twice o' the money.'

And so the villagers discussed in public delicate possibilities that had scarcely entered the minds of the principals.

The conversation of the two cronies was occasioned by the sight of Maddie and Percy walking from the landing.

A day had passed when the little launch *Genevieve* swung into the bay from Cromarty Head, and ploughed through the white-caps like a reed-bird.

'There's a wheen o' sheep on the water beyond the bight,' the wharfinger remarked, 'an' a dirty squall must ha'e caught Douglas in his birk-canoe.'

'Has Douglas not returned since yesterday?' asked Maddie in sudden alarm. 'What could have happened him, Baldie?'

'Naethin' serious, Miss Maddie. He's a seaworthy man is Douglas, an' no' ane to be tricked by a gale. Spent the nicht wi' the "habitat" French on the Quebec side, I'll be bound, an' he'll hug the shore hame when the wind drops wi' the sun.'

'"I'll be the cook, and the captain bold, and the crew of the *Nancy* brig,"' quoted Percy. 'Be here in an hour, boys.' And he tucked the oilskins about Maddie and took the wheel.

They were untying the snub when a messenger handed him a telegram. It was common talk among the villagers that the young millionaire often received as many as a dozen telegrams a day—strange and unintelligible ones that the local operator regretted he could not decipher for the benefit of his friends. Consulting a note-book, Van Peldt translated:

'Abature 137⅞ abaft 63 albatros 96⅜ albumen 66½ viper 26 viper preferred 45⅝ Runkle bearing abature. Advise us. HOGE, BROWN, & HOGE.'

He wrote: 'Bull abature to 150; sell viper.' Then he drummed on his teeth with a pencil, and added: 'Wipe Runkle off the earth, delusion, deminond.'

'I guess that will hold Runkle.' He laughed quietly.

'Who's Runkle?' asked Maddie.

'A fellow who thinks it's clever to bother me. I just wired my broker to wipe him off the map.'

'Break him?'

'Yes.'

'How?'

'Well, Runkle's worth a few hundred thousand dollars to-day. To-morrow he won't be worth five cents.'

'How cruel you are!' The girl shuddered. 'Has he any wife—any one who cares?'

'Really, I don't know; that's his affair. He's used to getting pinched. He made what little he has on Wall Street; let him lose it there. You see, it's all in the game. They get rich and go broke every hour there. Runkle took a delight in bothering me.'

'I don't care,' she concluded. 'I'm sorry for Runkle, whoever he is.'

The *Genevieve* puffed into the landlocked bay, where nothing but the swell from the outer world disturbed the peaceful waters. No shrieking nor'easter, no chop, no angry, racing white-caps. Sheltered on all sides from the wind, Marshal's Bight presented a perfect picture of serenity. It seemed that summer was loitering here, overlooking the threatened approach of angry winter. A great sturgeon leaped in the air far out of the water, and fell with an awkward splash on its side, sending a widening circle of waves across the pond; noiselessly

the turtles dropped from their perches on grounded logs at the boat's approach; and a great crane rose slowly from the sedges and lumbered across the headlands. Scarlet maples hedged the water on all sides, and white-and-yellow pond-lilies sweetened the air already heavy with the strange perfume of a Canadian autumn. The launch rocked gently on the swell. Neither spoke. Percy Van Peldt looked at the girl long and steadily. For the first time in his life he was tongue-tied. He had thrown diamonds in the lap of a prima-donna, pleaded his suit with eloquence to a fascinating widow, piled roses at the feet of a piquant *débutante;* yet in the presence of this girl, who, he knew, was his superior by divine right of intelligence, he was silent.

Maddie Buchanan's brown hair, damp with the spray beneath her yachting-cap, clung in circles to her temples; her red lips pouted with the tantalising fullness of youth. A perpetual smile, natural as the sunshine, beamed from her eyes. She was waiting. What strange clairvoyant power have women to read men's unuttered thoughts of love? She knew all the setting was so perfect as to render her irresistible; she knew that to-day Van Peldt would tell in full the story that each day of the last two months he had but told in part.

'Maddie'—his voice was hoarse with nervous tension—'Maddie, can't you see I love you?'

She half-closed her eyes and leaned back against the cushions without speaking. She was thinking how superior women are to men at such times. A whizzing dragon-fly, all green and purple and gold, lit on the gunwale of the boat.

'Maddie'—his voice had a startling earnestness—'are you marble and steel, or flesh and blood? I love you!—love you!—love you! Do you hear—do you care?' Mentally he cursed himself that he could find no better expression for his passion.

'I hear, Percy;' and the smile dimpled about her lips with encouraging friendliness. He caught her hand in the frenzy of the moment, fondled it, kissed it, but she made no attempt to withdraw it. A moment more and he would have had her in his arms.

'I love you better than life, honour, family, wealth, everything—anything. You are dearer to me'——

'Percy, stop! Let me go! Don't you dare!' Her voice took on a tone all men recognise; it is not the tone of love. 'I am a Buchanan. My affection is not the affair of a season. Love has a deeper meaning to us of the North. It means life's happiness or misery. I am no seaside maiden counting her so-called conquests on her finger-tips; I'——

'Maddie, listen! I swear by the eternal God, by the honour of a Van Peldt, I love you as man never loved a woman before! I offer you all—myself, my fortune, my virtues, my vices, everything I throw at your feet. I ask you, in as sacred a mood as ever man asked a woman, to be my wife. Maddie, your wish will be my command. I will strew your path with gold and diamonds. You will have wealth, position, prominence. You will excite the envy of the world's most favoured. Your home will be anywhere and everywhere you desire; the dreams and hopes of your childhood will be realised. Oh! I will love you always, truly, tenderly, loyally. Maddie, be my wife!'

She drew herself away from him.

'All this isn't fair to me,' she said. 'You speak on impulse. This is a madness of the moment; you are intoxicated with the glory of your surroundings. Percy'—her tone changed—'you have been awfully nice to me, and I appreciate now the seriousness and honour of your offer; but—but—I don't love you,' she concluded simply.

'Whom do you love? Douglas Craig Douglas?' he asked savagely.

She laughed a clear, ringing laugh that startled a bittern out of the shrubbery. Her eyes twinkled merrily. Douglas Craig Douglas would never have asked such a question, not if his heart was breaking.

'That would be telling,' she answered.

Maddie Buchanan was very much like any other girl after all. She laid her hand on Van Peldt's arm. 'Percy, you have paid me a very great compliment; but promise me you will not mention the matter again—to-day.'

Sullenly he headed the boat for home, and as he leaned over the bow to brush away the gathered bunch of weeds, a corked flask bobbing buoyantly on the waters touched his hand. Instinctively he grasped it, and a piece of birch-bark within caught his attention. There was writing on the bark. Carelessly he broke the bottle over the gunwale and read a message written with a pencil:

'Stranded on Desolation Island—boat gone—nothing to eat. Send *bonne* or launch.

'Douglas Craig Douglas.'

Percy Van Peldt's back was turned to the girl, and she could not see the expression of his face. He bit his lip till the blood came. At length he crumpled the missive and threw it far out on the swell.

'What was that?' asked Maddie.

'A message from a marooned sailor on a desert island,' he answered.

'How romantic!'

Both laughed.

He turned his face to the cold north wind to cool the flush of it. Shame for the thing he had done drove the blood to his temples.

'All's fair in love and war.' He quoted to himself the lying old adage.

Twenty years ago a fire had swept over Desolation Island, and from that day no living thing had grown upon it. It lay far from the main channel, out of the course of navigation, and a man might starve or freeze to death upon it before he could signal a boat in passing.

The voyage home was made in silence. On the wharf a crowd shouted and gesticulated.

'What's the row, Baldie?' asked Van Peldt.

'Douglas Craig Douglas's canoe has been found floatin' bottom up,' said the wharfinger, shaking his head dolefully. 'It's a sair day for Green's Ferry when the likes o' Douglas is gone.'

'My launch is at your disposal if you wish to look for him, Baldie;' and the boy almost choked at the hypocrisy of his own words.

'We needna look for him for nine days, Mister Van Peldt. Naethin' but a grapplin'-iron or the boom o' a cannon 'll bring him to the surface before then.'

'Poor old Douglas!' said Van Peldt as they walked up to Lodgewinna. He was thinking of the wretched Queen's Counsel shivering on his rock, with the second cold night approaching.

'He was a prince, Percy!' Maddie thought of Douglas as one dead. 'I'm going to be very lonely to-night. Come over after dinner. And, Percy, promise me you 'll do something for poor Runkle.'

She entered the darkened parlour, to find her father sitting alone, with his head buried in his hands.

'Daddy'—she put her face close to his grizzled cheek—'we are not going to lose Lodgewinna.'

It often requires the weakness of a dear one to bring out the strength of another. It moved Maddie to a sudden resolve. Matters were moving quickly for her.

Wallace Buchanan was a very tired old man, too tired to think or question, and bowed with age and weariness that he had never dared show the residents of Green's Ferry in his official capacity of Mayor.

'And, daddy—oh, daddy!' she cried, 'Douglas Craig Douglas was drowned in the squall yesterday, for his canoe drifted into the landing to-day bottom up.'

Her voice quavered for a moment.

The old man sprang to his feet. He was once more Mayor of Green's Ferry. Maddie held his greatcoat, and he took his stoutest stick from the rack.

'I may not be back the nicht. There's work to do, and my place is wi' the rest o' them at the water-front.'

*(To be continued.)*

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# A CRITIC IN THE HOUSE.

## HOME DIALOGUES.

By WALTER SHAW SPARROW, Author of *Old England, The English House, Hints on House Furnishing,* &c.

### I.—ON HOUSEWIVES AND SERVANTS.

OLD Mrs Agnew is well known in London as a disciple of Pugin, Ruskin, and William Morris. She knows their books by heart, and understands them critically. That is why the young speak of her as old-fashioned. She is an expert in the household arts, and they are not. Yet they do not take too much advantage of their inferior position. From time to time, indeed, the young go to Mrs Agnew for advice, and sometimes they follow it without the least hesitation or contradiction.

Four months ago, on her eightieth birthday, three young women called at ten in the morning, and Mrs Agnew beamed as she took their offering of flowers. One visitor, Mrs Richards, was sentimental, practice having taught her to be too sympathetic; another, Mrs Lynch, famous in the golfing world, spoke of 'the hump' as the present condition of her own feeling for town-life; it was only Miss Rae Brown, M.D., who started a conversation on a serious topic.

'Your health is truly wonderful,' said she with a diagnostic gravity.—'Mrs Agnew belongs to the Waterloo generation, you know—a very strong generation,' she added smilingly, but with just enough pomp of manner to do justice to a self-evident verdict.

Mrs Lynch approved. 'Waterloo generation!' she exclaimed. 'Stunning phrase! Off the top shelf—quite.'

'To look back on eighty years,' Miss Rae Brown went on, 'must be a conservative education.'

Mrs Agnew nodded and smiled. 'I remember about seventy-five of them perhaps, all busy years, and none really unpleasant, for I took pride in my home, I loved housekeeping. Every detail of it appealed to me, and never worried me.'

'Yes; but servants were good in those days,' Miss Rae Brown explained.

'Sure of that?' the old dame replied. 'Servants have never been good in England according to some critics. They were very bad in Dean Swift's time; the Dean said so, and he had a nasty temper, you 'll recollect.'

The listeners exchanged glances. To Mrs Lynch Dean Swift was 'something of a rotter,' and Mrs Richards told her black poodle to behave himself. Then she said, 'And your own servants, dear Mrs Agnew, what have *they* been like?'

'Just female human nature, nothing more,' came the quick reply.

'Bosh!' said Mrs Lynch in rare good humour.

'They spent all their money on dress,' Mrs Agnew continued; 'not underclothing, you may be sure, but just that part of dress which every eye could see at once. And criticism made them restive, of course, and they were quick to find fault; it did

'em good to talk about their grievances, whether real or imagined. Nerves, you see. Not so bad as nerves are now, my dears, because self-pity wasn't then a habit with womenfolk. We ruled at home as best we could, accepting our lot in life without rebellion—as a rule.'

'Less courage was needed then, perhaps,' Miss Rae Brown suggested.

'Courage! It's common-sense we women need. Still, you'll never learn from me. Youth never listens to old age, but hunts for its own experience, ransacking the most ancient follies and mistakes. One day you will know that the heart of the world keeps very old-fashioned; it never allows women to stray far from housewifery.'

But Mrs Lynch replied, 'You go no trumps on a bad hand, I think, dear Mrs Agnew;' and Miss Rae Brown approved. 'Women advance rapidly,' she dogmatised. 'They are man's equal to-day in many walks of life.'

'Is that important?' Mrs Agnew asked. 'The business of women, to my old mind, is to do finely what men can't do at all.'

'But why should man be a favoured mortal?' said Mrs Richards warmly. 'And why should woman have all the drudgery?'

'Tut, tut!' the old lady cried. 'Is there no drudgery in examinations, no drudgery in office-work, no drudgery in politics? To govern a home well is a woman's duty and art, and it needs as much talent as your high-flown wish to be male-women harassed by a business-fight against men.'

'You simple, dear old darling!' said Mrs Richards gently, 'you might think differently if girls in your time had been rightly educated.'

Mrs Agnew shook her finger playfully, as if a spoiled child had said something absurd. 'Modern talk,' said she; 'and very idle talk, too! With all your education, you know nothing about the history of your own sex. Turn to any almanac of George the Third's time, and you'll be surprised by the mathematical problems which girls did then in competition, as ambitious minds of the present day do "limericks." Then, as to your medical examinations and the rest, why, bless me! that sort of thing began in Italy during the thirteenth century, and for about five hundred and seventy years it had intermittent fashion there. Girl-graduates were found in the universities, and female professors also, not to speak of women writers and painters, scores and scores of 'em, poor dears; and what did Italy gain? Nothing. Italy went downhill despite her female marvels. It was good housewifery here and there that kept her alive, not the Brembatis, and the Angussolas, and the Agnesis, who were inferior to male barristers and painters and mathematicians.'

'For all that,' said Mrs Lynch, 'I prefer hockey and golf to housekeeping. Besides, home affairs are jeered at to-day.'

'By whom, pray?'

'By everybody—almost. To say a wife is a tip-top housekeeper is to imply that she is dull, uninteresting, stupid, an account-book without a cover, a woman without attraction, a frump!'

'Polly, don't be a fool!' replied Mrs Agnew. 'You expect bad housewives to condemn themselves by praising the good. The many laugh at the few, but the minority counts, believe me; it will win the day.'

'In a hundred years, perhaps,' cried Miss Rae Brown. 'Meantime, dear Mrs Agnew, household work is hated by most women, for it brings no credit.'

'It doesn't pay,' said Mrs Lynch. 'No woman can dress herself out of housekeeping. So there!'

Mrs Agnew sighed. 'I'm too old to understand that,' said she; 'but one thing I do see clearly. At a time when examinations are in vogue, and when degrees are as common as blackberries in autumn, there should be diplomas for housewifery as for other professions. Let the State give prizes and degrees.'

'It might do some good,' Mrs Richards assented; 'but housekeeping is so very secluded, so very *slow*, dear Mrs Agnew.'

'Yes, there are better things than marriage,' Miss Rae Brown asserted. 'I pity the average wife, who is nothing more than an upper servant, yet she receives no regular salary.'

'True,' said Mrs Richards.

'Wives and wages, indeed!' Mrs Agnew shook her white curls indignantly. 'Had you remained single, dear Polly, you could have earned wages as a good housekeeper while your health lasted. Wages soon vanish with health. But you chose marriage freely for your own good, and now your cry of martyr invites my sympathy. Fie, fie!'

Mrs Richards drew herself together and flew a red flag in each pretty cheek. 'I might be a schoolgirl,' she muttered.

Then Miss Rae Brown came to the rescue. 'Dear Mrs Agnew,' she began, 'the world changes, you know, and we young women change with it inevitably; and our hearts bleed when we see the dull, hollow, sordid existence of the ordinary middle-class housewife.'

'Ordinary fiddlestick! I've known a great many married women and a good many wives. The married women form three classes: those who cannot spend with thrift their housekeeping allowance; those who refuse to accept with care and tact the social position which their means should enable them to keep up; and, again, those who pretend that their real home is society, and that they haven't time enough to manage their own house affairs. It is so much easier for them to employ servants to do their work.'

'Common-sense too,' said Mrs Lynch. 'How can a wife be pretty if she works?'

'I spoke of married women, my dear, not of wives,' replied Mrs Agnew. 'Wives are thorough housekeepers and excellent mothers. They believe, with Napoleon, that the destiny of children is

always the work of women; and the destiny of children is the future of all nations. True wives govern the world, and the bad ruin a civilisation. There's my creed as a neolithic Englishwoman. If I had my way, a cathedral church should be built to the wives of England!'

The young women glanced at each other awkwardly. They might have been as ill at ease had they seen the Primate in the act of playing golf in a London square with the President of the Board of Trade. Their notions of rightness had been upset by something unusual, unexpected.

'The weather is almost mild to-day,' said Mrs Richards in a flurry, after a long pause—'so mild, indeed,' she went on, 'that this morning I wasn't afraid to enter the bathroom. Recently the bathroom has made me shiver.'

'And no wonder,' said Mrs Agnew. 'The modern bathroom is cold as ice in winter. How often is it large enough for a fireplace, and why should its window face north or north-east? As a training for Arctic explorers, or for persons who wish to be inured to the influenza, the modern bathroom may be useful.'

'It has faults, I admit,' said Miss Rae Brown; 'it ought always to be kept warm by a towel-rail heated with hot water from the main boiler, or the hot-water tank should be put within a good linen-cupboard in the bathroom. That I gladly admit; but in *your* time, of course, there was no bathroom at all. How did people live before bathrooms were introduced?'

'They never bathed,' Mrs Lynch believed.

Yet Mrs Agnew chuckled to herself with great satisfaction, as though she had found a Georgian gold piece in her linen-cupboard. 'Yet we did live then,' said she, 'and I'm still content to do without a bathroom. I take my bath by my own fireside, and never in my life has it given me a chill. To think of using a bath which is common to a whole family, *that* I don't like at all; the idea seems unclean. Besides which, the common bathroom is needed at the same time every day by several persons, who seem to play at hide-and-seek to get to it. Half-a-dozen doors are ajar at the same moment precisely, half-a-dozen noses begin to show themselves, and then there's a sudden rush from one bedroom, followed by the noise of a banged door and a running tap. The bathroom's occupied, and one person's happy; but the others are aggrieved, and nurse a grumpy mood till breakfast. That's the comedy of the bathroom.'

'How screamingly funny!' cried Mrs Lynch. 'Fancy bathing in a hand-bath, like a duck in a tea-saucer!'

'A tub in each bedroom would drive housemaids to distraction,' said Mrs Richards. 'Oh! think of the complaints, dear Mrs Agnew, the incessant grumbling; and many ceilings would be spoilt, for most of the water would be poured on the floors.'

'Dear, dear!' said Mrs Agnew, 'you seem very much afraid of your women-servants. I'm not in the least frightened of mine, and they don't scold me much either. When they are useful servants and threaten to give notice, I take great interest in their new caps and dresses, praise their good taste, ask after their fathers and mothers, and prescribe for rheumatism if any parent has a creaky limb or two. Then, somehow, the notice has no effect at all. It's just forgotten.'

'What patience!' cried Mrs Richards, poking the black poodle with her umbrella.

'Modern servants don't expect such attention,' Miss Rae Brown asserted airily.

'That's why they like it when they get it,' said Mrs Agnew. 'Women are women all through, my dears, in all classes. Give them what they expect, and *your* realisation of *their* expectations will be a failure; but they are charmed if you take 'em by surprise. They are astonished by your thoughtful kindness, and delighted, as I was by your birthday flowers, my dears.'

'It's ripping that you are pleased,' said Mrs Lynch. 'I love happy surprises myself, but my servants are suspicious if I pay them attentions. They wonder what I'm getting at, I suppose.'

'Strange!' said Mrs Agnew. 'My servants are apt to be too much attached to me. I said to one, "Mary, I can't keep you any longer; there's no more need of you." And she replied, "But I've need of you, ma'am; I should be lost without you after these years and years." And so I had nothing to reply.'

'Impudence!' said Miss Rae Brown.

'No, no,' replied Mrs Agnew; 'it was the voice of long service. Perhaps we do wrong when we keep a servant for many years. She takes root in our ways of life, and that means a heavy responsibility. And there's yet another point. Guess what it is?'

'I give it up,' said Mrs Richards, rising to take leave.

'Well, my dear, women act as women in their intercourse with each other. A mistake. You should play a part with your servants, and do what good men would do in your position. See?'

'I don't,' replied Mrs Richards.

'Nor I,' said Miss Rae Brown.

'Then here's an example,' said Mrs Agnew, holding out her hand in farewell. 'Women criticise on the spur of the moment, rapping out their discontent at the most inopportune moment and before listeners. That's nerves. They wish to relieve their own feelings, no matter how much they may hurt another person's self-respect. If you treat a man like that there's unhappiness; if you treat your servants so they rebel, and you deserve to lose them. So there!'

'A cruel parting blow,' said Mrs Richards lightly; but the black poodle yelped.

# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

CHAPTER XVII.—*Continued.*

IN the first place he met his sister Charlotte, stricken and anxious, and shaken for once out of all thought of herself. She was waiting for him at the stairhead, leaning over the broad oaken top of the balustrade, and looked as though she might have been there ever since she sent off her messenger.

'Oh Charles!' she gasped, and swayed as she rose from the balustrade.

He caught her in his strong hands, and led her into her own room and closed the door.

'How is he? What does Berkeley say?'

She shook her head with a sob. 'He says father may not live through the night.'

'Where is he? In his own bed?'

'Yes. He had Mr Pennefeather with him all the morning'——

'Pennefeather?'

'And it was just after he had gone. I heard him fall, and I ran in. Dr Berkeley was here within half-an-hour, and has been with him ever since.'

'And John Sax?'

'He is in there too.'

He kissed her forehead and went quietly out. There had never been any very great communion between them, but trouble breaks and binds.

He tapped very softly with his knuckles on his father's door. John Sax opened it gently, and Captain Charles started at sight of his face, at once so grimly set and warped was it. It set him fearing the worst, but his deepest thought never plunged within touch of what that might be.

John Sax came softly out.

'How is he?' asked Captain Charles, with the great fear at his heart.

'He is going. It is very terrible. He is conscious, but he can neither speak nor move, except his eyes, and they—oh, it is dreadful!' and John Sax covered his own haggard eyes at thought of them. 'He wants to speak,' he continued, 'and is trying to all the time, and cannot. I told him they had sent for you, and he blinked as if he had wanted that.'

'Perhaps if he sees I am here it may satisfy him.'

'Yes, I think you should go to him at once.' And they went softly in.

Dr Berkeley nodded a solemn greeting. Charles gathered the worst from his face.

His father's rolling eyes met his at once, and a look of satisfaction came into them—if that could be called satisfaction where all was anguish and revolt at this fettering impotence.

It was terrible to see him so, as John Sax had said, and to be powerless to ease him in any way.

A great desire was in Charles's heart to comfort him somehow, but he knew not what to do or wherein comfort and easement might lie. He bent and kissed the damp forehead, on which the sweats of agony had plastered some locks of gray hair.

'It breaks my heart to see you suffering so, father! Is there anything I can do?'

The straining eyes rested on his in a dumb agony of appeal under which it was impossible to remain quiet. It was the pitiful look of the gagged and bound victim of the vivisector's knife, when the anæsthetic has passed and the cruelty still goes on—wildest fear, horror, impotent agony.

There are beings who can witness these things without a pang. I hold them lower than their victims, for they have lost their God-given attribute of pity, and can never regain it in full. And think what you may of Charles Lauriston in the end—condemn him as you must on some counts—he was at all events ever thoughtful and considerate for all about him, and especially those who suffered, from their own faults or others'.

His heart was wrung at sight of his father's suffering. It quickened his perceptions to the penetration of the prison-house. He saw that his father understood what was said to him, and that much of his furious distress lay in his incapacity to answer.

He bent over the pent-up soul and said quietly, 'You want to communicate with us, father. Will you close your eyes once when you mean "yes," and for "no" keep them closed for a moment? Do you understand?' And the dumb, striving, bloodshot eyes closed and opened quickly, and there was somewhat of relief in them.

'Is it myself you want to speak to?'

'Yes,' signalled the troubled eyes, and then rolled meaningly on Dr Berkeley, who was speaking in a murmur to John Sax by the window.

'You wish us to be alone?'

'Yes,' but to Captain Charles's anxious eye not so immediate and unequivocal a 'yes' as before.

'Shall John Sax stop also?'

'Yes,' with a quick look of relief.

'I will see to it.'

He went across to the others.

'He wants to speak to you, Mr Sax. If you will ask him about anything you think he may have on his mind he will answer you "yes" or "no." "Yes" is one blink of the eyes; "no" is eyes closed. It will be a relief to him.'

'That is a great gain,' said the doctor.

'Perhaps you will favour me with a few minutes in the next room?' And they went quietly out.

'Now, what is it?' asked Charles. 'My sister says you fear the worst. A stroke is not necessarily fatal, is it?'

'There is more than an ordinary stroke here, Captain Lauriston. It is impossible to say yet. But he is visibly sinking. It looks like a sudden and complete collapse. He has always looked hale and hearty, but there may have been mental and physical tension of which we know nothing.'

'I am not aware of anything out of the common,' said Charles thoughtfully. 'Business in these days is no bed of roses, of course; and he is well on in years, and has always kept a great deal in his own hands—too much perhaps.'

'It looks like it; and now he is paying for it, and maybe wishing he had not.'

'You have done everything possible?'

'Everything. We can do nothing now but wait.'

'And how—when—may we look for any change?'

'I doubt very much if he will last through the night,' said the doctor gravely.

'Can you wait, or have you others'——

'I will see him again now. Then I have two or three others I must visit, and I will return in the evening. There is a good deal of sickness about. One does not get much time for rest nowadays.'

They went softly in again; and John Sax stopped abruptly in some low-voiced question he was putting to the stricken man, who seemed quieter and more resigned to the inevitable. The power of communication had evidently given him relief.

'We are going on as nicely as could be expected,' said the doctor, smoothing the furrowed brow with a cool, firm hand. And the worn eyes fixed themselves upon him with infinite knowledge.

'I will return shortly, my dear old friend. Don't worry about things. Rest makes for healing.' And Captain Charles went down the stairs with him.

'He has no hope himself,' said the doctor. 'I see it in his eyes. I fear you must prepare for the worst.'

*(To be continued.)*

# THE RIVER AMAZON.

HILE the Amazon is the world's greatest river, if not in length, at least in the volume of water which flows through it, it is the world's strangest river as well. The few travellers and explorers who have journeyed up this watercourse to its many sources in the glaciers of the South American mountains tell stories which are almost incredible about the literal maze of streams which unite to form it, each stream having its birth in one of the great ice-masses. Yet a few hundred miles below, where they merge and create the river, the temperature is such that it works its way through a perfect labyrinth of tropical vegetation.

Only the mariner can tell the place where the Amazon really has its mouth, because the opening it has made on the eastern coast of South America is so wide that it extends over one hundred miles. A long distance before one comes to the mouth of the river, however, one is really sailing on the waters of the Amazon, because they force their way so far out into the ocean. They say that three hundred miles out at sea, off the mouth of the Amazon, you can hoist a bucketful of fresh water out of the ocean from the deck of a ship, such is the quantity of its water that flows from that gigantic basin. Long after you have entered the actual river, and have its banks to north and south of you, if you are in mid-stream you will still be out of sight of land, such is the breadth of the vast channel. The river stretches far into the ocean and far up the country. Take a map of South America, and look out a place called Iquitos. It lies four-fifths of the way across the continent from east to west. Yet from Iquitos there is a fortnightly service of ocean-going steamers to Europe, which descend some three thousand miles of the river before they reach the sea. It is not only one branch of the Amazon, but many, that are thus to be regarded as the same as ocean highways. The southern branches of the Amazon are broken by rapids along a line where a low continental shelf exists. Above these rapids, however, there is again deep water. Thus beyond the falls of the Madeira there are over ten thousand miles of navigable water on that river and its branches, and these only await the making of a short railway, less than two hundred miles long, to be brought into connection with the other highways of the world.

Most of what we know about the upper region of the great river is due to an article of which we use so much in daily life—rubber—in footwear, coats, and other garments to protect us from the rain and snow; fashioned into handles for knives, forks, and other instruments of daily use; and turned into hundreds of necessary things. The world has been searched for the rubber-tree, but it grows in so few forests that most of the crude rubber comes from the gum which is drawn from the woodlands of the Upper Amazon. In these forests grow the trees which yield the finest quality of rubber-gum.

To obtain the rubber, little bands of white men have spent years in exploring these almost unknown forests, often cutting their way mile after mile through tangles of vines which so interlace the trees that every ray of the sun is shut out and it is almost as dark as night. Sometimes they cannot go on foot, but must work their way along in frail canoes, as the rubber-tree is often found in what might be called woodland lakes, rising directly from the water. Most of the steamships which sail far into the heart of South America carry rubber as the most valuable part of their return cargoes, bringing it not only to Great Britain, but to France, Belgium, and Germany, where the huge, dingy brown balls into which the

gum is pressed are made into articles to supply many human needs. So much of the rubber is taken from the forests of the Amazon that explorers are continually going farther and farther into them in search of more of the rubber-bearing trees, and it is owing to their explorations that much of the mystery of this great region has been revealed.

Probably Sir Martin Conway, the noted world wanderer, is more familiar with the head of the Amazon than any other white man. This is what he says about the actual sources of the Amazon:

'The sources of the Amazon are of course countless. Like the web of a gigantic leaf, its tributaries divide and subdivide into an infinity of threads at the outer fringe. Some, perhaps almost the remotest of these from the mouth, I have myself visited where they quit the glacier tongues of the great snowy Cordillera Real in Bolivia and Peru. Those glaciers themselves are in fact branches of the great Amazon, and to it each snowflake belongs that falls within its watershed.

'Great are the snow reservoirs on the roof of the Andes; but the streams that flow from them are far smaller than those yielded by Alpine glaciers, for the equatorial sun does not so much melt as evaporate the ice. Glacier rivulets are they, rather than torrents, that are the loftiest affluents of the Amazon. I have stepped across many of them, and the broadest were easily leapt over. By their union, however, torrents are formed which swiftly tumble into deep gorges—gorges with desert banks on the sides of Illimani, into which the most vertical sun pours a blistering heat. A few miles lower down all is changed, and the stream enters a fertile, hilly region, like the Italian foothills of the Alps, only more luxuriant for vegetation—the home of monkeys, birds, and butterflies innumerable. Through these foothills the river, now as large as the Thames at Chelsea, makes its way by rapids and swift stretches of smoother water. Here navigation is carried on by rafts made of light tree-trunks, skilfully handled with the skill of ancient tradition by the aboriginal Indians. While one is still among the foothills, the region of boat-navigation is reached. Here and beside the rapids is the upper limit of the great india-rubber forest, and the trees are now tapped which stand within reach of navigable waters. Not more than two or three hundred miles away from the crest of the Andes the foothills cease, and the edge of the great Amazon plain is reached, stretching thence some three thousand miles away eastward to the Atlantic seaboard.'

Away in this remote part of the South American continent Nature has been indeed generous, for in addition to the wealth of rubber there are known to be deposits of gold and other precious minerals. It is said that nearly every one of the glacial streams washing down the foothills of the mountains carries sand laden with gold which has been accumulating in its bed for centuries, but as yet none has been secured by the miner, owing to the distance to these streams being so great, and to there being no route by which machinery or tools for getting the gold can be taken to these places.

Not only Sir Martin Conway but other travellers who have ventured along the upper river and its tributaries say that here a curious earthly paradise really exists. To the surface of the water the sun's rays seldom reach; and, as already stated, one may go many miles along waterways where it is well-nigh as dark as night, because the sky is almost completely shut out by the mass of vines which interlace the trees and are so thick with leaves. Deprived of the sunlight, all is dark and rank. The damp air is laden with unhealthful vapour; the surface of the water, in places where the current is too sluggish to carry it away, is covered with scum and weed. It requires no little courage to explore these fastnesses, for a man really takes his life in his hands, so unhealthy are they. Occasionally, however, one can see the upper portion of the forest where there is a little crevice in its roof of vines. Above this is really a scene of life and beauty. Birds and butterflies and other gorgeous insects are flying from place to place; flowers of hundreds of hues and shapes are blooming from the plants attached to tree branch and trunk. While below all may be lifeless and silent, above the height where the mass of vines overshadow the river Nature has created a world of brightness and animation; but, as already stated, it is almost entirely shut out from the human eye. To attempt to break through this canopy of vines which hide it from the lower world is almost impossible, because the vines grow so thickly; but some naturalists have penetrated it, and say that the forests really have two surfaces, the one above this artificial roof and the one below. That which is above is barred from human entrance. Its inhabitants are mostly birds and insects that are radiant with beauty unequalled in the world. Whatever grows in the Amazon mud strives with desperate internecine struggle to reach this sky-exposed surface, and there blossoms. Beneath, where man can walk or float, all is dark; only here and there a fitful ray of sunlight struggles through. Orchids blossom within this shadowy region. But it is above, where man can seldom go, that the glory of colour reigns supreme—colour of flowers, of butterflies, of birds, radiant in scarlet, in gold, and blue. You can see these bright creatures fitfully in the cavern below, but not in all their glory as they must behold one another above. Sometimes, as they flit about beneath, they will chance to cross a sunbeam slanting through a hole in the vegetation; then for an instant they flash into view like an explosion of burning colour. It is thus that the great butterflies are seen to the best effect. No one can imagine what a picture they produce in their native haunts as their wings flash and close and flash again in the sunlight as they fly.

No, this upper world of the Amazon forests has been closed to human beings, and promises to remain a perpetual mystery unless with the aid of some aerial craft one may be able to visit it.

# LOST AND FOUND.

## A REMINISCENCE OF THE BOXER RISING.

'WELL, it's not exactly palatial, is it?' said Graham with a grim smile.

We were sitting in the filthy guest-room of a crowded Chinese inn as he spoke, endeavouring, in spite of the stifling heat and clouds of mosquitoes, to do justice to an unappetising meal of dried fish and rice. From the noisome courtyard without rose an unceasing din and clamour, dozens of curious eyes watched our every movement from the gaps of the paper walls, while the scampering of the rats above threatened each moment to bring the crazy ceiling about our heads.

It was, as Graham said, scarcely palatial, and the discomforts were none the less apparent after twelve hours in the saddle under the burning sun of Central China. We were on our way to a remote Hupeh mission-station on the Yangtse, and in order to avoid the tedious river-journey from Hankow we were travelling overland, disguised, for the sake of economy and convenience, as Chinese merchants.

The year 1900, of which I am writing, was no safe one for Europeans in China. That mysterious 'Society of Harmonious Fists'—or the 'Boxers,' as they are generally called—which was aided and abetted by the highest in the land, and planned at the instigation of the late Dowager-Empress herself, spread with such rapidity through the country that from Peking to Canton and from Amoy to the western provinces the life of every white man, woman, and child was threatened; but more particularly the lonely missions, stationed far from outside help and trusting with implicit faith in the loyalty of their converts, were in great danger.

Engrossed as the attention of England was in the South African war, but scanty notice was taken of the rising until it culminated in a hideous catastrophe—the siege of the Peking Legations and the dead of the allied nations in Pechili province.

The particular mission to which we were travelling was conducted by an elderly gentleman, who had been assisted for the last two years by his young niece. Although the harvest of converts was by no means abundant, yet they alleviated the distress and poverty of the inhabitants by many a kindly act of charity. Graham had known old Mr Mason for many years, and having been in a position to render some service to him in the early days of his occupation, was a welcome guest at the mission-house whenever his travels through the country led him in that direction. It should be said that Graham was in the Consular Service of China, and, incidentally, my very good friend.

Events which have nothing to do with this tale had reunited us after an absence of nearly seven years; and partly from his wish to show me the country, and partly for reasons which I was to know that evening, we had undertaken this inland journey.

The long summer day was drawing to an end, and the shadows were lengthening on the dirty floor; caravans were arriving for the night, and in the courtyard rose a deafening clamour of voices.

Graham, who had been sitting a long while silent and moody, kicked savagely at an inoffensive spider. 'Sometimes I hate this accursed country,' he broke out suddenly. 'I loathe the dins and stinks and the pestilential crowds. It gets on one's nerves at times.'

'Why don't you go home for a spell?' I said, knowing that he had much leave due to him. And then I added, 'Come back with me; we can rent a small place in the country, and shoot and hunt and live like princes.'

He did not reply at once, and when he did speak it was to make a startling statement. 'I ought to have told you before,' he said hesitatingly. 'The fact is—well, the last time I was up at the mission I asked Margery Mason to be my wife.'

'My dear fellow'—— I began.

But he cut me short with an impatient gesture. 'It's no case for congratulation; at least, not yet. You see, there's something that has to be cleared up before there's any question of an engagement. Do you remember the *Iconoclast* incident?'

'No.'

'Well, some five years ago a British cruiser, the *Iconoclast*, was lying in the Woosung River, and one night one of her officers completely vanished, and was never heard of again in spite of the most strenuous efforts on the part of the authorities. The matter was hushed up at the time, as his disappearance was synchronous with the appropriation of the wardroom funds; so, you see, it was a bad case.'

'How does that affect you?' I asked.

'That officer was virtually engaged to Miss Mason, who was then in England,' he replied quietly. 'She absolutely refuses to entertain the accusation of theft, and believes that he must have met with some accident which precluded his returning to the ship. On the death of her mother she came out here to her uncle, hoping to find among these four hundred millions of people some one who will clear all guilt from his name. Naturally I had never connected her name in any way with the story until three months ago, when I was last up at the mission; but during a week in Shanghai I was able to make many secret inquiries in the native city. It's wonderful what one can do with a knowledge of the natives, even after five years.'

All was quiet in the courtyard at last; night had come, and the bright stars that the East alone can give were twinkling in the stifling darkness.

Graham drew a candle from his gown, placed it

on the floor, and lighted it. 'For instance,' he continued, 'I have the evidence of the sampan-man who took him ashore that night from the *Iconoclast*, and the innkeeper in the native city in whose place he disguised himself as a coolie confessed at last that he had much money with him. God knows what devilry he was up to after that.'

'And you will use these evidences?' I asked.

There was silence in the room for a while until some one started a high-pitched Chinese song.

As the quavering notes died away to silence Graham answered my question. 'No, I think not. I can't tell her the man's misdeeds. She must find out for herself, and until then all our dreams of country-life in England must wait.'

With that we dropped the subject; but it was impossible to sleep, and so we sat far into the night, two bespectacled, pig-tailed Chinamen, talking of the English Channel and the South Downs and the Sussex Hunts, until the guttering candle spluttered out in the darkness.

The next evening we arrived at our destination, and in the mission premises within the city walls I was introduced to Mr Mason and his niece Margery.

It was impossible not to notice the trend of affairs. Not only had our short ride through the city (which we had entered in English clothes) been marked by more than usual hostility, but the anxiety and suspense were plainly visible on the faces of all the inmates of the mission.

'My uncle keeps assuring me that nothing is wrong,' said Margery after the greetings had been exchanged and Mr Mason had retired again to his studies; 'but he has forbidden me to go outside the house, and seems very sad and depressed.' The pallor of her face and the dark circles round her eyes showed clearly how the enforced confinement in that pestilential city was telling on her constitution.

We made light of her fears, saying that it was the old cry of 'Wolf, wolf!' and that the *taotai* of the city would see that no harm came to the mission; that the Union-jack was flying over the British Concession at Hankow, and that there were British gunboats on the Yangtse.

We did not then know that the allied nations were massing at Tientsin, and that the siege of Peking had begun. Nevertheless, in spite of a peaceful night in our comfortable quarters, we rose next morning haunted by a strange oppression—a vague foreboding of future events. It was a dull, stifling day, and it seemed as though anything could happen in that still, sultry atmosphere. But the usual routine of the mission took its accustomed course; throughout the long morning there was no outward and visible sign to give ground for our anxiety, and after *tiffin* Mason left in his 'chair' on a visit to a house at the far end of the city.

It must have been about five in the evening when the curtain rose on the first scene of the drama. Graham and I, having discovered the half-dozen rifles insisted on by the home authorities, were engaged in cleaning these on the veranda, when suddenly the mission bearers, dusty and streaming with sweat, came staggering into the compound.

Looking very white and aged, and binding his right hand in a blood-stained handkerchief, Mason descended from his 'chair' and came to where we stood. 'You can expect the worst,' he said. 'I'—and his voice broke a little—'I was stoned by a mob in the city—the first time in twenty years.' And he passed into the house.

Exchanging a look, my friend and I continued to clean the rifles.

Dinner that night was not a pronounced success, in spite of an avoidance of the topic that was uppermost in our minds.

To his niece the old missionary had made light of the affair, saying that it had only been the disturbance of a few roughs, such as might have happened in any town in England. However, as we retired with our cigars to the veranda we at once held a council of war, and out of the hearing of the girl he loved, Graham strongly urged our host to send to the *taotai* for help. 'Is there any one among your servants whom you can trust implicitly?' he asked.

The old gentleman reflected an instant. 'Yes, Wang—the only one, I fear.' The words cost him an effort. To claim only one faithful retainer after twenty weary years of hardship and privation must have been a bitter confession indeed.

The house-boy Wang, an intelligent-looking Cantonese of indefinite age, was accordingly sent for, and despatched to the Yamen with a message carefully drawn up by Graham and the missionary.

Occupied with our own thoughts, we sat silently smoking and waiting for the next turn of Fortune's wheel.

'Look out!'

A Chinaman had crawled into the compound and lay within a few feet of our chairs. We sprang on him in an instant; but he offered no resistance, and addressed our host rapidly in the vernacular. Unconversant with the language as I was, I watched him as he stood pleading vehemently before Mason. He was apparently a coolie of the poorest type, pinched with famine and wasted by disease and opium; and I remember thinking that he seemed to represent the summit of poverty and misery, the last word in degradation.

Graham translated to me. 'He says they are going to attack the mission; but if we come at once he will take us down to Hankow in his junk.'

The Chinaman stood watching him expectantly as he spoke; then their eyes met, and Graham continued: 'It's probably a trap; and, besides, not one of us could leave the city alive to-night.'

I was about to answer, but at that moment Margery Mason entered the veranda.

There was an instant's pause; and then an involuntary sob, more like the cry of an animal in pain than anything human, was wrung out of our strange visitor, who was leaning forward with a

ghastly pallor on his face, his hands gripping the wicker chair like a vice.

The girl crossed over to Graham: 'What is it, Gerald?' she asked.

Our eyes were turned to the Chinaman, who, trembling from head to foot, commenced a pitiable, confused jargon of English words. It was impossible to distinguish anything clearly, but I caught the words: 'England—Margery—God—another chance—lieutenant—Royal Navy.' It was an unparalleled, unheard-of situation. I, for my part, knew not what to make of it until, with a start of horror, I suddenly remembered the *Iconoclast* incident.

Mason was the first to break the silence which ensued. 'What is this?' he asked. 'Explain at once.'

The dreadful suspicion which had entered my mind was gradually confirmed as, slowly and haltingly, in the almost forgotten words of his mother-tongue, the poor wretch told us one of the saddest tales I have ever listened to: how as a lieutenant on the *Iconoclast* he had run into debt ashore, and one day had taken opium to ease his anxieties; how the drug had taken a grip on him so that he scarcely knew how to exist between the doses; and how, with all his principles gone, and broken in mind and body, he had finally yielded to the craving, and had slipped ashore one night in a sampan, taking the first money he could lay his hands on.

We heard the story through in silence, sitting mute and abashed like the unwilling recipients of some disgraceful confidence.

The awkward pause which followed was suddenly broken by the unceremonious return of Wang, who, running on to the veranda, leant over Mason's chair and jabbered quick, short sentences into his ear.

Mason translated quietly. 'The *taotai* is sleeping and cannot be disturbed. The Yamen runners beat Wang out of the courtyard. They are selling the Boxer-sashes in the city.'

With something akin to relief we heard the news, for it was at least definite. The *taotai* was obviously hostile, and we must go farther afield for help.

Miles down the great river lay the treaty-port of Hankow, and a British river-gunboat which was lying off the Bund must be summoned to our relief. We discussed the selection of a messenger. The few native converts huddled together in a back room were useless; any one who could use a rifle was indispensable for the defence of the mission; so our eyes were turned again to the faithful Wang.

Hurriedly Graham gave him his instructions. He was to try his utmost to creep out of the city that night, and, if that were impossible, to wait hidden until the gates were opened in the morning; to make his way with all speed down the river, and take a written message to the commander of the gunboat. So he departed—a slight figure, stealing noiselessly across the compound, in whom were centred the hopes of the mission.

Then we turned our minds to the fortification.

Now it so happened that the mission quarters were peculiarly adapted for withstanding a siege, as the back of the house abutted on to the city wall, while in front lay the broad, open compound, which would have to be crossed by an attacking party.

The matter of vital importance was the strengthening of the veranda frontage, and this we effected by means of a carefully erected barricade of anything we could lay our hands on; a quantity of flour-bags formed the foundation, and among these we left occasional loopholes through which to 'snipe' in comparative safety. Of ammunition there was an alarmingly small supply, and indeed only a moderate amount of food; in fact, our only advantage lay in a large consignment of *tansan* water which had but lately arrived.

We worked hard with the aid of the native converts, and about midnight we rested from our labours; the barricade had been built along the veranda, the ammunition divided, and buckets of water stationed at intervals in case of fire.

The ex-naval officer had sat silent and moody throughout the long work of preparation, with his head buried in his hands. Graham gave him a rifle. 'You must play the man to-night,' he said.

The poor fellow appeared utterly broken; but as soon as his hands closed on the rifle and wandered over the breech and bolt and barrel, all the old influences—good, strong influences of the *Britannia* and the Senior Service—strengthened him into a man again.

'You can trust me,' he said simply.

We divided the watches—two hours on and two hours off, and the man on duty was to call the others at the first sign of alarm.

Just as the eastern sky was paling and the deadly malarial mists were rising from the Yangtse River, I roused Graham and turned over in a dreamless slumber. I seemed to have slept for about a minute when I was awakened by a sharp report, and on looking up, saw Graham ejecting a cartridge.

'Wake up,' he said; 'they've begun the ball. That's one to me.' A quivering yellow body lay in the centre of the compound.

Four more desperate rushes were made before the slanting rays of the sun peeped above the city wall, only to end in a disorderly rout, with the dead and dying left in the open.

And then followed a dreadful calamity.

The old, white-haired missionary, who had insisted on keeping his watch and taking his place in the firing-line, suddenly collapsed in the last stage of exhaustion; the exposure in the deadly night-air, together with the heart-breaking events of the last few hours, had proved too much for his wasted frame, and he lay behind the barricade on the point of death.

Gently we carried him inside and laid him on the couch, and there, in the little room where he had laboured so long and patiently, he breathed his last and passed into the unknown Beyond.

The sun by this time had risen in the deep dark-blue of a summer sky, and the burning rays were already taking ghastly effect on the corpses in the compound. And Wang could not yet have reached Hankow! Ill-satisfied at the result of their rushes, the Chinese rabble began to adopt other tactics. A few rusty jingals had been apparently discovered, and these were being loaded with great precaution.

Now a few jingals in the hands of a Chinese mob are not necessarily very dangerous, and provided you are not scared by the deafening report, and can take cover from the hail of bullets, the material damage need not be very serious; but in this particular instance the jingal marksmen mounted the walls of the compound, and were thus able to fire down on the veranda, so that while our attention was concentrated on them the others could rush the compound.

In this way we suffered another casualty. We three defenders were endeavouring to silence a few ambitious marksmen whose fire was becoming quite unpleasantly accurate, when suddenly a villainous-looking crowd, wearing Boxer-sashes and armed with spears and knives of every description, came rushing into the compound and were within a few feet of the barricade before we had time to divert our fire. The next moment we sent a volley of bullets into their midst; three fell mortally wounded, and the rabble retreated in confusion, with the exception of their leader, a hideous, powerfully built ruffian, who kept on his headlong rush to the veranda rails.

Now Margery—who, although terribly distressed by the death of her uncle, had kept a brave front and shown an excellent example to the defenders of the tiny fortress—was at this moment under the shelter of the sandbags attending to one of the wounded converts, when just above her appeared the threatening spear of the Boxer leader. Lying prone as we were, it was impossible at first fully to realise the dreadful situation; but in a flash her one-time lover threw himself forward and received the full force of the weapon in his bare chest. The next instant the Chinaman fell back into the compound with two bullets through his shaven head.

We saw at once that the other would never recover. The broad-bladed, rusty spear had inflicted a terrible wound, and the poor fellow was suffering untold agonies. Still conscious, he refused to be taken into the house; so, having brought out a mattress and made him as easy as possible in the shelter and shade of the sandbags, we again took our places at the loopholes.

And so it went on all through the broiling day, now repelling rushes, now returning the fusillade of the jingals, until at last the sun sank behind the city walls and night came on with all the appalling suddenness of the East.

And what a night! As I look back it seems one hideous dream: the ghastly stench from the compound—the moanings of the dying man behind us—the sickly moonbeams falling, now on an arm stretched out in agony, now on the upturned face of a corpse.

Suspicion of a night-attack precluded, of course, all idea of sleep; so we remained at our posts with eyes and ears straining for a creeping figure, for the far-off sound of the river-gunboat. And as the night wore on, and all was still, there flitted through the tired brain fantastical fancies and memories, long since forgotten, of youthful hopes and dreams, of other times and other places, of schoolboy-days in England. The light of the dawn found us, haggard and weary, waiting with almost fatalistic indifference for what the new day would bring.

'Land dead ahead, sir!'

The words were spoken with alarming distinctness, but they were the words of a dying man. We left our posts and knelt beside the prostrate figure on the mattress; but the Boxer spear had done its work, and the *Iconoclast* incident was closed for ever. So there were two of us left to defend an English girl, a few native converts, and the honour and prestige of the British Empire.

The attack soon recommenced. First an attempt was made to fire the building by throwing lighted torches; but this we were able to frustrate by means of the buckets of water that had been prepared, and the fusillade began again.

A burning sun, an ever-diminishing store of food, our ammunition almost exhausted, and still no sign of relief. The situation was growing desperate. A well-organised rush would have settled the matter for ever. As we lay there behind the puny barricade, watching our little row of cartridges grow smaller, it is not to be wondered that there came down on us a dull, hopeless apathy, bringing vain, despairful imaginings: Wang had been caught in the city and the relief would never come; the whole British Empire was a myth; there was no such place as Hankow; there were no such things as gunboats; there was only the glittering foresight of a rifle and a horde of yellow, naked bodies in a sun-baked compound!

*Toot—to-oot!* The long-drawn wail from the river was succeeded by a dull report. I lay there wondering vaguely at the fresh trend of events until I became aware that Graham was tugging at my sleeve.

'That was the gunboat's siren,' he said hoarsely; 'and they 're using their three-pounder on the gates.' And he went on with his good news.

Slowly at first as the gunner ranged, and then with deadly insistency as he found his mark, the three-pounder shells came screaming in from the river. A faint cheer told us that the breach had been made, and then the gates which had survived all those countless generations of yellow faces collapsed in a mass of bent and twisted metal.

We heard the short, sharp bark of a service revolver; we saw the Chinese scattering in the narrow streets; and the next instant, in a flash of colour, a party of bluejackets, headed by a young sub-lieutenant, came doubling into the compound. And

so it was all over. The mission was saved, the three-pounder was layed on the Yamen, and Wang was the finest Chinaman that ever lived.

'We got your message yesterday afternoon, and started up-stream at once,' said the sub-lieutenant, replacing his smoking revolver. 'Guessed you 'd be having a warm time.'

Leaving the Lewes main road on the right, a little below the village of Berwick, you follow a leafy, wooded lane until you come to the gates of a fine old English mansion, standing in pleasant, park-like country, and looking out over the Sussex Downs. Any villager will tell you that it is the home of Sir Gerald and Lady Graham.

## A FLOATING LIFE-SAVING STATION.

TO the traveller who approaches the coast of Britain the neat white houses and walls of the same hue form indeed an attractive sight, even though the tourist may not be aware of the humane purpose for which they have been placed there. He sees them sometimes miles from any other human habitation, some on rock-ledges high above water, others in little valleys which stretch down to the sea.

This feature so familiar to the coast of Britain is absent in the United States, but along the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts are what the Americans call life-saving stations. They are exactly what their names imply, and the men who occupy them do not have to look out for smugglers, as this duty is performed by another department of the Government service. The coast of the United States in many places is extremely dangerous. For instance, Cape Hatteras, the long, low point which projects into the ocean from the coast of North Carolina, has been called the 'Graveyard of the Atlantic' because of the many vessels which have been cast ashore or sunk at this place by the gales from the Gulf Stream, and by the dangerous currents which sweep along the shore in this vicinity. Cape Flattery, on the coast of the state of Washington, has been called the 'Graveyard of the Pacific,' and is probably the most dangerous point on the seaboard of the United States, for the reason that it is a bold, rocky eminence reaching out into the ocean for several miles; it is not far from the narrow strait which forms the entrance to Puget Sound, and through which all ships going to the principal seaports of British Columbia, as well as of the state of Washington, must pass. What is called the Japan Current, an ocean-river which flows southward, comes close to the shore at this point, and, mixing with the colder water of the sea, causes fogs so dense that the pilot may not be able to see beyond the bow of his vessel. This part of the Pacific is also noted for its violent storms, while the tide often rushes into the strait with waves fifteen or twenty feet in height. Consequently the utmost care has to be exercised by the mariner whose ship plies in this part of the Pacific, and it has a dark record for the number of lives lost and vessels which have been dashed to pieces on the rocks or stranded, and their crews either drowned or possibly frozen to death in the winter gales.

It is a locality where the American life-savers have great difficulty in trying to perform their duty, as there are many storms so violent that it is impossible to launch a boat from the shore, while a ship in distress may be so far out on the ocean that the life-gun which is used by the rescuers for shooting lines to the vessel and hauling the crew to safety is of no use. An instance of this kind occurred only two years ago, in a January storm, when the passenger-steamer *Valencia* was wrecked at the entrance to the strait. For two days the fated vessel lay on the rocks, but the waves ran so high that it was impossible for the people on board to be reached. Finally she was literally knocked to pieces, and of the one hundred and thirty-six persons comprising the passengers and crew, not one was saved. Probably more lives have been lost in these dangerous waters than off any other harbour of America, for the record is nearly seven hundred within the last century.

The disaster to the *Valencia* caused the American Government to consider plans for preventing further loss of life, and for aiding vessels which might be in distress off this shore. The result was the construction of a little craft which is probably the only one of her kind in the world. There are passenger and freight carriers, the small lifeboat which is rowed or sailed from the shore such as the coast-guards and the American shore life-savers utilise, and the craft for towing vessels and for many other purposes; but this boat has been well called a floating life-saving station, since she was designed and constructed entirely for the relief of seamen in danger or distress. True, she is so staunchly built and so powerful that she can tow a hulk much larger than herself to a place of refuge; but she is intended especially to take crews from ships which are sinking or may be in danger of sinking, or have grounded where they may go to pieces. This means that the *Snohomish* has an arduous and dangerous mission, for she must be at sea in times when ship-captains seek the nearest port of shelter on account of storms. She will be stationed on the Pacific near Cape Flattery, and for weeks at a time will be cruising in these waters, especially during stormy and foggy weather.

The vessel is named *Snohomish* after one of the American Indian tribes who were noted for their skill with the canoe, even venturing far out on the ocean in their fragile boats. They inhabited this part of

America before the white man came, so the name is quite appropriate, as they were what might be called seagoing Indians. In appearance the vessel is not very impressive. Some of the tow-boats which ply on the English Channel and help to dock the great liners and other vessels at English seaports are larger in size, but it is doubtful if any have the same power or are so stoutly constructed. Her hull is entirely composed of massive steel plates, and in some parts is of double thickness. The interior is divided by strong bulkheads or partitions into watertight compartments, so that if by accident one or two of the compartments are filled with water the vessel will still float, as the others will remain free of water. In addition, however, she has powerful machinery for pumping out the water in case she should ship a sea. The framework is as strong as that of an ocean liner, being composed of heavy steel, while her engines have a strength of no less than fifteen hundred horse-power in order to help her to fight against the waves and to be able to ride out storms which would sink an ordinary ship. She is provided with a very large propeller-wheel having four bronze blades, each of which is no less than eleven feet in length. The *Snohomish* contains everything that will add to her safety and assist her in her mission. She is lighted by the electric current and is entirely fireproof. To enable her to be controlled in stormy weather she is steered by a steam-engine, and she has steam-windlasses for winding cables or ropes without human labour.

In addition to a complement of metal lifeboats, the *Snohomish* carries guns for throwing life-lines over a vessel in distress. The crew may be taken off safely even at sea, despite the rolling of either craft, by means of a novel breeches-buoy operated by steam-power. This apparatus is the well-known breeches-buoy used at the life-saving stations, combined with devices for operating and keeping the cable always under an even and safe tension no matter how the seas toss the vessel about. The two special features of this apparatus are an automatic reel which constantly 'gives and takes' on the cable, while maintaining a tension nearly as even and constant as if the vessel were at rest, and a 'down-haul,' by means of which the passengers in the breeches-buoy are safely landed on deck without regard to the boisterous character of the seas. A rustproof cable line of light steel fifteen hundred feet in length is provided. This will permit of the operation of the life-saving apparatus up to more than a thousand feet between the vessels.

The way in which this device is operated is worth describing. If the *Snohomish* sights a vessel in distress she goes within range of one of her life-guns, which carry a distance of over a quarter of a mile, so that she can keep far enough away to avoid a collision even in a heavy sea. The gun contains a projectile to which is attached a small rope known as a whip-line. To the other end of this whip-line is fastened the life-saving cable. Only the whip-line is shot over the wreck. Then the men aboard it haul the cable to their vessel and fasten it to a mast or to some other secure place. This life-line is provided with a pulley or block and tackle, and to it is attached what sailors call the breeches-buoy, which is a combination of a circular life-preserver and a canvas bag which will hold one or two persons. As soon as the line is made fast it is only necessary to get into the breeches-buoy, when the steam-operated machine on the *Snohomish* pulls it to this vessel, its human cargo is unloaded, and it is sent back to the ship in distress. So rapidly is the operation performed that a hundred persons can be transferred from one craft to the other in two or three hours, so that even if a ship is sinking the crew can be rescued in a very short time.

This floating life-saving station has a store of medicines in charge of a government surgeon, cabins where victims who are injured or very ill may be accommodated, and special supplies of food and clothing for use when they may be needed. As already stated, she is provided with cables and towing-machines, and if the ship in distress has not stranded, and there is a port within reach, not only the crew but the vessel may be rescued.

The *Snohomish* is manned by a crew of veteran sailors. She belongs to what is called the United States Revenue Marine Service, but is detailed entirely for this perilous duty. All of her officers have navigated the Pacific and are familiar with its many dangers. As she was built in a shipyard on the Atlantic coast, it is necessary for the little craft to make the long voyage round Cape Horn, and before reaching her station she will have gone a distance of no less than twenty thousand miles—one of the longest voyages on record for a boat of her size, as she is only one hundred and fifty-two feet in length and is not so large as many yachts used merely for pleasure. Her commander is Captain A. V. Levis, assisted by Lieutenant B. L. Brockway.

## EXILED.

Alone I stand beside the sea,
The long waves breaking at my feet;
So breaks my heart anew for thee
With each reverberating beat.

I watch the great ships slowly dip
Below the far horizon's rim;
And from mine eyes the salt tears drip,
And all the orient grows dim.

I lay a shell close to mine ear
To list to what it has to tell;
Thine only is the voice I hear
Sweet as some faint, far Sabbath bell.

Upon an alien shore alone
An exile from my home and thee!
Above the waves' sad monotone
God speaks, 'and there was no more sea.'

M. Hedderwick Browne.

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# THE GERMAN ARMY.

By RICHARD THIRSK.

THE German army is composed of the combined armies of Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony. Generally speaking, it might as truthfully be called the Prussian army, since nineteen of the army corps belong to Prussia, whereas Bavaria has but three, and Saxony only one. The total strength of these combined armies during times of peace is put down on paper at something over six hundred thousand officers and men, divided into six hundred and twenty-nine battalions of infantry, four hundred and seventy-four batteries of horse, five hundred and seventy-four batteries of field artillery, forty battalions of fort artillery, thirty-four battalions of engineers, and sixteen machine-gun divisions. Besides these, there are the various necessary auxiliaries for serving such a large army, including the medical staff, the commissariat, the veterinary surgeons, and other non-combative forces. A bill passed recently by the Reichstag empowers the authorities to augment largely the number of men serving in the ranks.

The term of service in foot-regiments is for two years; in the cavalry and horse artillery men must remain a year longer. From active service, soldiers pass into the First Reserve for a period of five years, during which they are frequently called up to their regiments for longer or shorter periods of drill. At the end of this time they pass into what is known as the Landwehr, or Second Reserve, and finally into the Third Reserve, in which they remain until the completion of their thirty-ninth year, when they are freed from military service.

While on active service the infantry soldier receives six shillings a month pay, the cavalryman two shillings more. Lieutenants begin with sixty-four pounds ten shillings a year, rising slowly through various grades to six hundred and ninety-nine pounds a year, which is the sum paid to commanding Generals. To this must be added a small allowance for rent granted to officers who cannot be housed with their regiments.

The Kaiser is the *Oberster Kriegs-Herr*—that is to say, the supreme head of the army, whose approval must be obtained in all that concerns it, who controls all its movements, and who alone has the right and power to send it into action. He has taken upon himself the responsibility of its efficiency and conduct, and it is very possible that should he take it into action he may command it in person.

In his position as chief of the army, the Kaiser is assisted by the Military Cabinet, composed of a number of high military authorities, whom the Kaiser elects as overseers of the various departments of the service, and whose duty it is to report to His Majesty in council all that takes place in the German army and in the armies of foreign nations.

Next to this is the War Office, which is under the charge of the Minister of War. The latter is a soldier of long and varied experience, who also represents the army in the Reichstag, answering the questions asked by deputies concerning it, and negotiating in the Reichstag the yearly grants necessary for the maintenance of the army.

The War Office is divided into a number of sub-offices, each under the control of its own military chief, who is subordinate to the War Minister. From these offices instructions, money, provisions, and all other necessaries are despatched to the units in the barracks or in the field. Thus the whole organisation meets under one roof, which prevents any confusion or the possibility of one part working against another, and constitutes the War Office the great controlling house without which the army would fall to pieces.

But the organising power, the brain, the eyes, the ears, the very soul of the army, is the General Staff. This is a colossal institution, composed of only the picked men of the whole army—those men who have distinguished themselves by their military genius, their knowledge of tactics, their capacity for organising and inventing, or by other distinguished qualities calculated to increase the efficiency and usefulness of the army. They are all of them men with ideas, and of unquestionable ability, devoting themselves entirely to the work of perfect-


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ing the complicated machine of which they are parts. The General Staff is also the Intelligence Department, and is responsible for all necessary information regarding the strength, movements, guns, arms, and every conceivable particular concerning foreign armies, forts, defences, and the like. According to this information, changes are made in the German army to cope with every emergency, and plans for attack or defence are worked out. Basing its conjectures upon the information in its possession, the General Staff has considered every possible chance of an attack upon Germany from any quarter, and has shown how such attacks are to be repulsed, and how the enemy is to be driven back. Recognising the possibility of an offensive campaign, it has worked out, on paper, campaigns in foreign countries. Locked away in its secret safes the General Staff has its plans, prepared with the greatest mathematical exactness, for the conquest of nearly every nation.

It is when one comes to know something of the General Staff that one realises what the German army really is, and understands something of its magnitude. To discuss the possible success or failure of its plans and theories would be idle. The fact that these have been prepared, and are kept constantly up to date, is a proof of that spirit which courts success, and of the determination of the nation to be ready for each and every emergency. All these plans and theories are tested from time to time in the light of recent events. Struggles between combating Powers are watched by the General Staff with the closest attention, all the incidents marking their progress are impartially criticised, and the lessons learned from these are applied in practice, forming the groundwork for changes and improvements. Another equally important duty is to secure carefully prepared plans of all countries in which Germany may at any time be called upon to carry out military operations.

Probably the most serious work falling to the General Staff is the arranging and preparing of secret plans for the mobilisation of the army and reserves the moment war is declared. As a knowledge of these plans would be of incalculable service to a hostile army, and as there is always the possibility that some part at least of the secret may be betrayed to some interested foreign Power, the plans have to be constantly changed and altered, which means that the work on them is never ceasing. With what smoothness these plans work, collecting the whole fighting army and transporting it to the scene of action, together with all necessary munition and provisions, was amply demonstrated during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. Then, as now, every General had his sealed orders and a time-table, which it was only necessary for him to follow in order to arrive at the scene of action at the time he was expected. So well did these arrangements work out that, though hundreds of units were involved in the various movements, Moltke could calculate with certainty to within a few minutes upon the arrival or departure of any one of these units.

To-day, with increased railway facilities, the system is even more perfect. Yet the railways have added to the complication of the task, making it more difficult to get a comprehensive view of the perplexing network of lines throughout the country; and the work of timing the arrival and departure of trains from all parts of the Empire, and of managing everything so that no block can possibly happen, drives many officers insane. This work in the time-table department is so dreaded that it is difficult to induce officers to take to it, in spite of the increased social advantages which such a position on the General Staff offers them.

This is, as briefly as it may be told, the composition and machinery of the army which was established by Frederick William I., and developed by Frederick the Great into that powerful weapon which has helped to make the nation what it is to-day. Its history has been chequered, and does not always justify the pride with which Germans boast of its deeds prior to its achievements in the war against France, or even since then; yet no one can gainsay that as a fighting-machine it is as nearly perfect as human means and genius can make it. It certainly is a wonderful institution, a marvel of ingenuity and organisation, a monument to the patience and skill of those who are responsible for its existence.

The motto of the German army is 'Ready,' and that is the keynote of everything done in every department of it. A solid business-like spirit pervades everywhere, and nothing that brains, energy, or money can suggest or do is spared, nor anything left undone which may help to keep it true to its motto and be always 'ready.'

Unfortunately it is an axiom that there seldom is a good that has not its attendant evil; and German militarism is no exception, as the Germans themselves are the first to admit. One of these evils is its increasing cost to the nation; but this must be looked upon as a necessary evil, since the army is the symbol of settled security to which the nation owes its existence, and endows it with that confidence so essential to industrial and commercial success.

Heavy as it is, the cost of maintaining the army is not the heaviest part of the military burden. It is as nothing compared to the enormous sacrifices which universal military service demands; and this hits hardest the middle or commercial classes, whose sons must give up to the army some of the best years of their life, which, needless to say, generally proves a severe handicap to them in the prosecution of their studies or the following of their commercial pursuits. The frequent claims which the army makes upon their time at varied periods causes a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction. On this very practical point all the German's theoretical pride in the army vanishes. He complains that universal military service is a vicious, unrelenting institution, which makes no

allowances or exceptions, which never takes into consideration whether or not it is ruining a young man's chances in life. It is so far-reaching that it hinders and upsets the ordinary course of business. Merchants and manufacturers look upon it as a bugbear. Almost the first question they ask an applicant for a vacancy is if he has finished his military service; and if he has not, they prefer not to employ him. They complain that they no sooner have taught a young man their business methods, and find him of use to them, than he must leave them for the army, and they cannot afford to let their business stand still until his return, so they have to fill his place as best they can; and when the young man leaves the service he is without a situation. No amount of argument can prove that it is a good thing to disturb the routine of a business, either for employer or employed. Therefore, however beneficial compulsory service may be for the nation, it damages the individual. And the hardships do not cease on expiry of the first term of military service, for when the reservist goes to exercise for eight weeks with his regiment either he and his family must suffer, or his master.

When a man settles down in business for himself his case is even worse, if possible, for it has happened that the army has ruined many who had begun in a small way. An instance of this was reported in the newspapers quite recently, and it may be taken as typical of many, though fortunately they are not all attended with the tragic circumstances which brought this case before the public. A man invested all his capital in a business, to which he applied himself with diligence, and began to do very well in it, until he was called out to serve some weeks with the Reserve. Unfortunately for him, he had not the means to afford a substitute to keep his business going during his absence. On his return he shot himself, and the examination proved that his reason for doing so was because his business, which depended entirely upon his personal effort, was hopelessly ruined through his having to close it for so long a time.

Another objection to universal military service is that it is dangerous to health—not the actual service, but the dread of it. Nearly all enterprising young men desire to escape military service for no other reason than that they wish to enter at once upon their life-work. In the hope of unfitting themselves for passing the doctor's examination they tamper with their health, often causing such damage as to ruin it permanently.

It is because of universal military service that Germany has never been a successful colonising Power. The adventurous young men, those who might be getting about the world, and probably winning territory for the Fatherland, are obliged to stay at home for the army. If they do go away, they must return within a certain time and at their own expense. This is seldom convenient or practical, and compels them to choose between two alternatives: either they must give up what prospects they have before them and become soldiers, or they must throw off their allegiance to Germany entirely, becoming citizens of the country in which they have settled.

The present condition of Germany's colony in South-West Africa is a startling revelation of the failure of conscripts, as compared with volunteers, to keep law and order in a colony. In the disastrous campaign against the Hereros, Germany refused to employ men who lived in the country, who had their interests there, and who knew the ground; preferring conscripts from home, who went out feeling they were going to martyrdom. One way or another, they managed to drag out the punitive expedition for an unconscionably long period, and few of them returned with much glory to themselves.

Realising some of the drawbacks of universal military service, the Government has tried to minimise its hardships by introducing what is known as the *Einjährig Frei-willigedienst*, or one-year service. The privilege of serving for only one year instead of two is granted to all who pass the middle classes of a high school. For this privilege they have to pay all the costs out of their own pocket. These include kit, uniforms, board and lodging, a man-servant, and the numerous expenses incidental to a soldier's life, which in the crack regiments may run up to a thousand pounds for the year, and which in the so-called cheap provincial regiments average two hundred and fifty pounds. From these one-year service men are recruited the officers of the Reserve, and as this title carries with it much influence, most young men are ambitious to obtain it. But as a very large percentage of those who possess the necessary certificate have not sufficient money to pay their expenses, they are obliged to launch into debt, and to place themselves and their parents under obligations, which burden hampers them in their future career. Hence many young men who have the one-year service qualification and not the necessary funds are obliged to serve as ordinary soldiers; for although the Government has a fund for assisting such, the conditions under which it is granted are not particularly enticing.

Another objection to this favour shown to educated men is that one-year service men are not popular with the ranks, being considered the legitimate sport of all who can take advantage of them. Nor are they looked upon with much favour by drill-instructors, except in those instances where there is a prospect of future gain. The drill-instructor is generally more noted for his bullying and abusive proclivities than for his intelligence, and only too often uses the power confided in him to make the soldier's life unbearable. His idea of a soldier is that he is something like a wild animal, which must be trained to do a certain number of things in a certain way within a certain time. The authorities allow him considerable latitude as long as he produces the results required of him, though he has frequently to be

court-martialled for the brutal and disgusting methods he adopts.

For a man of education and self-respect to submit himself to the rule of such a drill-instructor is to feel degraded and insulted. Rather than undergo this treatment many young men leave the country, never again to return to it; for the pains and penalties awaiting them in the event of their return are more terrible than the methods of the army they flee from. The mere fact of their running away proves them, in many cases, to be young men of spirit and pluck, such men as the country cannot easily afford to lose, who, were they permitted to remain at home, would turn out useful members of society. As it is, they look back upon the Fatherland with no particular pride, and their parents often curse the evil which robbed them of their sons; and when a son longs to return through illness in the family, or when other occasion requires his presence, he is kept away by fear of the authorities, who are waiting for him the minute he puts his foot upon German soil.

For this reason, it is to be feared that the army is killing patriotism in Germany, even in the army itself. The service is dreaded more and more as industrialism advances, and the only good thing that men have to say for it is that they have done with it. So strong is the feeling against it in the middle classes and the lower classes that were it not for universal military service very few men would be soldiers in Germany. Doubtless when the necessity arose volunteers in plenty would flock to the standard, but during peace-times the army is far from popular, and individual pride in it is more abstract than real or practical.

It may be possible that the conditions of life for which the army is responsible account for the sad fact that so many Germans when they go abroad deny their own country. It may also be for the same reason that they permit themselves so readily to become absorbed by other nations, making good citizens of other lands, to the abiding loss of their Fatherland. The greater freedom they enjoy abroad appeals to their imagination; they feel themselves more the masters of their fate, and they take advantage of every opportunity offered them by throwing off all their allegiance to the home-country and naturalising in the new.

Many complain that the army is an institution which the introduction of commercialism has antiquated, an institution that has not kept pace with the forward march of events. Much dissatisfaction is found in the army itself. The men complain that they have far too much drill and too many parades; that they have to go through exercises from sunrise till sundown, until they are completely worn-out. There is also much grumbling about the food. It is of a kind to which many of them have not been accustomed at home, and which, they say, is no more than sufficient to keep up their strength. The coarse black bread they can hardly eat, and the pay they receive is not sufficient to keep them in tobacco. Consequently they are dependent upon their parents and friends to send them hampers of food and money. Their great longing is for the time when they will be able to return to civilian life, and they tick off on their calendars the days as they pass, anxiously counting the time that remains between them and liberty.

Even the officers have their grievances. They feel in all things the power of the 'one hand,' as they express it; that the army is too much the Kaiser, being held in subjection to his absolute will. Every now and then he introduces changes in the officers' equipment or the style of their uniforms by way of experiment, the cost of which comes out of the pockets of the officers, who grumble about the expense. Officers are in no sense of the word free agents. Even their opinions are prescribed for them; and if they hold views on politics, government, and progress which are known to be at variance with those held in high quarters, they are compelled to run the gauntlet, and possibly to leave the army. They are forbidden to smoke in the three fashionable streets of Berlin; and if, when they are driving, they meet a Royal equipage with the coachman holding his whip aloft, thereby denoting that some Royal personage is behind him, the officers must stop their carriage, alight, and stand at the salute until the Royal equipage has passed by. No officer can marry without the consent of his superiors, who inquire if his intended wife is a fit associate; and should the result of the inquiry prove favourable, a fixed sum of money must be invested in the regimental funds, upon the interest of which the officer and his wife may be able to keep house and entertain in a manner befitting their position in the army.

Doubtless the sorest point of all among the officers is the slowness of promotion. Because of this, many of them, who are poor to begin with, and who have not the good fortune to marry money, have to eke out their salaries by remittances from home until they are over forty years of age. Usually an officer without influence serves something like twenty years before he obtains a captaincy, and before he can attain to any of the more lucrative positions he has reached the age-limit, and is retired on a pension wholly insufficient to keep him in comfort. It is stoutly maintained, and with some show of truth, that all the good posts in the army go to favourites belonging to the nobility, who practically hold a monopoly of such positions.

Much has been said in praise of the German army as being a good training-ground for the rougher element of the population, instilling into it some notion of discipline and orderliness. This the army may do, but it is questionable if the good wrought in this way is in due proportion to the evil wrought in other ways—as, for instance, when a young man who has been carefully brought up at home enters the army and comes into contact with the evil influences of the questionable characters around him. Whether or not he submits to these is merely a question of temperament and character. The chances are that in the process of having his eyes

opened he gets somewhat contaminated, and returns to his home a different man morally from what he was when he left it. In any case, it is not a particularly pleasant prospect for respectable parents to have the knowledge that their sons are likely to be boarded together with young men whose respectability is so questionable that the army contemplates reforming them.

Considering the large number of men serving with the colours there is comparatively little crime in the German army. The latest statistical report for the year 1907 gives the number of military and civil offences dealt with by the military authorities at ten thousand two hundred and fifty-three, and this proves a considerable decrease on the previous year. There are, however, a number of irregularities for which the army is either directly or indirectly responsible, but which are not included among the offences, and are therefore not published in statistics. The army is more concerned about drill than about morals. Its one and only aim is to lick the soldier into proper shape, so that he may fit exactly into his place in the machine. Its method of accomplishing this end is systematically to crush all individuality out of him, and to make him one of the crowd, moving in blind obedience to the word of command. Hence officers will tell you that in a whole regiment they cannot find more than twenty or thirty men in whom they can place any confidence; and it is on those few that they must rely for leading all the others, whom their officers characterise as being hopelessly stupid and entirely innocent of any common-sense.

This is not a particularly favourable comment upon what is often lauded as being the great social and economic advantage of the army—the advancement of the education of young men whose schooling has been neglected. True, there are schools in which those soldiers who come to the army ignorant of orthography may learn to write their names legibly, but it is questionable if beyond this they learn anything of real practical value to them. Young men who have been brought up on farms naturally have their wits sharpened through contact with the new world into which the army introduces them and the new companions whom they meet. Yet experience goes to prove that this kind of education is not always good for them. It makes them dissatisfied with the country life they have hitherto led, and causes them to look upon it as being narrow and cramped, and in order to escape it they remain in the overpopulated towns, adding their quota to the unskilled labour markets. Thus the education received in the army has been largely responsible for the undoing of Germany as an agricultural nation, a result which the military authorities have tried in vain to avoid.

Realising the seriousness of this, the Kaiser has now thrown all his influence into the movement which is endeavouring to stem the tide flowing townward. What he most wants is the healthy type of soldier who hitherto came from the agricultural districts, but who is fast disappearing. The various schemes favoured for the accomplishment of this end are likely to cause some interesting developments in German legislation, especially when the Land Reform question comes to be finally dealt with.

So long as the army remains one of the greatest factors in the country for the spread of political propaganda, a small holdings scheme, or any other plan, can only meet with partial success. Political influence is working more mischief than the authorities can counteract, much as they try to check it. What gives them the gravest concern is that this political influence is mostly in favour of the spread of the Social Democratic agitation. The members of this party serving with the colours soon succeed in interesting their dissatisfied comrades in the movement, and introduce them to their societies. Those men who later return to the country districts take with them their new political ideas, influencing people in remote parts who have never before heard anything about the party, and this had a tangible effect at the polls at the last elections. It is a very important part of the Social Democratic organisation and plan of campaign, and the party, in spite of its recent defeat, succeeded in adding over five hundred thousand votes in its favour in the course of a few years, and that in face of the strenuous efforts of the Government to effect a reduction.

The seriousness of this influence is proved by the fact that the authorities do not trust men to serve in the regiments stationed in their native districts. For instance, conscripts from German Poland are made to serve in West Prussian regiments or are brought to Berlin, while those from Elsass and Lothringen are sent to the Polish province and to East Prussia. In this way towns are garrisoned by men who are entire strangers to the districts, so that in the event of a rising among the inhabitants there is little chance of any sympathy between the latter and the soldiers whose duty it would be to deal with them. In any case, the authorities admit that dividing the troops in this way gives them a feeling of greater security.

These are a few of the problems with which this great organisation has to contend, and which are apparent to the casual observer. Yet it must not be inferred from them that there is any corruption in the army itself which would in any way affect its efficiency in the field. To be led into such a mistake would be fatal. It is so entirely under the power of the authorities that such a condition is altogether out of the question; nor, indeed, is there on the part of those serving in it any desire to see it otherwise than the powerful weapon of war that it is, probably the most powerful that has ever been invented.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER XVIII.—HOW SIR GEORGE PASSED AND LEFT HIS BURDEN BEHIND HIM.

JOHN SAX'S usually quiet face was gray and drawn as he lifted it from bending over his stricken chief when Captain Charles came back into the room, and he was evidently labouring under very strong emotion. 'We have been speaking,' he said abruptly. 'Sir George has something to say to you.'

'I would give years of my life to ease you, father. Only tell me what I can do,' said Captain Charles with deepest feeling as he bent over the bed.

'Your father asks from you,' said John Sax, 'a solemn promise that you will carry on the business as it is now being carried on.' And the eyes of the dying man glued themselves to his son's in heart-breaking entreaty.

'Oh, surely! I have never had any other thought in my mind, sir. Do not let that trouble you for one moment.'

'He knows what a wrench it was for me to quit the army,' thought Charles, 'and thinks I may dispose of the bank and return to it. And the bank has been his life's work.'

'You solemnly pledge your word of honour to carry on the business as it is now being carried on? It will be a satisfaction to him, Mr Charles, to hear you say it.' And the dumb anxiety of the tortured soul dragged at Charles's heart.

'I solemnly pledge my word of honour to carry on the business as it is now being carried on,' said Charles. 'And I promise to give my life to it as you have done, sir. Nothing shall be wanting on my part.' He never forgot the infinite depth, the uplook from the whelming waters of another world, the pathos, the tragedy of the sad eyes that looked up into his as he said it.

'Do you desire more, sir, just now?' asked John Sax.

But the weary eyes closed, and remained closed, as though they had done with earth's sorrows and anxieties, and craved only rest. And John Sax drew quietly back from the bed with a deep breath that was like a sigh.

Captain Charles went softly out and found Charlotte, her eyes red with weeping, her face all puffed with grief. But he could give her little comfort, and he was soon back in his father's room.

The afternoon wore itself out. The windows of the palace across the Queen's Gardens flamed in the setting sun; the shadows gathered among the trees and shrubberies and stole out over the trim lawns and flower-beds. The ponds alone gleamed pale and ghostly, like wakeful, watching eyes. Then the light faded in the sky, and the shadows claimed the ponds also, and Charles Lauriston and John Sax sat silently waiting.

At times one or other of them would hold his breath and listen intently, in fear that the slow breathing on the bed had ceased and the dread moment come; but, with what seemed most dreadful breaks and pauses at times, it would go on again, and theirs would follow it suspensively. Charles brought in a shaded lamp from the library, and the moment the light fell on John Sax's face he sent him away downstairs to get something to eat and drink, for he looked ghastly.

'You must keep up, John Sax, for all our sakes,' said Charles in a whisper; and Simmonds saw to it that such sustenance as outward ministration could afford was not wanting.

Simmonds asked after his master, in whispers also, as he waited on him with his own hands. For over forty years Simmonds had been to Sir George in the house what John Sax had been to him in the bank, and the end that seemed near was to him as the end of all things.

'Make Mr Charles come down and take something, Mr Sax. Trouble's easier borne on a full stomach than an empty one,' a precept which Simmonds himself had visibly practised all his life.

John Sax nodded and went back to the silent vigil upstairs, and presently Charles came down to satisfy Simmonds's requirements and his own.

'No hope, Mr Charles?' asked the old man.

'I fear not, Simmonds. Berkeley fears the worst.'

'It's uncommon sudden, Mr Charles. I've heard of folks having two or three strokes, by way of warning, as you might say. It's hard we should have only one and done with it.'

'I'm afraid he has worked beyond his strength, Simmonds. He has always looked well, but he would insist on keeping a very great deal in his own hands, you know. I don't suppose any one else could have done it as well, but I'm sadly afraid he's paying for it now.'

'Like enough, Mr Charles. Many's the time, when you've been away, that him and Mr Sax has been shut up in his room together till long after midnight. And that's wearing work, on top of a hard day's work too. And how is Mrs Lauriston, sir, and Master Charles and Miss Mavie?'

'The children are first-rate, Simmonds, and Mrs Lauriston is certainly stronger, though she's not quite her old self yet.'

'We miss the sight of her here, Mr Charles. I always used to say a glimpse of her sweet face made one feel as if the sun were shining right inside the house.'

'You're quite right, Simmonds, and your thought of her does both you and her honour. Now I must get back. I have been expecting Dr Berkeley every minute. Have something ready for him if he cares to take it. He is overworked too just now.'

He had barely got back to his father's room

when he heard the doctor's carriage drive up, and Berkeley came straight upstairs.

'No change?' he whispered.

Charles shook his head. 'Several times we have feared he was going; but'——

The doctor nodded, and, after critical observation of his patient for several minutes, beckoned Charles to follow him out of the room.

'Simmonds was offering me refreshment,' he said as they reached the dining-room, 'and I will accept it gladly. I've been on the go since I left you. I shall stop here now. It is only a question of time, and not very long, I fear. He is sinking slowly. I should say he has no pain, and his mind is more at rest, which makes for a peaceful ending.'

'He will just fall asleep?'

'One can never say,' with a shake of the head. Then nodding thoughtfully, 'Death is still the great mystery. Death the Consoler—the Healer—to those who are left, a grim black shadow; but to those who go possibly a sweet-faced angel with smiling face and welcoming hands. At least that is how I like to think of it myself.'

'It is a happier thought than the other. But it comes in terrifying forms at times—to the onlooker, at all events.'

'Exactly! We see the outside only, and the flesh may be wrung though the spirit is at peace. Do you fear it yourself? As a soldier—no?'

'For myself, no. For those I might be leaving behind'——

'Ay, that's where the wrench comes. And it is natural too, as natural as it is for every man to think himself essential, which no man really is.'

'All the same, his going may leave a gap and a wound.'

The hours dragged on slowly and wearily to the sound of the long, slow breathing on the bed, and the startling abruptness of the watchman's cry as he crawled on his round outside.

'Two o'clock and a fine, clear night!' had given place to 'Three o'clock and a fine, clear morning!' The shadows in the Queen's Gardens, over the way, were gathering up their skirts for flight; the ponds were like watchful eyes struggling with the mists of sleep; the east was just pearling to the dawn, softening and opening as though for the passage of troubled souls, when the three men, sitting, heavy with watching, behind the screen where the shaded light was, were startled suddenly to their feet by a hoarse, strained whisper, a dreadful whisper under the circumstances, 'Charles! Charles!' and they hastened to the bed.

Sir George was sitting up, bending eagerly forward, his gray face weirdly lit by the last flicker of the dying light within.

'Your promise!' he jerked, sawing imperatively with his feeble right arm. 'I charge you!' And it was dreadful to see the battle between the spirit and the flesh. 'You will suc'—— He swayed heavily forward, choking for breath. Then, with a valiant, an agonising effort, 'You—will—succeed'—— For an instant the light glowed in the deep-worn eyes, and then he sank forward in a heap.

They laid him back on his pillows, the laboured breath was indrawn twice and twice expired in a long-drawn sigh, one more breath he drew, and sighed no more.

For good or ill, Sir George Lauriston was dead.

And old John Sax's face was as colourless as the face of his dead chief.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE BRIDGES OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

By A. J. Glasspool.

THE recent widening of Blackfriars Bridge and the coming of the County Council trams over the territory of the City of London has naturally drawn attention to the unique means by which the City bridges are constructed and maintained. It is well for the ratepayers of London that the Bridge House Trust exists, for out of its funds such magnificent structures as the Tower Bridge and also the other bridges within the City's jurisdiction have been erected, repaired, and improved.

Our forefathers acknowledged the value of bridges. The names of those who were connected with the Bridge House Trust are lost in oblivion. The fund was certainly in existence in 1122, for in that year, the City records inform us, the monks of Bermondsey and the Church of St George, Southwark, received five shillings as an annual rent out of the funds of the Bridge lands. The Trust was probably commenced by charitable contributions; grants of toll for this purpose were allowed by the Saxon and early Norman kings. It was William Rufus who imposed a tax to furnish labourers for its rebuilding. Henry the Second assisted by means of a tax on wool; this gave rise to the belief that London Bridge was founded on wool-sacks. King John gave the 'God's Pence' taken from foreign merchants. Funds were raised by the rents of the houses built on the bridge.

The money thus derived attracted the attention of monarchs. Henry the Third seized on the funds, first granting them to the Hospital of St Katherine, and afterwards to his consort, Queen Eleanor; London Bridge fell into decay, and consequently the brothers of the Chapel of St Thomas, on the bridge, had to seek charitable aid to maintain the fabric.

In 1412, in the mayoralty of Richard Whittington, the annual value of the Bridge House Estates is put down at £148, 15s. 3d.; in 1591 the amount

left over after paying expenses was £109, 17s. 6¾d.; in 1611 the houses on the bridge produced the sum of £472, 11s. 8d., and the revenues from the Bridge House Estates had increased to £1546, 16s. At the present day the annual income is about £150,000. The accounts preserved at the Guildhall are written in Latin from the year 1381 until the year 1480; some are marvellous specimens of calligraphy. Prepared on loose sheets, they were afterwards bound in volumes in elaborate binding.

It may be interesting to know that the Bridge House sign, used to the present day on all documents associated with the Trust, is supposed to have originally been a merchant's mark. That means of communication to either side of the river was considered an important part of the Corporation work may be gathered from the fact that on the obverse of the ancient seal of the Corporation was seen London Bridge, with a boat riding on the water below.

That the Bridge House buildings were used for important public purposes may be gathered from interesting facts recorded in the City's letter-books. On the 30th December 1594, we read of a 'Letter from the Lord Mayor to the Lords of the Council, complaining that he had received a message from Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins, requiring for the use of the fleet the garners and ovens within the Bridge House, which had been erected by the City for the storing of corn in time of dearth and for baking bread for the poor; and requesting them to direct the knights to use H.M. garners at Tower Hill, Westminster, or Westminster Palace for the purpose.' Again we read, on the 14th January 1624, of a 'Letter from the Lords of the Council to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, requesting them to give directions for the delivery to Sir Allen Apsley, one of the Surveyors-General for victualling the Navy, of two thousand quarters of wheat from the storehouses at the Bridge House, Bridewell, and elsewhere.'

A faint idea of the enormous amounts paid out of the Bridge House Estates funds on account of City bridges may be gathered from a few simple statements. With regard to London Bridge: removing the tolls in 1767 cost £30,000; rebuilding in 1833, £483,732; approaches (north and south, 1824 and 1846), £1,021,421; widening (1904), £100,000. Blackfriars Bridge: building the first bridge (1760 and 1812), £230,000; rebuilding (1863), £401,131, 1s. 4d.; widening (1909), £150,000. The purchase of Southwark Bridge cost £218,868, 18s. 8d., and the building of Tower Bridge £1,060,000.

The evolution of a bridge is a subject fraught with the deepest interest. It is a long journey from the simple stepping-stones, or the trunks of trees laid across a stream, to the Tubular Bridge of Robert Stephenson built across the Menai Strait. Some of the bridges of ancient days were remarkable for their skilful construction. In China we find stone bridges of which no records will tell us the day of their building. The bridge of boats formed by Xerxes across the Hellespont in 480 B.C., and Trajan's stone bridge, four thousand seven hundred and seventy feet long, over the Danube, A.D. 105, were both masterpieces of good work.

The occupation of England by the Romans was of a purely military character. To keep the inhabitants in subjection good roads were highly essential. There could be no better starting-point than London; and it seems natural that we should find, in that portion of the itinerary of Antoninus Pius relating to Britain, that nearly one-half of the routes described started or terminated in London. Dr Reginald R. Sharpe, in his *London and the Kingdom*, remarks: 'The same reasons that led the Romans to establish good roads throughout the country led them also to erect a bridge across the river from London to Southwark, and in later years to enclose the City with a wall. To the building of London Bridge, which probably took place in the early years of the Roman occupation, London owed much of its youthful prosperity. Whenever any accident happened to the bridge, the damage was promptly repaired.'

Whatever was the nature of the structure of the first London Bridge, it does not seem to have been very substantial. We know that when the Danish fleet chose Canute's son to succeed his father in 1014, the English Witan declared for Ethelred; and he returned to England, accompanied by Olaf, the king of Norway. The Danes were assembled on London Bridge in great numbers to prevent Ethelred and Olaf from entering into London. With their united fleets, they determined to make the effort. They covered their boats with wooden roofs, and rowing bravely up to London Bridge, placed cables round the piers; then rowing down-stream, they caused the piles to become loosened, the bridge gave way, and the Danish fighting-men were precipitated into the stream. The memory of King Olaf's assistance is preserved in the names of four London churches: St Olaf, Jewry; St Olaf, Hart Street; St Olaf, Silver Street; and St Olaf, Tooley Street. A Scandinavian poem also celebrates this event:

> London Bridge is broken down,
> Gold is won and bright renown;
> Shields resounding,
> War-horns sounding,
> Hildur shouting in the din!
> Arrows singing,
> Mail-coats ringing,
> Odin makes our Olaf win!

The bridge was rebuilt, only to be swept away entirely by a great storm in 1091, when, we are told, six hundred houses in the neighbourhood were destroyed. Stow mentions that in 1114 the stream between the Thames and London Bridge was dried up: 'A great number of men, women, and children did walk over both on horse and foot.' The bridge having been destroyed again by fire in 1136, a new bridge was constructed in 1176 by Peter of Colechurch. Peter was a priest of St Mary Colechurch,

situated at the corner of Conyhoop Lane, Poultry. His church was built upon a vault above-ground, 'so that men were forced to ascend into it by certain steps.' It was here that Thomas à Becket was baptised, his father's place of business being situated not far away—on the site of the present Mercers' Hall.

London Bridge was then in its glory; it was one of the sights of the Metropolis, its Non-such House and the Chapel of St Thomas attracting much attention. In 1756 all the houses were pulled down, and in 1822 John Rennie's designs for a new bridge were approved; the work, however, was carried out by his two sons, John and George.

It seems strange that any opposition should have been made to the proposition to construct another bridge across the Thames. It is, however, a fact that several ineffectual attempts were made in this direction in Parliament during the reigns of Elizabeth, James the First, Charles the First, and Charles the Second.

The question was raised in the House of Commons in the year 1731 regarding the building of a bridge from Palace Yard to the Surrey side of the Thames, the money to be obtained by a lottery. The first stone was not laid till 1739, and in 1750 London Bridge had its earliest rival.

As London increased in population the enormous traffic caused much congestion on London Bridge, and many demands were made for the widening of the bridge. There was, however, desperate opposition to any interference with Rennie's beautiful structure; numerous acrimonious debates took place in the Council Chamber at Guildhall on this subject, one well-known councillor concluding his speech in defence of the bridge in Macaulay's well-known words:

> Now, who will stand on either hand,
> And keep the bridge with me?

Those who wanted a new bridge got their way when the Tower Bridge was opened, and in due time the advocates of the widening of London Bridge were also satisfied.

London Bridge has been associated with many happy and as many unhappy events. The grim heads of traitors struck terror into the hearts of evil-doers; from its roadway Queen Eleanor was pelted with mud and stones. Perhaps the bridge never looked so beautiful as it did when our Queen, as Princess Alexandra, made her entry into London. Portraits of Danish kings adorned the bridge, and tripods held sweet incense to perfume the air and to kill the evil scent of the river; a gorgeous triumphal arch on the City side was magnificent by day and by night.

In a few years no doubt another bridge will cope with the increasing demands of London's traffic; but no bridge will ever be a genuine rival to London Bridge in historical interest and in the simple grandeur of its design.

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# WHEN WINTER CAME TO GREEN'S FERRY.

### CHAPTER II.

IF there is one word of appreciation a man loves more than another it is the term 'prince.' Van Peldt dwelt upon it, for it had an added charm when spoken by Maddie Buchanan.

The cold wind moaned down Lake Lomond, and the young man drew his coat around him as he left his home. Dark as God's wrath and cold as the hand of death, the night whipped his cheek with tiny particles of flying ice. Indian summer had gone, and winter was upon the land. He turned his back to Cromarty Head and looked to the north. A faint light shone, glimmering and fading; now for a moment it was lost to view, again it fluttered back to life. It could be seen only from Cromarty Head, and Percy Van Peldt alone knew whose light it was. It was the camp-fire of Douglas Craig Douglas, perishing on his rock.

Van Peldt felt like a despot king, with the life and death of a man in the hollow of his hand. Why should he interfere with Fate playing the game for him? His rival marooned, Maddie half-won; a few hours more and the game would be ended. 'All is fair in love and war' he told himself again. But his was not the part of a prince; he winced and tried to think of something else. The tiny speck of camp-fire, like a red star in the murky night, had an accusing glow. He drowned the voice of conscience with an oath.

'Curse you! Starve, freeze, drown! I hold the winning hand. Life is a game, Douglas Craig Douglas, and I win. Go down to your defeat like a man—down—down with Runkle. The gods are with me, and the world is mine!'

And how the three Fates must have smiled!

He turned away from the light and strode off to Lodgewinna.

The Virginia creepers tapped like human fingers on the window-pane, and a long stream of light poured across the frozen beds of phlox and verbenas. Silently he stepped within the porch-door and contemplated the scene before him. It was such a picture as artists paint. Maddie sat at the old grand piano, on one end of which was his photograph, on the other end the portrait of Douglas. A great sheaf of chrysanthemums he had ordered from Ottawa shadowed the centre-table; in equal prominence was a bunch of water-lilies the Guardsman had gathered for her on the Quebec side. Slowly her fingers touched the ivory, and then her voice arose in song, sweeter and sadder than he had ever heard it before, the plaintive notes sounding almost like a requiem:

'Could you but come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be faithful and loving, Douglas—
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

'Never a scornful word should grieve you,
I'd smile on you sweet as the angels do;
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever—
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

'Oh, to call back the days that are not!
My eyes are blinded, my words are few,
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas—
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

'I never was worthy of you, Douglas,
Never half-worthy the likes of you.
Do you know the truth up there in heaven?
I—love—you, Douglas, tender and true!'

The girl's voice broke with sobs as she finished, and rushing to the photo of Douglas, she threw her arms about it and burst into a freshet of tears.

Nothing else could have told Percy Van Peldt the truth as he heard it that night; he was learning more of women at Green's Ferry than Newport or Saratoga could have taught him. He knew that in half-an-hour she would have consented to become his wife, but he also knew that he never could have won her while she thought her hero lived. She had told him, and would tell him again perhaps, that she did not love him. With Douglas Craig Douglas a dead memory there was wealth to gain, Lodgewinna to save, an old man's life-desire to be indulged, and all her childish ambitions realised. That afternoon she had weighed his wealth and the luxurious life he had to offer against the personality of Douglas, and the Guardsman had outweighed them all.

And, strangest of all—he had wondered at himself—he did not blame her; it seemed such a natural thing to do. At twenty he would have married her had he known she secretly hated him, but at twenty-five he craved the love she had given to another. The world in an instant had slipped from his grasp. He left Lodgewinna as silently as he had come, and walked through the stormy night back to Cromarty Head. Defeat had made him a more manly man. Blinking and trembling, the little camp-fire shone bravely, the only star in an inky darkness. He was glad he had known and loved the woman; a strange sorrow and joy had formed a truce in his heart. He was again a king in word and deed, but not a despot, and the lives and happiness of three people lay in the hollow of his hand. He looked at the light in friendliness now, murmuring lines he had once heard in a play, 'I am going to do a far, far better thing than I have ever done.' His face was drawn and set as he entered the cottage.

'Meakin!'

'Yes, sir.'

'Get the men to take out the *Genevieve* and go to Desolation Island at once. Tell them to bring back the man they find there. Let them tell him we saw his camp-fire. Get a clear track and a special to take my car to Ottawa. Wire the Russel House to reserve apartments.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Send this note to Lodgewinna at once.' He scribbled across his card:

'Called suddenly to Ottawa. Douglas Craig Douglas has been found alive and well on Desolation Island. Sorry I cannot come over to-night. See you when I come back. *Au revoir.* PERCY.'

It was a light-hearted note written in his own heart's blood. He stood for a moment blinking stupidly at the light. 'The game has turned. Douglas, you win,' he said.

Douglas Craig Douglas had tried in vain to live within his income, but his tastes were extravagant. He loved fine books, fine horses, fine dogs, and fine wines, yet his salary was scarcely twice that of Van Peldt's man-servant. As captain of the Strathmore Guard, his remuneration came mostly in honours and social recognition at Ottawa. This was the reason why his wooing of Maddie Buchanan had always stopped short of the words, 'Be my wife!'

The consciousness of his limitations came to him more bitterly with Van Peldt's rivalry, and he grasped at the possibilities of gambling to help him from the horns of dilemma. For the past three weeks he had been dabbling in stocks; but it had been a see-saw of fortune, and the stakes were small. Copper stocks on margin seemed to promise the best action, and he wired his broker to buy Colorado and Montana Company shares on one dollar margins.

When the point was made he ordered him to close out and buy in again with the entire amount, and continue on this plan, often referred to as pyramiding. C. and M. seldom moved more than one or two points a day. He would probably quadruple his thousand—all he had—or be penniless. So he paddled off that eventful afternoon with no occasion for apprehension.

There were balloon ascensions in Wall Street when Percy Van Peldt's brokers began a plan of action to break Runkle, whose hobby was selling C. and M. on margins.

The quarrel between the men had been a personal one. Runkle had made an ugly remark about Van Peldt, and the Press had quoted his words.

The stock, operated by unknown forces, began to rise slowly and steadily. 'Bull abature' meant more to Douglas Craig Douglas than a few thousand dollars; but he was shivering on Desolation Island, wondering if the two points had been reached, wondering if his love and fortune and life would all end in another miserable night on a barren rock. When the squall swamped his frail canoe he had swum through the icy waters to the island. He drew fire from the heavens with his sun-glass, and huddled beside the blazing driftwood all night long. Hunger crucified him, and hope died when

he saw for the second time the sun set in the blue-black timber, while Colorado and Montana closed ten dollars higher and left him nearly a millionaire.

Next morning, after Van Peldt's yacht had rescued him, the telegram handed to him in his room at Green's Ferry said simply, 'C. and M. closed at $149. $750,000 to your credit. Advise us.'

He laughed. There must be some mistake. Then his eye fell on the headlines of an Ottawa paper: 'Bulls Copper Market. Young Van Peldt causes flurry in Wall Street. Colorado and Montana goes skyward.'

He turned to the telegram again. 'C. and M. closed at 49.' He knew he had bought at 39. He figured mentally. He had doubled his total capital each turn—one thousand, two thousand, four, eight, sixteen; at the ninth turn he was lost in a maze of figures. An ill wind had simply blown him a fortune.

'Cease operating' was the message he sent his broker. Then he put on his hat and walked over the snow to Lodgewinna.

They talked of different things in the low, sunlit windows of Lodgewinna—the storm and the rescue, and of trivial incidents. Outside, the snow glistened over the phlox and verbena beds it had buried. The hedges and firs were bowed with their wrappings of ermine. Sleigh-bells tinkled along the roadway. Only yesterday it was golden Indian summer, and this morning by a miracle of a Canadian night all was turned to winter.

Douglas hugged the secret of his success to his heart; one more triumph, one more, and then the world was at his feet. There was no sign of emotion in the eyes of Maddie Buchanan, no sign of the love and anguish that had wrung her heart the night before. She talked of the frozen verbenas nonchalantly, and of Van Peldt. They are a self-contained people the Scotch Canadians.

'And Percy left last night for Ottawa, with only a note to say "Good-bye." It must have been important business that made him break an appointment.'

'It was,' said Douglas, 'a big deal on Wall Street. See what the *Free Press* calls him, "The Young Copper-King." They say he has enormous interests in all the leading copper-mines of the west.'

Maddie sighed. The sun had gone behind a cloud, and the snow-caps began to look cheerless.

'Douglas, I wish you were a king of some kind.' Then she laughed at the idea. 'What would you do?' she asked.

He turned to her with a face full of earnestness. Three-quarters of a million dollars is a lot of money anywhere, but particularly in Canada. He felt like a king. His thoughts went back to a poem he had written while in Edinburgh. He seemed to be musing:

'If I were king I'd woo you as a peasant,
Beneath your windows serenades I'd sing;
Holding your hand, through woods and valleys pleasant,
I'd wander happily—if I were king.
There'd be no tinselled courts of pride and glory,
No fawning courtiers nor viziers grand;
I'd pay you homage with the old, old story,
And crave the merest favour from your hand.

'If I were king I'd lead no hosts to battle,
Unto my slaves the joys of war I'd fling.
My highest, holiest, noblest ambition
To kiss your eyes, your hair, your lips—if I were king.
I'd be a slave the while I was a peasant,
A captive bound by love's own silken chain;
I'd pay the hostage of a life's devotion,
That you as queen within my heart might reign.

'If I were king there'd be no blare of trumpets,
I'd win you with a glory all my own;
I'd wear no purple to your pride appealing;
I'd woo you with a heart and not a throne.'

The girl's eyes fell, and Douglas held out his hands to her.

'If I were king my love could be no dearer;
I'd throw aside my crown and signet-ring,
To read my title in your eyes, love, clearer,
If I were king—if I could be your king.'

Tears of a strange happiness wet the girl's lashes; her prince of yesterday was every inch a king to-day. With all the native trustfulness of her nature she put both her hands in his.

And thus the captain of the Strathmore Guard won Maddie Buchanan.

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# PRACTICAL HINTS ON AFFORESTATION.

THERE are signs that the question of afforestation is reaching the sphere of practical politics, though Mr John Simpson, in his new book, *British Woods and their Owners* (Pawson and Brailsford, Sheffield), states emphatically that the proposals of the recent Afforestation Commission are outrageously extravagant, and out of proportion to its professed object, which was to consider whether it was desirable to make an experiment in tree-planting as a means of increasing employment during depression. A better method, he thinks, would be by a system of State forestry as in Germany. The question of afforestation should stand on its own merits, apart from the unemployed problem; its advantages are so evident that the State might be well advised in promoting a scheme on a generous scale. Mr Simpson, who is a practical forester and horticulturist, dedicates his book to the landowners of Great Britain, with whom, he believes, lies the future of British forestry.

Of Mr Simpson's previous very illuminating and instructive volume, *The New Forestry*, there was a notice, 'Forestry for Beauty and Use,' in this *Journal*

for 1900. This new book has been issued to prompt private owners to bestir themselves, as little help may be expected from the State for a long period. Practically the whole of the woods of Great Britain and Ireland are owned by private individuals, who maintain them at their own expense. But owing to lack of funds and proper management they are of far less value to their owners than they might have been. On some estates the woods are a dead asset, yielding no income to their owners; others have been so gutted that no more trees can be spared out of them. The great lack on private estates is system and supervision. Even though the State did not work the forests, as it does in Germany, it might make forest-laws, as there are game-laws and land-laws.

Mr Simpson says that 'as yet no favours bestowed by the Government on behalf of forestry have touched our British woods. The only piece of legislation that has left its mark has been the Death Duties Act, which has caused, and is causing, the destruction of standing timber on estates on a scale that was neither foreseen nor anticipated, which has thrown people out of employment, and arrested planting on a proportionate scale. There can be no doubt that if a record could be had it would prove this, and that not only has much mature timber been sacrificed to meet death duties, but much that was immature and unfit, or too young to cut as well, and the removal of which could only do injury to the crop left by over-thinning. If the timber-trade papers are watched, it will be seen that timber sales on estates follow the demise of owners in a great number of cases.'

Few things strike the visitor to Sweden and Germany more than the mountains covered to their summits with fine woods, in strong contrast to our own bald hills. The pictures in this book and in *The New Forestry* bring the difference graphically before the reader. The great Thuringian forests cover 26 per cent. of the surface of the land, only 5 per cent. of which is unproductive. There are corresponding areas in the United Kingdom lying entirely waste. The remarkable prosperity of Finland is largely due to its wealth of timber, some 90 per cent. of the country being covered with woods largely belonging to the State. Germany had forests to begin with; what the State did was to take them under its care, private owners being glad to conform to State supervision. About half the private forests are under State supervision. The United States is adopting this system, and the number of technically trained foresters is on the increase. The nursery area of young forests is also being increased, this being an absolute necessity, as the United States is now using as much wood in a single year as grows in three years, with only twenty years' supply of virgin growth in front. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company has introduced a forest system on its own lands. In the undergraduate forest school in Center County, between Michigan and Maine, a four years' course is given in every branch of forestry, which is taken up in connection with the work of the agricultural and mechanical department of the State University. The students study in a most practical way in forest reservation areas; they learn camp-life, the use of pack-animals, ponies, and mules, and the estimating of timber. There is a constantly increasing demand for trained foresters in the United States Forest Service. Tree-planting is being systematically carried out on the Massachusetts roads; in five years thirteen thousand trees had been distributed amongst fifty-five towns. German villages, like Cronberg and Konigstein in the Taunus, owe much of their beauty and attractiveness to the tree-planted highways. Mr Rockefeller purchased from Boskoop, Holland, in 1909, some thirty-five thousand blue spruce, coniferæ, cultivated by Koster, for planting in a park in which he was interested in the United States. Since 1900 the Canadian Parliament has established twenty-one forest reserves. In New South Wales a department has been created in the interest of conserving forest reserves. The forestry report of 1909 from New Zealand is not reassuring; it was estimated that there was timber to last the sawmills for about thirty-five years, after which the country must look to Canada or Manchuria for pine.

Mr Simpson points out that in England and Wales alone there are nearly two million acres of woods demanding the immediate attention of the State to save them from destruction, as also three and a half million acres of mountain and waste land far more fit to plant with a greater variety of trees than any land of the same kind in Scotland. British foresters have never had clear ideas about rotation periods, final crops, or density. A solution is proposed of the planting difficulty. He writes: 'In clear felling and complete replanting, one advantage of making a clean sweep of the old standing crop is that more money is realised, the felling and hauling harrows the ground well, and there is no better rooting medium for young trees than the virgin surface soil of an old wood covered with the humus deposited on the surface perhaps for generations. Clearing also affords a chance of succeeding one crop with a crop of a different species. The author would rather follow an old wood with a different species in the virgin soil than plant on the best sod or fallow or pasture he ever saw; and all old woods are in that condition, though it does not appear to have struck foresters much. By this method all the most profitable species may be used—light-demanders or shade-bearers. Indeed, the whole of our forest trees succeed best in the full light of the sun, and in clear cutting and planting they may be either mixed or pure. In adopting the scheme here advocated, clear cutting is to be preferred. The larch, all the pine family of the Scotch fir and Corsican class, the ash, oak, sycamore, elm, alder, birch, are all light-demanders in a greater or less degree. They may exist for a time under

the partial shade of other trees, or so crowded together in pure plantations as to shade each other injuriously; but the fact has been established beyond doubt that, consistently with the proper density of crop to secure clean timber, the more favourable the aspect and the more sunlight the trees receive during the whole of their life the more rapid the increase of trunk-volume, the more profitable the crop, and the shorter the rotation period.'

It is fir timber that consumers want more than any other. The Japanese and common larch and the Douglas fir would meet the demand. This last surpasses all the rest of our forest trees in rapid growth and increase of trunk-volume. Good examples may be seen on the Murthly estate, and at Taymount and Scone, in Perthshire. The Japanese larch is immune from larch disease. Some planted in 1886 near Dalbeattie are now fifty feet high and twenty-nine inches in circumference breast-high. Young plantations do not need wire-netting for more than four or five years to preserve them from destruction by rabbits. It is the first two winters that are the critical period. The Germans draw the line at a few useful species—mainly beech, spruce, and Scots fir. Larch, Douglas fir, oak, ash, sycamore, alder, black poplar, and willow are all profitable trees. Larch tops the list in usefulness.

Sir Arthur Bignold has shown a good example in tree-planting. In the course of the past thirty years he has planted eight million four hundred thousand trees, and he gives eight hundred feet as the maximum height where they flourish. Sir Herbert Maxwell thinks one thousand feet not too high. The German forests are luxuriant at a much higher altitude. Professor Somerville has pointed out how, in spite of the use of concrete and iron, the demand for timber continues to grow, while it seems unlikely that the chief timber-exporting countries can maintain their supplies for export. It is the interest, therefore, of every country to prevent wasteful destruction by forest-fires, to see that denuded areas are regenerated, and to undertake the planting of all available land with the right kind of trees. On the other hand, Sir Robert Hunter, in the first issue of the *Local Government Review*, writes upon 'Afforestation of Commons,' criticises the Development Bill, and says there seems a danger that many commons may become fir-woods through the absence of adequate means of protecting the commoners' interest in their pasture.

Meanwhile some large newspaper firms, anticipating the scarcity of timber and supplies of paper-pulp therefrom for the manufacture of paper, have made provision for the future. One company has sunk over a million sterling in the purchase of virgin forests of spruce-trees in Newfoundland, and pulp-mills have been erected, worked by electricity generated by water-power. A township is growing up around the works on the River of Exploits. When trees are cut down others are planted in their room. The proprietors of the *Daily Chronicle* and *Lloyd's Weekly News* get their pulp from their own mills at Honefos and Vittingfos, in Norway, and it is shipped from the port of Drammen. They also get quantities from Canada. The trees are felled in winter, and conveyed on sleighs drawn by horses or oxen to the nearest river, where they lie till the thaw comes in the month of April. At Honefos, thirty miles to the north-west of Christiania, Messrs Edward Lloyd, Limited, have their pulp-mills, which convert trees into pulp at the rate of sixty thousand tons annually. From thence it is brought to the paper-mills at Sittingbourne, Kent, which have an output of one thousand six hundred tons of finished paper every week.

## WHO OWNS THE HUDSON BAY REGION?

By P. T. M'GRATH.

THE alleged discovery of the North Pole, and the consequent claim that, the Stars and Stripes having flown there, the flag can never be lowered again, raises anew the question of the right of Canada to control the region north of Hudson Bay and exercise sovereign authority over the lands and waters there.

In the Canadian Parliament on March 10, 1905, in discussing the alleged American movements in Hudson Bay and adjacent lands, Sir Wilfred Laurier observed:

'We are aware that the Americans have been patrolling northern waters and giving American names to some of the territories there which I think are under our jurisdiction. We have already provided against that by sending an expedition there, which has just returned after planting the British flag on many parts of these northern lands. We cannot allow Americans to take possession of what is British territory, and we intend to assert our jurisdiction over it.'

This question may prove the most menacing to Anglo-American relations. Canada's assertion of sovereignty there and her measures practically to enforce her claims mark a new phase in her history. The expedition mentioned was sent north in July 1903, in the steamer *Neptune*, under Commander Low, to annex all the lands which could be reached. The *Arctic* followed in 1904, with Major Moodie, commissioned as Governor of Hudson Bay, and with North-West police to establish permanent posts and enforce Canada's laws there, and she has made annual trips to the region ever since.

Canada pleads that she has been forced to these drastic measures by the Alaskan Boundary Award, the bitterness against which is not likely to be allayed for many years. Fearing disputes hereafter as to the rights of both countries to this mighty unexplored northland, with a possible further loss of territory to her, she would prevent such by the precautions now taken. Especially is she impelled by her new transcontinental railway being designed to relieve her from dependence on American seaports and to afford an outlet for Western grain through Hudson Bay. Hence she would not desire traffic there to be menaced by foreign guns, as it was feared for a time Port Simpson, the Pacific terminus of the new railway, would be dominated by the islands which the Alaskan Award gave to the United States.

The impression which generally prevails that Hudson Bay and its surrounding lands are completely enshrouded by ice and snow is altogether erroneous. Sir Sandford Fleming, the distinguished engineer who built the Canadian Pacific Railway, in advocating a branch line to that bay, says:

'Moose Factory, on the margin of Hudson Bay, has a winter and summer temperature the same as Winnipeg, and the average snowfall is less than half that of Montreal and Quebec. Looking forward but a few years, the Dominion may come to possess in it a new seaport. Archangel, the Russian port, is on a parallel of latitude of thirteen and a half degrees, or more than nine hundred miles farther north than Moose Factory. Archangel is a seaport of importance, with a dockyard and a prosperous shipping trade. Its population is not inferior to some of our Canadian cities, and before the founding of St Petersburg it was long the only seaport within the limits of Russia. Can any person now living foretell what Moose Factory may yet become?'

Nearly the whole northern half of the continent, described as Rupert's Land, after the Prince Rupert, the first Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, was at the outset embraced within the domains of that corporation, which was formed in London in 1670, and received from Charles II. a charter granting it greater powers than have been bestowed on any company ever formed for overseas enterprise before or since. They included, according to the original patent:

'The whole, entire, and only liberty of trade and traffic of all these seas, streights, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the streights commonly called Hudson's Streights, together with all the lands, countries, and territories which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects or the subjects of any other Christian Prince or State. The fisheries within Hudson Streights, the minerals, including gold, silver, gems, and precious stones, shall be possessed by the company. It shall enjoy the right to seize upon the persons of such English or any other subjects which sail into Hudson Bay, or inhabit any of the countries, islands, or territories granted to the said company, without its leave and license in that behalf first had and obtained.'

The French, who were already established in Quebec, and had partly explored the interior, stoutly resisted this sweeping appropriation, and the efforts of both to control the rich trade in peltries and game led to bloody encounters, until by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 France had to abandon the region and recognise British sovereignty there. But in subsequent conflicts the war was carried on in that region, and as late as 1772 the French ravaged the bay and captured some of the forts. In 1812, again, when England and America were at variance, several fur-ships were plundered; but the Treaty of Washington in 1818, which granted Americans equal fishing-privileges with the British subjects along the Labrador and 'northward indefinitely,' declared these to be 'without prejudice to the rights of the Hudson Bay Company.'

Upon the ground that the rights were absolute and all-embracing virtually rests Canada's claim to the northland. But this is the one point which has never been properly determined. More than a century ago rival corporations strove for a foothold there, and became successful competitors. Lord Strathcona, the present Governor of the company, and Canada's High Commissioner in London, in a paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute in 1897, dealt thus guardedly with this aspect of the matter: 'The Hudson Bay Company claimed that it had the right to the whole of the territory included in the charter, and to the exclusive trading therein. This was, however, disputed, and the difficulties were indeed never satisfactorily settled until peace was rendered possible by the amalgamation of the rival companies in 1821.'

This charter, it should be noted, gave the company rights not alone over Hudson Bay itself, but over all lands and seas clear through to the Pacific Ocean which could be reached by means of a 'northwest passage' made *viâ* Hudson Strait, and therefore the company's rights, whatever they might be, would be as effective along the coast near Alaska or in the Arctic Circle as in Hudson Bay itself.

Lord Strathcona, however, does not maintain that these rights were monopolist, for eminent British authorities, after the grant of the charter, questioned its validity on the grounds that King Charles gave away a vast territory of which he had no conception, and that it was impossible to transfer property which could not be described. Then the company was successfully assailed in its operations by different rivals until eighty years ago. Canada, forty years later, opposed the theory that the company possessed such absolute privileges as it claimed, and again there was never any effective occupation of the northern seaboard of the territory.

Obviously, then, if the company did not possess an effective monopoly of the furring-rights of the region, it did not possess kindred fishing-rights either. American subjects, in the exercise of a privilege granted in 1818, could cruise up the

Atlantic coast and enter every inlet, among others Hudson Bay itself, unless the monopoly was effective. But if it were effective British subjects could not enter there either, the company's charter being equally directed against them. If this contention were accepted it must follow that British fishermen had no legal rights in any waters within the jurisdiction of the Hudson Bay Company, or else that when British fishermen were admitted there American fishermen should be granted the same liberties.

The next stage in the matter is thus described by Lord Strathcona, in the paper already quoted from:

'The march of events began to interefere with the virtual monopoly the company had enjoyed for many years. In 1857 a select committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider "the state of those British possessions in North America which are under the administration of the Hudson Bay Company, or over which they possess a license to trade." The committee reported that whatever might be the validity or otherwise of the rights claimed by the company under the charter, open competition in the fur-trade might tend to demoralise the Indians, and bring about the total destruction of the most valuable of the fur-bearing animals. Finally, in 1869, an agreement was arrived at by which the company consented to accept one million five hundred thousand dollars for the surrender of the territories to Canada, through the Imperial Government.'

In the foregoing extract it will be again seen that doubt is thrown upon the company's exclusive rights, and as the Scotch whalers began frequenting Hudson Bay in 1829, more than forty years before this transfer of authority took place, it is clear that this 'monopoly' cannot easily be maintained. No attempt was made to prevent these whalers, nor the Americans who soon followed them, from operating there; and from that time to the present day the Americans have continued to prosecute this industry without hindrance. Moreover, the United States and Great Britain differ in their interpretation of the famous 'headland' doctrine in maritime matters. The British view is that all waters within a line drawn from headland to headland are embayed and constitute a territorial area, the *mare clausum* (or closed sea) of diplomacy. The United States does not subscribe to this, though the entrances to Boston, New York, and Philadelphia might be held to bind her thereto. In the Alaskan dispute one of the main questions was as to the sovereignty of the headwaters of Lynn Canal, and involved this very issue.

Hudson Strait, the entrance to Hudson Bay, is forty miles wide and five hundred long, and the bay itself is the third largest sea in the world, only exceeded in size by the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, the area of the first being nine hundred and seventy-seven thousand square miles, the second six hundred and eighty thousand, and the third five hundred and sixty-seven thousand. As no attempt has ever been made to hold the first or second as the exclusive possession of any one Power, it is contended that the claim of Canadian ownership of Hudson Bay is not tenable, especially as the American whalers have been practically the only inhabitants of its western shore for sixty years past. If the American right to fish along Labrador and 'northward indefinitely' is valid, it gives these fisherfolk the right to operate along Baffinland and to the North Pole itself; and, inasmuch as they would have authority to enter every estuary more than six miles wide, it would seem as if they could not be successfully prevented from fishing in Hudson Strait or Bay. The northern extremity of Labrador and the southern point of Baffinland form the entrance to Hudson Strait, and according to the ancient view no ship but the company's could go west of a line drawn between Capes Chidley and Resolution, the two promontories in question.

That Canada can maintain this view is strongly disputed by students of the question for the reason already presented. Moreover, while Baffinland and other Arctic areas are claimed as British territory, the exploring, charting, and naming of much of the northern hinterland there has been the work of American explorers, who have done similar service in Beaufort Sea and Mackenzie delta, east of Alaska. These facts, then, coupled with Canada's failure until the last few years to attempt any effective occupation of these remoter areas, and the implied admission of insecure tenure in reannexing the territory, make a questioning of the validity of her jurisdiction by no means unreasonable.

Canada, however, views this matter of regaining her hold on the northland from a national standpoint, and the subject of her rights and authority there has become one of deep and vital interest to all her people. Her public men are only now awakening to the value of the fishery, peltry, forest, mineral, and agricultural wealth of the Hudson Bay district, the area of which is estimated at one million five hundred thousand square miles, comprehending every variety of soil and climate. The bay itself yields the northern whale, so prized for its whalebone (a single adult specimen being now worth fifteen thousand dollars), the white whale or grampus, the narwhal or sea-unicorn, the walrus, five species of seal, and thirty kinds of edible fishes. The peltries of the sea and shore have remained undiminished after nearly three centuries of slaughter, and the Hudson Bay Company spends two million dollars there every year in the purchase of furs alone, the most famous being those of the bear, fox, wolf, moose, caribou, wolverine, lynx, sable, ermine, marten, mink, otter, and the renowned beaver.

In the southern section husbandry is practised, in the west lies the fertile belt with its teeming grain-fields, and beyond is the ranching country, the products of which promise to create a new transportation problem erelong. The forest pro-

ducts include three varieties of pine and spruce, two of elm, ash, poplar, and birch, and one of aspen, tamarack, and fir. Smaller growths suitable for pulp-making abound also, and as the woodlands available in more southern latitudes become depleted these must be levied upon. The existence of such minerals as hematite and pyrite iron, copper, silver, gold, mica, gypsum, antimony, asbestos, and coal has been determined; and if the precious metal should be found in workable quantity there is likely to be an eastern Klondike established on these lonely shores, with a rush of settlers there such as follows every new discovery of auriferous areas anywhere in the world.

But transcending all other arguments in its bearing upon the future development of Canada's northern heritage, and her desire to preserve her coastline from foreign interference, is the pressing need for some outlets for the products of her great prairie country. The rapid opening up of the North-West, the peopling of the wilds, the marvellous increase of the wheat crop, and the mighty railway project, all point to Canada soon bulking larger in the eyes of the world as a commercial factor than she does now. To enable her to profit to the fullest extent from this improved position it is urged that she should utilise the Hudson Bay route as she does that *vid* the St Lawrence.

The case for the Dominion is that Hudson Bay is to Canada what the Mississippi is to the United States. It lies in the very heart of the continent, and is completely surrounded by Canadian territory. For two hundred and thirty years it has been as uninterruptedly a British possession as Chesapeake Bay has been American territory for one hundred and thirty years. Against Canada's plea of exclusive possession it is urged that there is no fixed rule as to what constitutes a closed sea, and that other nations made extensive claims at times to exclusive maritime jurisdiction, but had to abandon them. Thus England once claimed the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean north of Scotland, Venice in her days of power held the Adriatic as a closed zone, and Denmark and Sweden asserted the same as to the Baltic. Spain, most grasping of all, claimed the entire Pacific Ocean and the western half of the Atlantic, including the Gulf of Mexico. Britain, until midway in the last century, claimed the Gulf of St Lawrence, the Bay of Fundy, and the Cabot Sea off the south coast of Newfoundland. Lord North, in the Imperial Parliament in 1775, introduced a bill to prohibit the revolted American colonists from fishing on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. Russia, down to the sale of Alaska to the United States, maintained Behring Sea as within her exclusive jurisdiction, and the United States then did the same; but the tendency of modern times is to limit exclusive jurisdiction to waters within three miles of the coast, and the United States' claim was rejected by the Paris Arbitration of 1894.

But, in the argument as applied to the above cases, none of the claims were based on geographical and territorial facts analogous to those existing as to Hudson Bay. Although it has the dimensions of a sea and is connected with the Atlantic by a strait of varying width, the entire bay and strait are within the territory of Canada. Apart from territorial claims, her obvious interests, Canada asserts, form as good a claim to jurisdiction over it as the demand of the United States for an exclusive sea-area around the Pribylof Islands, not on account of territorial rights, but because of the value of the seal-rookeries on the shores.

With regard to the Hudson Bay route, the bay itself is so vast an area that it is never fully frozen over, but the strait is congested with ice for some months of the year, though at least seven hundred voyages have been safely made in and out of the bay by small vessels belonging to the Hudson Bay Company. The navigable period of the strait is variously fixed from three to five months for specially built steamers, and the interesting of capitalists in the venture must depend upon the facts provable as to its feasibility. The project will be one of interest to the American as well as to the Canadian West, because of the possibilities for a new grain-route which it embraces. A vigorous campaign for the development of Hudson Bay might stimulate the United States to advance claims to the region which might enable her to share therein; while, on the other hand, she would probably be indifferent if the prospect were not encouraging.

Canada, however, in any event, has determined upon an effective occupation of her northland in future, and by means of revenue cruisers, police patrols, and armed posts throughout the region, will give visible evidence of her jurisdiction, with the twofold purpose of securing to herself and her people all the future wealth of the region and of preventing another diplomatic entanglement like the Alaskan boundary dispute.

## SILVER AND GRAY.

Silver the shine of the moon on the wave,
Burnished the path of the light on the sea,
Gray looms the shore where the tides gently lave,
Lichened the walls of the church by the quay—
Silver and gray.

Silver the catkins on willow-tree shake,
Lonely the graves midst the whispering grass,
Silver the stem of the birch in the brake,
Eerie the cry of the gulls as they pass—
Silver and gray.

Hope for the morrow, though dark be the hour;
Get thee thy trappings, why garb ye in gray?
Courage keep alway when battle-clouds lower,
Silver a broadsword to wield in the fray—
Silver or gray?

J. Johnston Smith.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# THEIR LOVE-STORY.

By ROSALINE MASSON.

PART I.

THE girl stepped out of the window on to the dark terrace, and stood quite still for a moment, drinking in the delicious peace of the summer night. The ball she had left was at its height. The supper-rooms had been thrown open — it was just midnight — and were crowded, and full of the noise of talk and laughter, the clink of glasses and dishes, the popping of champagne-corks, the hurrying to and fro of busy servants. The ballroom was comparatively empty; but one or two who loved dancing were still taking advantage of the clear floor, and were gliding on its polished surface to the dreamy music of the string-band. It was the picture-gallery that had been turned into the ballroom, and the walls were covered with family portraits, the proud and fair of many a bygone generation of Dabridgecourts. Some of the pictures were by unknown artists, popular in their day; but here and there came a painting by Van Dyck, by Janssen, by Lely, by Kneller, a sombre Rembrandt, a blue-sashed Romney. High above their frames a wreath of evergreens was festooned round the cornice, whence it trailed off down the carvings of the balustrade of the broad stairway, and lost itself among the flowering shrubs that half-concealed the band, just where the staircase curved into the centre of the gallery.

Edith Dabridgecourt could hear the strains of the waltz-music where she stood on the terrace, and could distinguish the more distant talk and laughter of the supper-rooms. She stepped a little farther out into the night to avoid the sounds, and leant on the white stonework that edged the terrace, and looked across the dark, shaven grass to where the dusk deepened into gloom and hid the familiar country. Suddenly the moon edged through the clouds, and struck her where she stood, making the stone she leant on pale as marble, and playing tenderly with her gleaming satin and pearls. Again she moved away, flitting like a ghost, gliding down the steps from the high terrace to the lower one, and taking refuge in the shadows below. She wanted to be alone, this modern maiden whose twenty-first birthday was being celebrated so royally in the house she had just left. She was very modern, this descendant of a long line of Dabridgecourts, this heiress of an ancient name. She found life at home dull after three strenuous years at Newnham, full of the excitements of physical and intellectual endeavour, of examinations and contests and emulation, of debates and hockey-matches and tripos, of talk and freedom and opinion. She had returned home; and, after the first thrill of delight in the æsthetic grace of it all, she had not been satisfied by tennis-parties, nor by the drowsy mornings in the old village church under the rotten oaken rafters, amid all the tablets to the memory of her ancestors. Even the advent of a lover was to Edith Dabridgecourt nothing more than another possession, to be taken for granted, to give at first (like other possessions) an artistic satisfaction as an æsthetic property in life, and then to cause embarrassment. After all, Sir Edward Lennard was only part of this new life that was so old a life. He was a neighbour, and the rest of the landscape belonged to him. He even shared the traditions with her, for the Lennards, when not compared with the Dabridgecourts, had been long planted on the soil.

As Edith stood in the moonlight she tried to focus her thoughts, and a frown gathered on her broad white forehead. Her friends—all those adoring college chums who had gathered in her study and drunk coffee with her, and talked of all matters under the sun and beyond their knowledge—had been wont to tell her that she was like a 'Dana Gibson girl,' for she was tall and generous of build, and she wore her dark hair parted, not always evenly, and brushed simply off her broad forehead above her great dark eyes, and the dainty chiselling of her little nose was not more adorable in its result than


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were the mobile curves of her rather too large mouth. But had these college friends seen the pictures in the gallery of The Chase then they might have recognised the same features appearing and reappearing through the centuries, all in different disguises—the square forehead concealed by the 'kissing curls' loved by Charles the Second beauties, or surmounted by the vast structures of powdered hair and pearls and roses of Georgian days, or demurely draped by bunches of the ringlets that were the care of Victorian matrons. 'Even my face is not my own!' Edith Dabridgecourt had exclaimed after a long, wet morning spent in the picture gallery. 'What is the meaning of it all? How much are we ourselves, and how much are we simply transmitted ether and radium? I wish I had taken psychology for my final!'

By a touch of irony on the part of Fate, it was Sir Edward Lennard who had brought the breezy American to her. Edith had seen him first in the morning-room, where she had found both young men talking to her mother. She had glanced casually from one to the other as they rose on her entrance, and suddenly—meeting in her straightforward, simple fashion the equally straightforward look of the tall, fair stranger—she had felt that in this man whose very name she had not yet heard, whose identity was unknown to her, she had met some one before whom all others—her parents, her lover, even those dear girl-friends with whom she had shared every thought and combated every opinion—were strangers indeed. As she gave him her hand she smiled; it was all so simple, so natural! And he—the directness of his scrutiny too grave to be rude—smiled suddenly in response a brilliant smile that lit up the clever, thin, civilised face.

Edith had moved slowly through the heavily curtained doorway into the drawing-room, and had bent over the cups on the tea-table. Sir Edward had followed her, and had stood waiting to receive them, talking idly in a lowered voice. Presently she began to listen.

'Curious, isn't it?' he was saying. 'Daybridge—of course it is the same name—a corruption. He's awfully keen on hunting it all up. The vicar introduced him. He seems a very decent chap. Then it turned out he got an introduction to your father from some one in London to whom he had brought letters from some bigwig out there. It ended in our walking over together.'

'Do you mean that he claims relationship?'

'Well, relationship is rather a strong word. It was a century or two ago. These Americans are awfully interested in tracing their families, aren't they? I never feel in the least drawn to mine. I knew a man'——

'Edith dear, ring and send a message to your father,' Mrs Dabridgecourt had interrupted in her gentle voice, entering from the other room as she spoke. 'He will be very much interested in what Mr Daybridge is telling me.'

The young American strode forward as she moved towards the bell, and again their eyes had met. Edith could have laughed, the thing was so patent, so wonderful, so ludicrous! They were no strangers; the rest of the world were strangers to them both. Their lives and their thoughts fitted as the two splintered edges of a broken vase fit when put together again.

Mr Dabridgecourt was very much interested. He carried the American, with his strong, likeable face and his slightly nasal accent, off to the library, where the tables were soon littered with old volumes and with cherished manuscripts.

Afterwards Mr Dabridgecourt told his wife and daughter that he held it was genuine—perfectly genuine; and that Mr Arthur Daybridge from Baltimore was the direct descendant of the elder branch of the family, who had lost the estate in the Civil War time.

'My love, does this young stranger claim his heritage from us?' the gentle old lady asked.

Her husband waived the idea aside. 'It rests a great deal on assumption,' he said. 'You know an Arthur Dabridgecourt fell at Worcester. We have his portrait. Well, he left a son, an infant presumably. Nothing more is heard of that infant in the family annals, for the estate was confiscated, and passed to the younger branch of the family, who were Cromwellians and my ancestors.'

'But why, if there *was* an elder branch, did they not claim it back at the Restoration?' Edith asked.

'Well, my dear, they did not. There is no record of any claim. The son could have been only a mere child, you see; and no doubt they were poor, and justice would have been expensive. But this young Daybridge claims descent from him, for it appears he can trace his family back to 1722, when an Arthur Dabridgecourt emigrated to Virginia. It rests chiefly on the name, and on the fact that he was a native of Buckinghamshire; and our Arthur Dabridgecourt married a Buckinghamshire woman. It seems more than likely that the widow went back to her own people, and that this emigrant of 1722 was the son's son. Also, he says that Cicely was a family name with them, and so it is with us.'

Mr Daybridge and Sir Edward Lennard dined with them next day, and spent the greater part of several days with them; and old Mr Dabridgecourt grew full of talk and excitement over the matter of the relationship—more so, indeed, than the young claimant himself, who seemed more interested and absorbed by the place itself, and the wonder of old tradition, old pictures, old trees, old ways, old names—all the fetters of the past and its continual presence, its unforgettable claim.

And now, on the night of the ball—the ball given in honour of Edith's majority—the American was amongst their guests, and was being introduced by their old host, half in earnest, as a kinsman. And Edith Dabridgecourt had slipped out into the night—the fragrant, warm silence of the summer night—to be alone with her thoughts.

Sir Edward Lennard had proposed for her and to her; he had come to her armed with her father's hearty consent; it seemed it was a thing regarded as settled inevitably, like so much else in her life. He had, she learned, waited for her all the three years of her erratic search after learning and freedom, and he had meantime been as a son to her parents in their retired life. All the neighbours knew of his hopes. It but wanted Edith's consent; and if this consent could be given now, then this ball would be in honour of a double event—her majority and her engagement. But Edith had begged postponement; the last prayer of the doomed and of the wooed was hers—she asked for time, and it was given. The women of the Dabridgecourt family had always been hard to woo and faithful when won.

Edith put her soft white arms round a little marble pillar that held a sun-god from Italy, and pressed her hot cheek on the cool, moonlit stone. A sudden thought had sent the blood coursing into her cheeks. A week ago, she owned to herself, she had been ready to drift into this marriage simply because then she had had no reason against it weighty enough to outbalance the wishes of every one else; but now, why was it different? It was because she had a reason. She straightened herself proudly. Had she given unasked, undesired? And then she smiled with that beautiful mobile mouth of hers. Was it only three days since they had discovered each other, or was it three centuries ago?

Undesired! Again the old feeling swept over her. They understood each other so well that to them the rest of the world stood aloof: and yet no word had been said. It mattered little what they talked of. What had they talked of? He had told her of his life in America. He had treated her with that singular deference that the New World accords to a young girl; not only deference to her as a woman, but recognition of her as an individuality, as the possessor of a soul and a mind. And in his talk he had touched, as a matter of course, on all the themes that had interested and fascinated her, that she had let her young judgment work upon, that she had imagined in her splendid young egoism to be her own. He had even used the very words and expressions she used, and had used them to convey the same ideas. This was not what her own family, nor Sir Edward Lennard (who aspired to become her husband) ever did. Mr Daybridge had taken for granted her college career, a thing that had hitherto provoked surprise, amusement, or distaste. He had asked her if she 'contemplated entering any profession,' and had given a humorously apologetic shrug at the consternation he had thus afforded her parents.

'Would you allow your sister or your wife or your daughter to do such a thing?' Mrs Dabridgecourt had asked him with gentle correction.

'Oh, my *wife!*' he had responded, with a slight accenting of his American speech. 'After she had allowed me to call her by *that* name the pronouns would never again get properly assorted on either side of the verb "allow."'

But to-night, the night of the ball, the talk had been different. Instead of taking her into his life he had come into hers. They had waltzed together, waltzed in silence but in wonderful accord. When the dance was over they had gone, as if by mutual consent, to one end of the picture gallery, where hung a little, dark portrait of that young Arthur Dabridgecourt who had fallen at Worcester fighting for his king. The portrait was very dark and faded, the paint crusted and cracked; it was not a valuable portrait, but only one 'after Van Dyck.' The coat of the young Cavalier had been blue satin, and the ruffles at neck and wrist showed dimly the rich pattern of the lace, though the white had turned yellow. The curled hair fell on the lace, and the long waxen fingers rested on the handle of his sword. The blue of the satin was dimmed, the lace was yellow, the hand was dead; but the eyes—the sad eyes, eyes as sad and full of nobility and dignity and as haunted as the eyes in the portraits of his unhappy monarch—the eyes were alive. And the girl, looking from the portrait to the man beside her, had laughed nervously a little laugh that ended in a shiver.

'Do you see it?' she had said. 'You could claim our name and The Chase for this alone! Tell me, do you like it? To come across the world from your land of liberty and freedom and individuality and find your very features—and if your features, then who knows how much else besides?—are not yours, but are only lent to you!'

Then he had smiled at her suddenly, tenderly, humorously. 'Liberty, freedom, and individuality! Is that what you crave for? And I, coming out of the garish tastelessness of modern life, the "bustle of man's work-time," the rush and heedlessness of it all, the self-seeking, the lack of enthusiasm, the want of interest for the real things, the interest only in the passing moment, the money-talk, the—— Oh! I crave for the past—its leisure, its strong aims and simpler passions, its reverent faith, its poetry, and perhaps also'—he lowered his voice and looked away from her as he spoke—'for one of its poems.'

'You are not a typical American,' she said lightly.

He pointed with his hand to the portrait above them. '"And if the features, then who knows how much else besides?"' he quoted.

She looked at him, and the smile died from her eyes, and she bit her lip to keep it from trembling. As though he read her thought, his face set. Did he remember the story of the portrait, the wrong done, the blot on the 'scutcheon? Of course he knew it! Was it not printed for any who cared to read since the bringing out, a year or two before, of a volume of old family records and letters, a volume the reading of which, young Daybridge had acknowledged to them, had brought him from Balti-

more to trace his connection with the Dabridgecourts at The Chase, in a quiet English valley in the Old World? It was of this story that these two modern young people were thinking, not of themselves, as they stood silently together by the portrait; so that when he asked her suddenly, 'Is there no portrait of Edith Dabridgecourt?' she knew, though it was the first time she had heard her own name spoken by his voice, that he spoke not of her, but of the woman who had loved and died more than two hundred years before, the woman who had so wronged the sad-eyed Cavalier, and whom, alas! the sad-eyed Cavalier had so bitterly wronged.

'No,' she answered. 'Her husband, it is said, burned her portrait.'

Arthur Daybridge raised his broad shoulders, but found the information beyond comment.

Edith's glance had wandered down the length of the portrait gallery, and she quoted sadly:

'Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,
Death came tacitly and took them where they never see the sun.

Isn't that how it goes—never see the sun? Who knows? They never saw it *here!*' She laughed half-mischievously, half-wistfully. 'It is all shut out by ancestral trees.'

'With us it is sometimes shut out quite as effectively by overhead wires,' he told her. 'Say, Miss Dabridgecourt, don't the features only serve to remind us of our debt and our duty? We inherit the world that was once all *their* world, and if we find it the richer for their lives that were lived in it? And if we find it otherwise, then too—— I feel, somehow, as if I 'd got to carry it on for him, you see,' he added, dropping into his American intonation. 'But where are *you*—where are *you?* Have there been many of you to gladden and grace the centuries?'

'Yes, I am here. Even these!' She touched the pearls at her throat as she spoke.

They turned away, thinking of themselves now, and forgetting to look again at the sad-eyed Cavalier; and they passed down the long gallery, as fair and proud a woman and as strong and true a man as any of those framed on either side of them. And he had glanced at each pictured woman as they went, but without comment. Only, as he resigned her at the door, 'I saw the *pearls*,' he had said, and his eyes for a second had met hers as he said it.

It was after that that Edith had escaped from the heated ballroom, and come out into the night to be alone and to think. But her thoughts, as she stood alone in the shadows of the lower terrace, hiding her hot cheeks in her cool hands, strayed again to the story of the past.

It was a story of tragedy, of hot passions and rash acts; a story of one woman and two men. There had been, in the early days of Charles the First, a happy group of young people at The Chase—a brother and a sister, Arthur and Cicely Dabridgecourt, and their orphan cousin, Edith Dabridgecourt who had been brought up with them. They had played and ridden in this very park, and they had lived in the old Chase, now a roofless ruin in the centre of the rose-garden, and the haunt of bats and owls. When they were older Arthur had gone to Oxford; and then the letters were full of gay doings when the young heir and his companions had ridden down from Oxford for vacation-times to make holiday love to the brilliant Edith and the gentle little Cicely. Later, the letters had told of the engagement of Arthur and Edith, and their wonderful love for each other, and of how Cicely had a vocation and was to become a nun. And suddenly into the midst of it all crashed the Civil War, ruining the home-life of Merry England, dividing houses and wrecking lives. Arthur went out to fight in the Royalist cause, and for months nothing was heard of him.

(*To be continued.*)

## FASHIONS IN WINES.

THE circumstances which tend to make a wine or a particular vintage fashionable to-day are wholly different from those which influenced the popularity of a wine some thirty or forty years ago. In those days a wine found favour according to its merits; a good wine was then always fashionable. Port was probably the most favoured, but a host might safely offer a good claret or even a thoroughly sound madeira or sherry to his guests without apology. But a completely different state of affairs prevails to-day. Different wines come into vogue for all manner of reasons. A well-known doctor, for example, may chance to extol the virtues of a light claret, and then all in a moment light clarets become the rage, which lasts until some other wine receives a like recommendation to popular favour.

Public attention may be attracted to a wine by some chance circumstance such as occurred a few years ago, when a discussion was raised in the press on the merits of old port. During that discussion, and for some little while afterwards, I received more orders for port than I had done in the whole of the previous twelve months. A customer told me rather an amusing story at the time, in connection with this sudden revival of port as a fashionable wine, which illustrates the widely different manner in which wines are judged nowadays from the way they were thirty or forty years ago. The customer in question was rather an old-fashioned gentleman, who still maintained the custom of stocking his cellar very

carefully with well-chosen vintages. He happened to have at the time in his cellar the last dozen of a really wonderful claret of the year 1858, worth quite three pounds a bottle. One night he had a couple of friends to dine with him, and as a special favour opened a bottle of this magnificent claret. 'Now,' he observed after the butler had filled their glasses, 'tell me, did you ever in your life before taste a wine that could come up to that?' The two friends sipped their glasses, looked at one another and then at their host, and shook their heads. 'It isn't bad, old man,' said one; 'but it is claret, isn't it? We are all drinking port now, you know.' For a moment their host was too astounded to speak. When he had recovered himself he got up from his chair with a smile, saying that if his guests would excuse him for a moment he would have a bottle of sound port brought up. 'I sent for a three shilling bottle of port,' he explained to me with a grin, 'and I assure you both of them declared it was a first-rate wine.' No one just now is likely to ask for claret instead of port, for the latter is, next to champagne, the most fashionable wine for the moment, whilst claret has sunk to zero in fashion's favour.

Champagne, by the way, had a long struggle for favour; but when it was accepted by connoisseurs it greatly affected the consumption of port, claret, and other old-fashioned favourites. Champagne was first introduced into this country in the reign of Charles II., and became for a time a very fashionable wine, chiefly because it found favour with that monarch. Only the sweet variety, however, was consumed at that period; and, though it was palatable enough, it was altogether too much doctored to appeal to the taste of good judges, and after a short time it rapidly declined in favour. For a long while it remained tabooed by those, at any rate, who understood the qualities of good wine; but in the reign of George II. several wine-growers made a determined effort to push the sale of champagne in this country, and a much better quality, though still sweet and very much doctored, was put on the market. From that time it became much more popular; and, though connoisseurs rarely touched it, champagne became more or less an established dinner-wine, its patrons being chiefly, however, the rising generation.

In the early seventies of the last century champagne got a tremendous boom, which it owed to the daring of a couple of wine-merchants who were the first to put a dry champagne on the market in this country. Dry champagne, I may explain for the benefit of the uninitiated, simply means the wine in its natural state, unsweetened by any mixtures. The wine-growers who supplied the merchants in question with dry champagne actually refused to let their name appear on the bottles, so strongly did they believe that the attempt to put the wine on the market would end in utter failure. Several wine-growers, as a matter of fact, refused to supply it. At first it looked as if the wine-growers were right. A well-known service club, who were the first to order the dry wine, declared it undrinkable, and for a time the merchants found their consignments of the wine a dead loss on their hands, and were unable to sell it anywhere. The merchants did not despair; they made a point of offering a bottle to their best customers whenever one came to give an order, and pointed out how infinitely better the wine in its pure state must be than the doctored, sweetened mixture. Gradually good judges of wine came to recognise this fact, and in a few years dry champagne had completely displaced the sweet variety, and came to be regarded as a wine to be selected with as much care and judgment as a port or claret. Between 1874 and 1894 champagne boomed tremendously. The vintage of the first-mentioned year was a splendid one, and was followed by the great vintages of '78, '80, and '84, during which period several new firms of wine-growers came into existence, who made their reputation and fortunes by the champagne of their year. Port and claret began to fall away in favour, and it became the fashion at many great houses, in well-known clubs, and at the messes of crack regiments to drink nothing but champagne.

From 1894 the great vogue which champagne had obtained, however, began to decline; and though it still remains what might be called perhaps the most fashionable wine, it has now many competitors for favour in the shape of light clarets, hocks, moselles, and chablis, which are now consumed at the most fashionable dinner-tables. Champagne and claret are the wines mainly consumed at the royal dinner-table; but it is interesting to note that the names of the wine-growers are never seen by the guests, for the wine is either decanted before being served, or, if not, the labels bearing the growers' names are removed from the bottles. This is done simply to avoid giving what would be a tremendously valuable advertisement to the growers supplying the wines to His Majesty, and it is a custom, I believe, now adopted by many people in society. One customer told me some little while ago that he had adopted this custom for the simple reason that if he had not done so people would suspect that he was giving them wine supplied to him free for the sake of the advertisement. Of course, no well-established wine-growers would dream of doing such a thing; but it is probable that a new firm would supply some highly placed individuals with wine, if not actually free, at a greatly reduced price for a time, to bring their name under the notice of the class of people they were most anxious to appeal to.

The habit of entertaining at restaurants which has grown so popular of late years has greatly affected fashions in wines, because it has resulted in most people letting restaurant proprietors form their taste in wine, and the persons who can go to the trouble and expense of stocking their own cellars are yearly becoming fewer and fewer. There are, of course, a number of people who do so still, and who always have their own wine served at a restaurant

whenever they dine at one; but this type of individual is decidedly becoming scarce. The result is that hotel and restaurant proprietors can make almost any particular wine they please fashionable for the moment. At a very fashionable restaurant in the West End of London the proprietor purchased some years ago a large quantity of claret and hock at a very low figure from a firm who were in great financial difficulties at the time, though they are now in a flourishing condition. The wine was laid down in cellars for a couple of years, and then the proprietors of the restaurant began to bring it under the notice of their customers very persistently, with the result that in a short time the claret and hock of that particular establishment obtained quite a vogue. They were by no means bad wines; indeed, the claret particularly was a fine vintage, and was in excellent condition; but it was quite absurd to suppose that the wines were of that rare quality which the patrons of the restaurant in question believed them to be. I happened to have one hundred dozen bottles of claret of the same growers and vintage in stock at the time, for which I would have been quite content to have taken forty-five shillings a dozen; but owing to this temporary boom in the wine I was able to dispose of the lot at seventy shillings a dozen. No doubt the wines supplied at the best hotels and restaurants are usually of a very high quality, though the prices charged for them are certainly high—quite three times as much as would be charged in a club for the same wine. It must, however, be remembered that the prices charged at the most fashionable hotels are maintained in order to keep them fashionable, and to retain a clientèle which would quickly desert it if its charges were made more popular.

Liqueurs have become immensely fashionable of late years, especially among ladies, which is largely to be attributed to the fact that so many women nowadays indulge in cigarettes. Non-smokers rarely drink liqueur. I have a number of customers of the gentle sex who never drink anything but a liqueur after dinner, and this simply to help them to enjoy a cigarette, which they feel compelled to indulge in as a concession to prevailing fashion.

There is, of course, not the least doubt that far less wine is consumed nowadays in society than was the case thirty or forty years ago, and the quality has also declined with the quantity in individual instances. I mean that there are now a number of people who put a class of wine in their cellars which their grandfathers would never have purchased. It is not bad wine; but it certainly has not the flavour, body, or aroma which men of a past generation thought so much of—too much perhaps. There were many men fifty years ago who would sit for days in their wine-merchant's office discussing the merits of various vintages when restocking their cellars, and give the whole subject a care and attention which was in some cases almost absurd. A customer of my father's actually got an attack of illness through the worry caused by the difficulties he encountered in deciding upon the respective merits of three port-wines when restocking his cellar.

Nowadays the first thought which enters a man's mind when stocking his cellar is to keep down the expense of the operation as far as possible, and he can purchase wines of excellent quality at a reasonable cost. They may not be so wonderful wines as the 1812 port for which was paid fifty pounds a dozen, or that famous claret that cost the late Lord Lamington seven pounds a bottle, and was considered a bargain at the figure, but they are good value for the money, and not one in a hundred, or rather a thousand, could detect the difference between, say, a port at fifty shillings a dozen and '47 port which fetched about twenty-five pounds a dozen the last time some came into the market.

The fact is, the possession of a really valuable wine no longer gives men a distinct social reputation, as it did in the days of our grandfathers, when a man would be often spoken of as So-and-so, 'who has some of that '12 port or '15 claret in his cellar.' Nowadays it is only enormously wealthy people who care to lay down wines of very high quality in their cellars; and many of them do so as a speculation, or rather as an investment, for a well-chosen wine of good vintage will always pay for the keeping. But the number of people who can afford to leave money idle for ten or twelve years is not very large nowadays.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XIX.—HOW JOHN SAX OPENED THE CUPBOARD-DOOR.

BERKELEY wrung Charles's hand sympathetically as he went down the stair. 'He has gone, full of years and honour, Sir Charles'—at which Charles's lips tightened; 'and you will follow in his steps and carry on the traditions of the house that were dear to him. That, I judge, was on his mind.'

'Yes,' said Charles brokenly. 'I fear he was troubled by the thought that I might wish to return to the army. But nothing was farther from me.'

'The bank must have a Lauriston at the helm,' said the doctor weightily. 'A great career lies before you, my boy, and you carry every one's confidence.'

Charles shook his hand gratefully and closed the door quietly behind him.

'Is he gone, Mr Charles?' asked Simmonds at his elbow. He had sent the others off to bed, but anxiety for his master had kept him up himself.

'He is gone, Simmonds.'

And the tears ran down old Simmonds's cheeks.

'He was a good master, almost a friend, if I might make so bold as to say so, Mr—I mean Sir Charles. We shall all miss him. You most of all, Sir Charles.'

'Yes, we shall miss him sorely. But these things are beyond our control, Simmonds. Do you know where Miss Lauriston is?'

'She is in her room, Sir Charles.' And Charles went up to break the news to her.

When he got back to his father's room John Sax was still standing by the bed, looking down at his old master's body with a white, set face. He raised his woeful eyes to Charles as he entered, and then pulled himself together with a visible effort.

'We may not grieve too much, dear John Sax,' said Charles, laying a kindly hand on his shoulder.

'God rest his soul!' said John Sax in a voice that was strange to Charles, who had known him all his life. 'I have much to say to you, Mr Charles, and it must be said here and now.'

'Can it not wait, John, until—— A day or two cannot make much difference.'

'A day or two!' said John Sax, and looked searchingly at the frank, sad face. And then he looked across at the bed. 'A single day has made all the difference there! But for you, Mr Charles—Sir Charles, I should say—ay, and for him, I wish to God I were in his place!'

'Why, John?' said Charles, with a look as intent as his own, but charged only with wonder and a touch of doubt. 'What is it?'

'You will remember his last words as long as you live?'

'Surely.'

'You think my head is touched. If the loss of it would right matters how gladly I would lose it! I will tell you what killed him. It will probably kill me—one way or another. It helped to kill Sir George. It may kill you. But his last word was that you would succeed, and dying men see far. Let us sit—here, in the window, Sir Charles. I am going to wring your heart, perhaps to break it; but you will see that I have no choice.'

He dropped into a chair, and set his elbows on the table and his head in his hands, so that Charles could see but little of his face. But what he could see was the colour of parchment and twisted like a withered leaf, and his voice was as dull as the voice of a man whose heart was dead within him.

'For four years and more,' said the dull voice doggedly, 'Sir George and I have been living with our heads in the noose.' And Charles's heart lost a beat and then plunged furiously; and his face went quite white, went crimson, and slowly paled again. 'Four years ago, when the Newcastle banks failed, we ought to have stopped payment. It would have meant ruin to very many, but there would have been no dishonour. Now, if we stop, I go to the gallows. I thank God he has escaped!'

'John!—John Sax! what is this you are telling me?' broke from Charles Lauriston's white lips, and he gripped the table in a vice-like grip to keep the world from falling away from him completely.

'Just the truth,' said the dull, mechanical voice that was so unlike John Sax's voice; 'just the bitter truth. He carried a brave face to the world, but it wore his life out inside. Then something gave way of a sudden, and he is gone.'

Charles sat for the space of some moments in a stillness that was more awful than the stillness of the quiet figure on the bed. For that spelled peace and an end of earthly troubles; and this was the deathly stillness that precedes the storm.

At first he had thought John Sax's brain had gone wrong, but now—— 'How has it been done?' he asked at last, and his own voice was strange to him now.

'Sir George had faith in his power to win through if only we could gain time. And at times we did win, but these have been difficult years, as you know. We have used our clients' funds—and securities.' It came out with a ghastly jerk, that word that plumbed the lowest depth of financial crime. Charles comprehended, if but dimly as yet, all that it implied. 'And as occasion required we replaced them and used others. Fortunately—unfortunately—God knows—we hold very large sums in trust from France. So far they have not been called for. If they were'——

The sweetness of the spring smiled in upon them from the ordered beauty of the Queen's Gardens over the way. The trim lawns were sprinkled with diamonds, the trees and shrubberies gleamed living emerald, the ponds laughed up at the sun, and the thrushes and blackbirds fluted faith and hope.

These things had always appealed to Charles. But never again would they be to him as they had been. Never again would anything in life be to him as it had been. As the condemned may thrill to the short joys of life with keener taste than those whose days may, for aught they know, run to common bounds, so might he seize each permitted day and thank God for it. But that is not the joy of life. The sword that hangs by a thread may add keen edge to appetite, but it does not make for joy.

'John Sax! John Sax! you make me wish I had died at Dunkirk!'

'Many 's the day I have wished I had never been born. But that does no good. We are here face

to face with it, and here and now you have got to decide what you will do. To-morrow—to-day—the fight begins again.'

Now the matter bit home. He, Charles Lauriston, had to decide, then and there, that mighty issue, and with little time for thought.

'To-morrow,' said John Sax grimly, 'we must have funds or close the doors. If he had been alive we should have provided them—he and I together here—as we have done before.'

'My God! My God!' groaned Charles, with his head dropped in his hands.

'You stand clear as yet,' continued the dull, level voice that was so terribly unlike John Sax's. 'You have the right, and the power, to end the matter here.'

And a dreadful silence hung upon them for many minutes.

Then Charles lifted up his haggard face. 'Tell me in full, John, all that it means—right to the end—everything!'

'If you pull up now, it means ruin for very many—hundreds—thousands maybe; utter, absolute ruin, and no possibility of ever making it good. I say nothing of your future or my own, or of your wife and children, and Miss Lauriston.'

'Everything gone?'

'Everything gone, many times over!'

'What do you suppose the total?'

'Not far short of a million. We are close on fifty thousand pounds better than we were last year. In going on there is the chance of redemption.'

'Through certain dishonour,' said Charles through his teeth.

'Through certain dishonour, and every chance, if we fail, of a dishonoured death,' said John Sax inflexibly.

'Death is nothing,' said Charles gravely. 'Dishonour is much—everything. What are the chances of redemption?'

'Better, I believe, than they were, but only chances after all. France must settle down again soon, and that will increase the chances tenfold everywhere. Every country in Europe will want help to start afresh.'

'Our clients there will call for their money.'

'Many of them are probably past the need of it,' said John Sax. 'If they claimed it we should have to find it.'

'And you say, John, in solemn conviction, that you believe redemption possible in time?'

'I believe it possible, because all things are possible. He believed it certain. His last words were to that end.'

'There is no other way?'

'There is no other way.'

And Charles Lauriston dropped his head into his hands again and fell to keen and bitter consideration of the matter.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE ROMANCE OF MOVING PICTURES.

By Fred. A. Talbot.

THERE was never an invention but has possessed its individual romance, and no inventor has yet been born who has not experienced many ups and downs and passed through many vicissitudes of fortune in the perfection of his pet idea. As a matter of fact, the greater majority, by the time they have perfected the fruit of their inventive faculty, have found themselves ruined, and have absolutely failed to profit from their labours. This has been shown from time to time in connection with all the great discoveries in our complex social and industrial life. But probably the most powerful latter-day illustration of this fickleness of fortune is recorded in connection with animated photography, to-day the most popular form of amusement in the five continents, which brings before us the life and movement of remote countries, from the bleak, frigid expanses of snow at the Poles to the portrayal of the life, habits, and movements of the most minute members of the world of life which are invisible to the naked eye.

In the year 1885 the Photographic Society was holding one of its usual meetings, and the members were discussing the latest improvements in photography. Upon the table stood a small lantern which externally appeared in nowise different from the ordinary magic-lantern. The only divergence was that, instead of the slides being mounted in a rectangular wooden carrier, there was a glass disc. When held up to the light, this disc was found to be covered, apparently in a promiscuous manner, with a number of transparent pictures; but closer investigation showed that they were arranged in sequence in the form of a continuous ring.

The lights were lowered and the lantern focussed upon the opaque screen which hung in its usual place. The first picture was brought into projection, and the select audience saw that it differed in no particular from the ordinary lantern-picture. Then came the great surprise. Successive pictures were projected so rapidly that those present saw real life, with every phase of motion, pass before them. Every detail was perfect; no action was lost. It lasted but a few seconds, and the sheet was white once more. For a short time the silence that prevailed could be felt. Every one present had seen something that had never been seen before—instantaneous pictures taken so rapidly in succession from one point of view that, when thrown upon the screen at the same

speed, faithfully reproduced the animation of the actual scene.

When the surprise was mastered, the young inventor, who was calmly detaching the plate from the lantern, was overwhelmed with inquiries. One and all wanted to know how it was done. Surrendering to the importunity of his friends, he was soon deeply immersed in a detailed explanation of the camera, its special design and operation to bring about the requisite results, and how the pictures were obtained merely by turning the handle of the machine as if it were a coffee-mill. The popular appreciation 'Remarkable!' but faintly explains the comment of those who were privileged to see the task performed and learnt the simple manner in which it was done.

The young inventor was Mr William Friese-Greene, who at that time was one of the most successful fashionable photographers in the West End of London. That night recorded a new era in photography, and saw the first public demonstration of the results of several years' patience and work in an absolutely new field and in the face of great odds, for in the late 'seventies photographic science had not made the great strides that attended its development in the following decade, and in which he himself played a prominent part, for he made the first celluloid film and discovered the hydroquinone developers.

Many of our greatest inventions have sprung from an insignificant beginning, a passing thought, or the observance of a trifling detail of action. It was the same in connection with kinematography. The inventor was one night using a magic-lantern, and was about to insert one of those slides which provoke such mirth among the young. It was one in which the first picture portrayed a face placid in sleep, while the second showed the annoyance and widely opened eyes with the humorous facial contortions provoked by sudden awakening. While moving this to and fro with one eye shut he observed that when the operation was effected at a certain speed a life-like action was obtained, and this curious feature set him thinking hard.

In the course of a day or so he set to work to devise a means of taking a series of successive pictures on glass from one point of view in a spiral. This was no easy task, as the wet process was still in vogue and the speeds of the emulsions were not what they are to-day. This meant that the inventor had to carry out his own investigations with emulsions in order to get them more rapid than were the plates in use. It was all work in an entirely virgin field, and some of these investigations proved unduly protracted. Then, again, there was the determination of the speed at which the pictures should be taken, and in this connection the inventor can recount many humorous experiences. One of his first experiments was with a friend in the act of drinking. Instead of portraying the steady, graceful raising of the glass to the lips, the photographic representation displayed it in a series of wild jerks or jumps. In another instance, where a young lady was partaking of dessert, the action was depicted photographically as a sequence of spasmodic efforts, which, when thrown on to the screen, proved more farcical than the crude-colour, comical pictures so dear to our young days.

After his first public demonstration he continued his experiments, and two years later exhibited the apparatus in the window of his photographic studio in Piccadilly, 'never anticipating,' he related to the writer, 'the effect it would produce. I thought it might arouse curiosity as a "scientific toy," as it had been described by one sceptical scientist; but I did not look for a riot! Such was what practically happened. The window was besieged by pedestrians, and they packed in a tight mass around the window, blocking the roadway and seriously impeding traffic, and in London's busiest and most fashionable thoroughfare! The pictures I had innocently set working in the window were simply of the Marble Arch on an ordinary day, and if the sightseers had only passed the spot they would not have thought for a moment to stop and watch what I had photographed. But the fact that I had brought that scene to a Piccadilly shop-window, and there reproduced it with all its life and movement, proved irresistible—so much so, in fact, that the police came to me and courteously proposed that I should remove the apparatus from the window, as the traffic was becoming blocked. Not wishing to create trouble, I removed the cause of such curiosity.'

Once more the crude apparatus disappeared from the public eye, though from time to time it was brought out for the edification of learned societies. But the glass plates proved the most serious handicap. Not only were they liable to become broken, but they were bulky and heavy, and could not be made large enough to carry a sufficient number of pictures; since the inventor discovered, as a result of his experiments, that photographing and projecting must be effected at sixteen pictures per second—nine hundred and sixty per minute. Accordingly he set to work upon a new field of research—a substitute for the glass plate. This was a more elusive quest than that of the right speed at which to project the picture to give the desired smoothness and fidelity of movement. He prepared hundreds of different kinds of material in gelatine and other flexible substances that might suit the purpose, but one and all proved impracticable. Then he suddenly bethought himself of celluloid, which was then just coming into extensive vogue. He prepared the substance, rolled it out in thin sheets upon a slab of glass, and cut it into strips about four inches in width, for the early kinematograph pictures were made about the size of the ordinary lantern-plate.

At last success was achieved. Not only had he discovered a medium, flexible, durable, and capable of being packed in small space, which by his crude

method could be made into long lengths of any desired limit, but he had evolved the means of feeding it into the camera and securing the intermittent motion, whereby a succeeding section of film is jerked suddenly into position behind the lens in the minute fraction of a second in which the shutter is closed. In connection with the preparation of this film he relates a very interesting anecdote. He was showing an American the apparatus in his laboratory, and in due course produced a length of the celluloid film he had devised. The American was greatly interested, so much so that he asked if he could take a short length away with him as a memento of his visit and to show his friends at home. With that the visitor departed, and nothing more was seen or heard of him.

'About two years later I met the same American in England. He had forgotten me, and I did not reveal my identity. In the course of our conversation upon photography he suddenly enlightened me of an important development that had been effected in American photographic circles. I expressed my interest. "Yes," he went on, "it is the most wonderful invention that has been made since Daguerre harnessed the latent image. We have been able to do away with glass, and can now use celluloid made in strips and cut to size for our negatives." I extended my congratulations, for I had been engaged in the same field for years past; and my success, though suitable for my purposes, was not commercially exploited. "Is it possible for me to get some of the material? I want some myself for certain experiments." "Why, for sure; I am interested in the matter myself, and I have a sample here." With that he whipped a small packet from his pocket, and with much ceremony unrolled the section of film strip. I took it and examined it carefully. "So this is a bit you have made?" I interrogated as I held it up to the light. He nodded. I rolled the film up and returned it to him without any comment. It was the same piece that I had given him two years before, and which I had made myself!'

When the inventor had perfected his film and had secured a long picture, arrangements were made with one of the learned societies for a lecture upon the subject. In the course of this lecture he described the possibility of taking an illimitable series of pictures in succession upon a long film. In the discussion which followed he was roundly assailed for his statements, and the possibility of taking pictures in the manner he described was ridiculed and regarded as equal to Jules Verne's imaginings. Called upon to reply at the end of the discussion, the young inventor prefaced his remarks by saying that he did not intend to enter into academic arguments with the worthies who had discussed his paper, but would prove his statements right away; saying which, he caught hold of one end of a roll of film he had in his pocket and threw the other among his audience as if it were a coil of paper from a news tape-machine. There was no further discussion.

When the perfect machine was exhibited at the Photographic Jubilee at the Crystal Palace in 1889 it created tremendous excitement, especially the long length of celluloid film. The press described it in a characteristic, sensational manner; but for once their picturesque predictions of the possibilities of a new invention were shortly afterwards more than fulfilled, as is evidenced to-day.

But the romance has its seamy side. First demonstrated, as the idea was, when the inventor was at the head of a flourishing and prosperous photographic portraiture business in the West End, its perplexities and difficulties were such that he became absolutely absorbed in the perfection of it, to the detriment of his commercial interests. The investigations also proved exceedingly expensive, and in the course of eight years sixteen thousand pounds was expended upon it. The inevitable catastrophe happened, as it always does when business is left to its own devices. The cameras and lanterns were seized by the creditors and put up for auction. With a quiet philosophy the inventor recounted his experiences of the subsequent sale:

'I attended the function and watched the proceedings with, as you may imagine, somewhat glum feelings. The lantern which I so highly prized, upon which I had spent four days and nights to secure perfect adjustment, and which cost me one hundred and sixty pounds (for it had to be specially built), was knocked down for a few shillings. The cameras and some other appliances I succeeded in retrieving at a small outlay. But the most mortifying spectacle was the way in which the instruments were handled by their new purchaser. I had tended them with extreme care, for fear of throwing some delicate part of the mechanism out of gear; but the new owner, not having the remotest idea of their real use, unceremoniously threw them into a sack; and when I, out of curiosity, ventured to ask what he was going to do with his purchase, he replied, "Sell it for old gun-metal."'

In the early 'nineties Edison's kinetoscope appeared on the scene and created a furor, though the self-same thing had been before the public here for some years previously. The American Wizard is popularly considered to be the inventor of the kinematograph; but perusal of the records of our own or any other country's Patent Office will show that he was forestalled by Friese-Greene not by days but by years. Each country, in view of the amazing popularity of the moving pictures, even excelling that of the phonograph, is jealous of its own native investigator in this field. Thus America clings to Edison, France to Marey, Germany to some one else, and so on; but in this country, at the Photographic Convention held at Hereford in July 1907, the president, in referring to kinematography, stated that absolutely the first moving-pictures demonstration was given by the inventor, William Friese-Greene, at Chester in 1890. Though demonstrations of the method had been given in previous years, that in 1890 was the first as it is practised to-day with the celluloid

film, and fundamentally the apparatuses now used are precisely the same as those used by Friese-Greene in the late 'nineties. At this remote date the inventor is coming into his own. Other nations have realised that their champions were but following in the footsteps of an English inventor, and can advance no claim disputing the latter's distinction as the Father of Kinematography.

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# NAVIGATING THE CAÑON OF THE COLORADO.

By Day Allen Willey.

HE quest for riches has led men to risk their lives in many hazardous feats; but it has remained for two reckless Americans to perform an exploit which few would think of attempting, because of the hardship and danger incurred. To seek gold in that great gap in the earth known as the Cañon of the Colorado River is to defy death itself, for this strange water-course has cut into the world to the depth of thousands of feet in its passage through the American desert. For hundreds of miles it passes through a region so barren that it is unfit for habitation, so that any one who goes into it must take with him an ample supply of food and water if he would come out alive. Should he succeed in climbing down the sides of the cañon, he comes to a turbid torrent rushing along with the force of Niagara, for in many places the rapids of the Colorado are so long and their fall so great that they exceed the famous whirlpools of Niagara in size.

Men have gone through this enormous crevice in the earth; but not until the gold-hunters dared to do it has a boat floated the entire length of the gorges. Major Powell, one of the pioneer adventurers, tried to go through with four boats and eight men; but only by taking a boat around the rapids did he succeed, after three of his little fleet had been wrecked. That was forty years ago. Since then four other parties have defied the mighty river, but only one of them has navigated the cañon for its entire length: the fortune-hunters who took their lives in their hands in search of gold, and made a voyage of seven hundred and fifty-two miles, perhaps the most perilous ever attempted by men.

The Cañon of the Colorado is really a series of cañons. From the place where its largest tributary, the Green River, flows into it, to far-away California, where its waters issue from their rock-wall and flow out over the Yuma desert, the great river passes through no less than five clefts in the earth's surface. Their walls rise from the foaming, swirling waters to heights ranging from three thousand to six thousand feet. The Grand Cañon, which is the name sometimes improperly given to all of them, deserves its title, for it is two hundred and seventeen miles long. The Marble Cañon, so called because much of its walls are composed of marble, borders the river for sixty-six miles. Dante might well have located his Inferno here, for the river is lined with towering cliffs for a distance of four hundred miles, in many places the rock-walls rising more than a thousand feet almost vertically, their surfaces so steep that not even a mountain-goat could get a foothold, and it would be impossible to find even a ledge where a boat could land.

Russell and Monett, and another miner named Loper, were the adventurers. They arranged for their trip by securing steel boats, one for each. The boats were sixteen feet long, and decked over (except in the centre) with sheets of steel fastened by means of a row of small bolts along the gunwale. These covers, or decks, reached from each end to two partitions placed near the centre of the boats, thus leaving only an open compartment three and a half feet long for the passenger. The whole of the food was placed under cover, and lashed securely to prevent shifting. The boats were also provided with airtight compartments at each end and under the seat, containing sufficient air to float both boat and load should all the other compartments be full of water. They named their boats the *Arizona*, *Utah*, and *Nevada*.

The start was made at a little town on the Green River, in the state of Utah. Four days later the trio had reached the beginning of the Colorado, having covered the one hundred and twenty miles in less than five days. From this point to Hite, a small town in south-east Utah, the first rapids were encountered in the forty-one miles of Cataract Cañon. Here Loper's boat met with disaster in the rough water, dashing on a rock in the midst of one of the rapids and rending its side.

They managed to reach Hite, where Loper decided to give up on account of his wrecked boat, and Russell and Monett were left to continue. Friday, the 13th of the month, had no terrors for the intrepid pair, and they started off down the river on the morning of that day, with the Marble Cañon acting as an introduction to the Grand Cañon below. In seven days they passed down the roaring torrent, with the perpendicular walls of Marble Cañon towering up on either side to an average height of three thousand feet, and came through safely, although their experience was indeed thrilling, for in one part of the cañon there were fifty-seven rapids in a series, some of which have falls of from sixteen to twenty feet.

Entering the Grand Cañon, for the first fifteen miles below the entrance of the Little Colorado and the beginning of the big cañon they found the water comparatively quiet; but from this point on their way was threatened by the most dangerous falls

they had met thus far. The good-luck which had attended them from the start, however, still continued, and they managed to force their way, without damage to either boat, down over the almost continuous cataracts for five long days.

Christmas Day of 1907 found Russell and Monett huddled over a fire of driftwood on a strip of sand just wide enough to beach their boats. They were in the heart of the Grand Cañon, hemmed in on every side by cliffs of black granite. Coming through miles and miles of rapids, the river, as far as they could see below them, was covered with breakers, from which the spray dashed high. To remain where they were meant starvation, so they again launched their craft. Immediately below this camping-place, and continuing for the succeeding ten miles, the river dashes through a stretch of water, the most perilous section of which is known as the Sockdologer Rapid. To make matters worse, Russell found it impossible to follow his usual custom of 'picking a trail' through these rapids. When possible, he would climb along the precipitous sides of the cañon beside each cataract, leaving Monett above the rough water in charge of the two boats. From this point Russell could pick out the most dangerous places through the rapids, and 'chart' a course accordingly. But in these ten miles the granite walls are sheer and smooth for over a thousand feet of their rise upwards. Russell could find no foothold, and the men faced the necessity of 'shooting' unknown waters.

As always, Russell led the way in his boat, swinging it into the boiling current stern first—his own method of taking each cataract—and making his frail craft respond to his will when possible by a forward pull on one or the other of his oars. After the first minute the cockpit in which each man sat, and which was shut off from the rest of the boat by watertight compartments, was filled to the gunwale with icy water, in which the oarsmen were soaked. Hundreds of times waves totally submerged them, the little boats staggering out from under the terrific weight of the water only to plunge into another broken wave.

Russell heard his companion cry out in terror from behind. Before he could turn to see the cause of the cry he was driven into smooth water. Mooring his boat at the foot of the rapids as quickly as possible, he half-climbed, half-waded along the shore of the river, and made his way back. Monett, with his boat wedged tightly between two jagged rocks, a foot below the sweeping water, was hanging desperately to the side of the little craft, his body straightened out horizontally by the rush of the water about him. The boat was completely wrecked. But when Russell threw the rope to his companion he was astounded to see him carefully work his way closer to the boat, and begin to tie its contents securely to the one means of saving his own life. Against the roar of the rapids it was useless for Russell to yell to his comrade to let the food go and save himself. Four times Monett let Russell haul sides of bacon and sacks of beans through the thirty feet of rushing waters between him and the shore before he finally caught the rope himself and allowed Russell to drag him to safety. He had been in the water more than twenty minutes, and was nearly exhausted when Russell helped him to his feet.

This accident left but one boat available, and as it was decked over with the exception of an opening just large enough for one man, it seemed as if Russell would have to continue alone. But a novel idea occurred to him to carry his comrade on the covered deck of the remaining craft. This was finally decided upon, and the trip resumed. They succeeded in reaching another stretch of smooth water at the foot of what is known as Bright Angel trail, one of the few pathways from the rim to the bottom of the cañon. Here, while a trail-party of tourists were eating their luncheon on the river-shore, they saw two men in a little row-boat swing out of the rapids two hundred yards up the river and row leisurely towards them. In the thirty years that tourists have visited the bottom of the cañon at this point it is safe to assert that not one ever saw a sight like this.

This was the only time Monett and Russell came out of this under-world during the four months they remained in the cañons. They stayed three days at a tourist-house on the rim; then, descending, resumed their voyage, one man being carried on the boat-deck. Although another series of dangerous rapids were encountered below Bright Angel, they managed to get through without a wreck, and finally ended their journey at the little town of Needles in California, one hundred and twenty days after leaving the shores of Green River.

The way in which they performed the seemingly impossible feat of navigating this great mountain-torrent is well explained in Russell's account of their experiences in some of the cañons. Speaking of the Cataract Cañon, he says:

'The rapids presented a terrifying appearance, the rushing, roaring water, beaten into foam as it plunged over the rocks, rolling in waves five to ten feet high at the foot, stretching away into a tail of vicious, white-capped waves for one hundred yards and more before they became quieter, and ended in swirling whirlpools. Hardly does the water quiet down until it takes another plunge, so close are the rapids together.

'It was to be my first experience in shooting rapids. I rowed out, taking the centre or tongue of the current. I seemed to go very slowly until very near the brink, when my speed was suddenly accelerated, and over I plunged, the boat taking a stiff angle downward as she went over, only to rise abruptly as she climbed the next one; then another pitch downward for the next, but this she did not climb. This wave combed back fiercely, and the rear-end of the boat plunged under. The huge wave deluged the boat, almost taking my breath away as it swept clear across the boat; but she rode

nicely, and was out on top of the next one easily, and we were soon through the worst part, and pulled into the eddy.

'Our method of running rapids was exactly the opposite of that of most boatmen. We shot in stern first—that is, with the stern down-stream; thus the oarsman is facing his course. When a rock is to be missed, the oarsman simply turns his bow away from it and pulls up-stream; and the current, now travelling much faster than the boat, whips it quickly away from the rock or obstruction. In this manner a boat can be guided back and forth across current, going much slower than the water itself, and rocks can be easily dodged.'

# THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH.

By J. Morton Lewis, Author of *Senorita Dolores*, &c.

It was in the eighties when our regiment was serving in one of those frontier wars on which so much often depends, perhaps the peace of Europe, and to which is devoted a brief paragraph in the English newspapers.

I was second in command of a small punitive force sent against Rhandda Khan, an Afghan, who, with a few hundred followers, had made a series of raids upon the native population of the smaller villages scattered around Peshawur.

In response to urgent requests from those of Her Majesty's subjects who earned a precarious livelihood by cultivating a few acres of rice-fields, we had been despatched from Lahore, where we were garrisoned, with instructions to ride night and day to the seat of the disturbance.

It was early morning, and the first rays of a July sun were breaking over the hills, when our little force entered the streets of Peshawur.

Tired and thirsty, we dismounted and flung ourselves upon the grass by the roadside to snatch a few hours' rest before we commenced our task of subduing Rhandda Khan.

Reveille sounded before we had recovered from our previous night's march, and two hundred and sixty very weary men of the line gathered in the horses and gave them their morning meal.

An hour later Colonel Cullingford interviewed the chief natives whose property had been ravaged by the rebel. It was a mournful tale they told. Rhandda Khan apparently had pitched his camp among the hills, where, at the head of nearly a thousand followers, he made periodical swoops upon the country-side, robbing the inhabitants of their wealth—little enough, Heaven knows!—devastating their property, and in some cases even carrying off their women-folk.

'But now that the war sahib has come, we are safe,' said one.

Colonel Cullingford enwrapped them in the protecting folds of the British flag, assuring them that with the advent of the White Queen's troops all danger for them was past.

When the last of them had departed, he returned to me with a new-born seriousness on his face. 'We are in for an awful job,' he said. 'Our force ought to have been treble what it is. I only wish Colonel Cusack were alive and with us now;' and he walked away to issue some orders.

Colonel Cusack was the late commander of our regiment, who had died only a few months before from a sudden attack of malaria. A soldier beloved by his men, as he was, who knew his India as well as a Cockney knows the Strand, his name was known throughout the country—known and feared.

That night we rode out of Peshawur and camped among the hills, taking with us a couple of natives to act as guides.

The Colonel and I shared the only tent that had been brought with us, and before we turned in he stood at the entrance, framed out in dark relief against the pale moonlight. Around us stretched the gray slopes of the hills, in some fastness of which we knew the man we had come to seek lay hidden. There is nothing so awesome as the hills on the North-West frontier. Their silence is oppressive; it warns one of the hidden dangers that may lurk in their passes, almost of treachery. They are beautiful, but it is a cruel beauty. The remembrance of their slopes lingers in one's mind, ineffaceable, but with no pleasant memory. I have known men, brave men, who shuddered at the thought of them; men who have known them in peace, and have not heard the rattle of musketry, the fierce cries of the Afghans upon their sides.

For a few moments the Colonel stood there in silence; then he called me to his side.

'Look at it,' he said.

Around us on every side they stretched, the key to India, the passes by which no adversary could invade the land. Gray, tapering to an almost ashen colour, they lay on every side, magnificent, yet cruel.

The Colonel laid his hand almost affectionately on my arm, and there was a deep yearning in his eyes. 'I would give my soul to be Colonel Cusack for the next few weeks.'

With that he retired into the tent.

For a few moments I stood gazing at the view around; then I joined him.

He was stretched full length upon a rug, his service jacket utilised as a pillow.

'I shouldn't care to undress in a place like this,' he said.

For a week we spent our time chasing an imaginary foe among the hills.

Then one morning a patrol of sixteen men was surprised and cut to pieces in a narrow defile. We came upon them sword in hand, as they had fallen.

As we stood beside their bodies, a mere handful of men ourselves, we knew Rhandda Khan had issued his challenge, and more than one looked at the dark-gray hills around, wondering if they hid anything. It is this that makes a year among the hills more exacting and injurious to a man than a decade on the plains—the terrible, silent uncertainty, the awful waiting for surprises long delayed.

I was standing by the Colonel's side; he was without a helmet, and a soft, warm wind was playing amidst his iron-gray hair.

'The fight has commenced.' For a moment he appeared to hesitate; then he looked up into my face. 'I am going to act as Cusack would have done had he been alive. I have been dreaming of him every night since we came to the hills—dreaming whilst I was awake. I have seen him standing in the door of the tent each night, and have spoken to him.'

I looked closely at him, fearing that the sudden responsibility and the silence of the hills had acted upon his mind. They have done so on other men's brains before now.

He saw my glance and interpreted it. 'I am quite sane,' he said with a grave smile.

We carried the bodies back on some improvised stretchers, and buried them at the foot of the hills. The next day there came to us news of an attack Rhandda Khan had made upon some villages.

'Foster,' said the Colonel to me when he heard of it, 'I am going to leave you in charge of the camp with fifty men. The others I shall take with me. I may be absent a couple of days, but I shall heliograph every few hours.

Three hours later I saw the small force canter across the plateau on which we were encamped and pass out of view down a narrow defile.

At sunset the first message was flashed to us: 'Hope all well. Shall be back to-morrow.'

At ten o'clock next morning another message came: 'Am ten miles north-east. Strike camp and join me instantly.'

Within an hour I led my small force along the pass, through the unknown dangers, to join Colonel Cullingford. We had not travelled a couple of miles before the heliograph was at work: 'Am coming to meet you. Throw out scouts and be very careful.'

There was an ominous reticence about the message very far from reassuring, which made me study the hills around me very closely with my glasses. There was no doubt that the Colonel had discovered the position of Rhandda Khan, and that he lay somewhere between our two forces.

Acting on his instructions, I sent four men ahead to act as scouts.

They had hardly left us before another message came: 'Push forward with all possible speed.' And almost instantaneously, from another position a little farther east, we discerned the heliograph working to the point from which our message had come.

Instantly I issued the order to my men, and closing up the ranks, we galloped in the direction the Colonel had indicated. It was an exciting hour, one never to be forgotten. To an uncertain destination, through unknown dangers, expecting every moment to come face to face with the army of the man we were seeking, or to hear the sound of firing which should denote his presence, we sped between the hills.

Suddenly there came to our ears the rattle of rifle-shots, the pass through which we were riding widened out on the horizon, and through my glasses I could see a grand plateau in the distance.

Ten minutes, and the whole scene was laid before our eyes—a battle scene in miniature, fraught with the horrors of death.

Colonel Cullingford had found Rhandda Khan, and was engaging him with a force of less than a hundred men.

Barely a mile separated us, and with a wild hurrah, their swords drawn, ready to thrust, my men galloped across the plateau.

Riding out of another defile to the east of us came the remainder of our force, another sixty men.

After I had ordered my troop into one long line, stretching to meet the company, we tore across the open ground, the light of battle in the men's eyes, the horses' hoofs thundering upon the sun-baked ground.

The Afghans saw us, made one last attempt to regain freedom through the Colonel's force, then broke and fled in all directions.

To meet them we spread out in a long crescent formation, closing in upon them. Many threw down their arms, to be trampled beneath the feet of our horses, while others were impaled upon our swords.

In ten minutes all was over, and the ground white with the figures of those who had fallen.

In the midst of it all I found the Colonel, hot and dirty, by the side of the body of Rhandda Khan.

'Ah, Foster,' he said, 'you did your part splendidly—splendidly.'

That was all then.

It was in the cool of the evening that he told me the story—how he had discovered the position of the enemy from information which he had received from a native, information which he had verified by going to Rhandda Khan's lines alone at dead of night.

'You went to their lines alone?' I said incredulously.

He nodded. 'Yes; it is what Cusack would have done.' He leant towards me. 'I wonder if there are such things as spirits. If so, as sure as there's a

God in heaven, his has come to me. I dreamed what I was to do three nights ago, that night upon the hills when it was so hot that you slept outside the tent, do you remember? Dreamed every word of it, and I was as much awake as you are now. I saw the old Colonel standing in the entrance to the tent, between you and me—saw him as plainly as I see you now. What do you make of it?'

I did not answer. There was nothing to be said.

'At any rate, spirits or not,' he went on, 'I have done my duty.'

'Yes,' I said, 'the mantle of Elijah has fallen upon you.'

## THE SALMON-FISHERIES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

EXT to the gold and silver deposits, nothing has contributed more to the fame and prosperity of British Columbia than the salmon fishing and canning industry. Almost everybody has read of, if not eaten, British Columbia salmon; but the individual consumer of the king of fish—offered canned and ready cooked in all quarters of the globe—has little or no conception of the general features of the industry, the enormous capital involved, or the extensive work done locally to keep pace with the ever-increasing demand.

An idea of the remarkable development of the industry may be gathered from the fact that when the fishery-laws of Canada were first made applicable to British Columbia, in 1876, the total number of establishments for canning purposes in the province, all on the Fraser River, amounted to four! Thirty years later there were no less than sixty-six canneries in operation, besides oil-factories, cold-storage works, and salteries.

These canneries, &c., are equipped with machinery of the most approved type for dealing promptly and cheaply with the vast salmon-harvest of the Columbian rivers; and, including fishermen and general workers, there are about nineteen thousand people engaged in the business. As many as one million two hundred and fifty thousand cases (each containing from four to eight dozen tins) have been packed in this district during a single season lasting only six weeks; while the record 'pack' on the Pacific reached in 1901 the mammoth total of five million cases!

There are six varieties of the salmon—namely, spring, sockeye, cohoe, steelhead, dog-salmon, and humpback. All these, however, do not inhabit the same waters. Except in Minkish River and certain adjacent creeks, the eastern shore of Vancouver Island is devoid of sockeye; but an excessive and continued 'run' is experienced on the west coast. Humpbacks are plentiful in the Chemainus River, the Howe Sound, and Burrard Inlet; but they are never found in the Cowichan. The spring is a frequenter only of the main rivers; but the cohoe and dog-salmon find their way into every little creek or pool.

The time of the 'run' of the same species in different waters varies considerably. Generally speaking, however, the spring fish appear in the spring and autumn, the sockeye in the summer months, and in the autumn the cohoe, steelhead, and dog-salmon are strongly in evidence.

The best table-fish are the spring, cohoe, and steelhead. Of the former there are two kinds, pink and white, and in weight they are found up to eighty pounds in British Columbia waters, and in Alaska (where they are known as the king-salmon) they have been caught up to and above one hundred pounds in weight. The sockeye, however, is the fish of most commercial value, and this is the variety that is used by the canners. Only when a short 'run' of sockeye has been experienced are cohoes packed; and the Indians alone have use for the dog-salmon and humpback, but a greater utility is assured these two kinds with an increased demand for fish-guano and fertilisers.

Fishing operations are carried on at different points of the coast, notably on the Fraser, Skeena, and Naas Rivers, and Rivers Inlet. The main watercourse of the province is the Fraser River. It has its source in the Rockies, and is about seven hundred and fifty miles in length. It is navigable for upwards of one hundred miles to New Westminster, and excellent accommodation in deep water is found for large steamers and sailing-vessels about twelve miles from the mouth.

Steveston is the headquarters of the fish-canning industry on the Fraser, and the striking progress and development which it has witnessed during the last twenty years or so speak volumes for the enterprise and ability of those engaged in the business. Considerable attention is now directed to the cold-storage plants of the province, and large quantities of salmon are sent away 'fresh' in ice to the towns and cities of Canada and America, and even to Europe, in refrigerated cars and steamers.

It is fully twenty years since salmon in a frozen state were first shipped from British Columbia to New York and London. In the former case the venture was a complete success, but the same cannot be said regarding the material despatched to London. The shipments to this country were generally made *viâ* Sydney, a total distance of twenty-two thousand miles, and the handling of the fish during transhipment left much to be desired as to quality on arrival. Obviously something had to be done; and a year or two later a new departure was made, when a parcel of one hundred tons was consigned by a steamer fitted

with cold chambers direct to London and Liverpool, *viâ* the Magellan Strait. The results were eminently satisfactory, and further developments rapidly ensued in the same direction.

In the transhipment operations the steamer's plant alone is utilised. Moored alongside the cannery, a large-sized scow is in attendance upon the steamer. The greatest care is exercised so that fish of the best quality may be procured. Three kinds are shipped: cohoes, spring, and steelheads, the former being in much the larger proportion. Taken fresh from the boats of the fishermen, the finest specimens of fish are selected, and all those with unsightly markings or showing the imprint of the gill-net are at once rejected. Fish-cleaning operations on the scow provide work for a large staff, each fish being cleaned separately, the bodies being thoroughly scrubbed, and particular attention paid to the head and gills, and all blood and slime removed. A final plunge in clean, fresh water precedes their elevation to racks round the scow, where, by a cord attachment on the tail, they are hung to drain. Each fish is well dried, wrapped carefully in special white paper, and packed into boxes each containing twenty fish. After being marked, the boxes are put into slings and hoisted on board the vessel. They are placed straight away into the cold chamber, where they remain throughout the voyage, reaching the markets of this country in capital condition—firm and fleshy, of a good colour, and full of flavour.

Prior to the fishing-season, extensive preparations are made among the fishermen and at the canneries in anticipation of the busy time ahead. At the canneries tins and cases by the hundred thousand are got ready, and afterwards months of work are necessary in finishing them off and despatching them.

A cannery of average size owns and works about twenty-five to thirty boats; but with outside contractors the total is increased to from seventy to one hundred. The total fishing-fleet engaged in the salmon-fishing industry is composed of fully five thousand round-bottomed boats and skiffs and about thirty steamers. Considering the large number of people that are dependent for a living upon the lordly salmon, the numerous appliances used for its capture, and the huge takes recorded, it seems incredible that any fish should be left 'to tell the tale.' But no risks are taken in this respect, the establishment of hatcheries by the Canadian and American Governments providing for the liberation of millions of small fish every year.

In the month of June or July shoals of salmon begin to leave the open sea for spawning in the rivers, many hundreds of miles distant; and as soon as they reach within fifty miles of their destination, they enter the danger-zone. Many miles of netting, at a cost of tens of thousands of pounds, have been stretched in the sea, and dozens of traps are ingeniously arranged in order to stop their progress and catch them on a wholesale scale. These traps are made of strong uprights driven firmly into the ground, to which nets having a small mesh are fixed, extending from the water-line to the ground. The lead-net is about fifteen hundred feet long. The salmon strike this, and go straight on till they reach a kind of pocket by a short lead approaching another at right angles. A second double pocket or heart opens from this, and the fish, still advancing, reach the trap proper through a narrow opening. Such a trap will catch from four thousand to twenty thousand fish per day, according to size and situation. Even if the salmon is fortunate enough to negotiate and avoid the traps, there are thousands of fishing-boats working around and blocking the entrance to the river, to make no mention of stake-nets, fishing-wheels, and the spear of the Indian. The fish that do successfully run the gauntlet and eventually reach the spawning-grounds are in poor condition, their bodies being wasted and torn, and covered with slime and festering sores. Few indeed that get so far ever return to the sea again. Of course the fish used in the canneries are all prime fish taken before or immediately on their entrance to the river, and the foregoing only refers to those that escape the snares laid for them and successfully reach their destination.

Occasionally a 'run' is of such vast and extraordinary proportions that, despite the great resources now operating at the many canneries, it is quite impossible to make use of all the fish caught. When this occurs the price of salmon, instead of being from fourpence to sevenpence each, as it generally is at the beginning of the season, drops sometimes as low as three-halfpence to threepence, and in a recent record season scow-loads of trap-fish were actually hawked on the Fraser at one halfpenny per fish!

It is confidently anticipated that the salmon-fisheries of British Columbia will yet develop to an even greater extent than at present, for it is generally admitted that few countries present such a large and profitable field for capital as Canada's maritime province on the Pacific.

## BOGHALL CASTLE.

Here—where the winds blow fresh and free,
And mists on earth are falling,
Where the silent hills encircle me,
And bygone years are calling—
I sit and think of the long ago,
Among the sweet wild heather,
Of the ruined castle far below
Where the lapwings weep together.

In the wimpling burn that hurries by
I cannot trace the story,
And yonder lark which seeks the sky
Sings not of ancient glory.
For thou dost sleep in the moss-clad vale,
By silent stars attended,
Where the low, sad note of the curlew's wail
With the evening calm is blended.

GILBERT RAE.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

*London, Yesterday.*

OH, how one is weary in the big town for the coming of the spring! So long does it seem since one could move away with any pleasure of anticipation into the open country! And the days have been dark, and the labours have been hard, and the sorrows have been keen. When we left the hills and the meadows and the country lanes at the beginning of the autumn days, left the clear sunshine and the sweet scents and music of nature behind us, we plunged into the strong, fast, thundering life of the heart of the world with no little feeling of pleasure, the pleasure of the fight. But it is not in the London way to last the winter well; it is so long and so dreary. The fighting tires, the gloom first comes and then increases, the spirits sink a little, and then the yearning comes for the spring days that give the new hope to weary men and women. The man who lives the round of the year up on the mountain-sides or in a cottage by a stream may himself indeed be glad when March takes its place again in the order of the months, the March which is blamed for its winds, but the month which brings the first flowers and gives the spring. But though there may be few of the natural signs of spring to be seen in the town, only the winds and the warmer rains, and the brightening skies and the light of day which endures until the regular toilers come to leave the streets of the City and descend into the subterranean tubes wherein they make their journeys to their suburban homes, one comes to the view that there is no man who so much welcomes this coming of the spring with all its promise and all its hope as this one does. He feels the strain of the winter-time so much. The passing winter has on the whole, perhaps, been less unkind in the matter of weather and murky fogs than others of recent times have been; but still it has been a season of great strenuousness and mental pain. The conditions of life in their speed and their severity have been harder than before, as they are harder year by year; but more than this, much more, it has been a season throughout of troubles and anxieties. The newspapers, reflecting the moods of the moments, have been gloomy in their tone since the autumn came. One may care little for the newspapers and what they say; one may scarcely ever read them; but the continual dropping of the water wears the rock away, and the nerves weaken under the strain of constant dark prophecies and forebodings. Day by day we have been told that it is to become more difficult to live, that in the near future it will be next to impossible; week by week we have been asked to view a mental picture of a foreign army landed on the shores of England. There have been horrible scenes of starvation and misery in the town, and then the people rejoiced because in their very midst, on the banks of the Thames, a new battleship was to be built. Here surely there was a little complexity of circumstance with a touch of irony interwoven. And in the midst of it all there was the great unsettlement, the really awful derangement of things, the bittering effects of a General Election, the shadow of which hung over the Christmas-time. Let this dying winter soon be gone, with no blessing upon it save for the hours of silent memory of the days of the past which were stolen from it. As after a great war there comes a time of peace when men go back to art and nature and peaceful work and all the beauties of life that are attendant thereon, so after the winter in town there is a great renaissance in the spring-time, seen clear to the eyes of those who can observe it. Men's thoughts turn to other things. Their hopes revive. They feel the blood warming in their veins again. They think that after all it is a good thing to be alive. They have new schemes. Great enterprises are afoot. In the City the prices of stocks and shares show some inclination to improve. A certain brightness comes over everything. It is a pleasant thing again to walk down Cheapside, the Strand, and Piccadilly, and out into the Park, where there are already some


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pretty flowers to brighten the borders, and the buds on the shrubs and the trees are already swelling with promise of the green leaves which they will shortly give forth. All these things increase the feeling of hope and give a stir to action. Yes, we say, we will go into the country to-morrow, and we will see again the things that we like and love. And all about the edge of the town there is a pathetic thing to be seen happening daily. There are good folks there in their thousands who cannot be going out into the country just as soon as they hear the call of it, or not, indeed, until the hot days of August, far off, come round to them. But they tempt a small morsel of nature towards them, and they fondle it. They have little plots of garden, surrounded by great houses and blocks of flats, and perhaps laid atop of one of those subterranean railways. There are just a few feet of earth, petted and stimulated by chemical means, and here in the early days of March there are crocuses and daffodils to be seen, and the people are outside tending them, digging and raking, making their preparations for their little harvest of flowers that they look forward to the enjoyment of. So there is hope in the dull suburbs, and some pathos in it.

* * *

All the world loves a lover, so it is said. And though this is a very matter-of-fact age—perhaps because it is that—there never was a time when the people cared better to read the love-stories of the most ardent souls of the past. In the open general life of to-day the word 'sentiment' is considered to embrace something of weakness; to say that a man is sentimental is to suggest that he has not a proper grasp of things, certainly that he would not be a success in the City; and to say the same thing of a woman is—well, to convey the idea that at all events she is outside and behind her time, and that there is no place for her in any of the new and great movements that are supposed to be stirring the world. But yet, though these be the views that are expressed in public, it is to the stories that are richest in sentiment that men and women most delight to turn for relief when the cares of the time are heaviest upon them. When the black cloud of a great war hangs over the world, when parties of the State rend each other in a strained conflict upon abstruse questions of taxation, when there is a new story in the morning papers of a woman who has been carried shrieking from some public hall where she had attempted an assault upon a Cabinet Minister, it is a relief to change the thoughts away from this heavy mass of sordid things in which there is no beauty and no kindness and no purity, and let them loose among the heavens and the stars, where there are no laws but those of simple Nature, and where manners and customs are of less account than the simple working of the soul. There are no such romantic tales as those which hang around the literary and poetic geniuses. We have them at home in the lives of such as Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Burns, belonging to what was surely a very romantic age of genius. In France that age came a little later, and, naturally, after the horrors of the Revolution and the peace of spirit that was felt at last after the Napoleonic period was brought to a close. There was a great awakening of genius then, and there was a rich romance in the lives of the men who wrote, just as there was in what they wrote. Chateaubriand was a type. Another was Alfred de Musset, who has to be ranked as one of the great lyrical poets of his country. He was a master, and in some of his work he plumbed the depths of the deepest tragic passion as others have seldom done. And for himself, though poor in some respects, he was a man of the strongest feeling, of the keenest emotion. Some of the episodes of his private life—if that term may be properly employed in such a case—are well known. They give him some likeness to Byron. That there were other events that the people did not come entirely to know was suspected, and only now is the truth disclosed; and not merely the French but other peoples are interested.

* * *

It is a story of the poet's attachment to a lady whose identity was preserved as a close secret until the present time. It is now thirty years since she called on the secretary of Saint-Beuve regarding certain love-letters which she had received from De Musset. She was thinking at that time of destroying them; but this man, Troubat, persuaded her to give them—there were seventy-nine—to the Bibliothèque Nationale, attaching the condition that they were not to be opened until after a fixed date. A period of fifty years was at first suggested, but this was afterwards altered, and the time is now just completed. Of course the lady is long since dead, and it happens that this year is the centenary of the birth of De Musset—almost the only literary centenary worth speaking of in 1910, in such contrast to last year, when there were so many. There is no longer any doubt as to the identity of the lady, upon which point literary Paris has been puzzling itself exceedingly for some time past. She was Mademoiselle Aimée d'Alton, who after the death of Alfred de Musset married his brother Paul; and, as Mademoiselle d'Alton reminded us in the curious little preface which she has given to the letters, there is a reference in the biography of Alfred written by his brother to 'a reciprocated passion between him and a woman in high society of whom he kept a pleasant recollection all his life.' Mademoiselle d'Alton refers to herself throughout as 'Mlle. X.,' and in this preface she says: 'In reading these letters it must not be forgotten that Alfred de Musset and Mlle. X. belonged to a generation that was ardent, passionate, and enthusiastic, which is described by the poet in his introduction to his *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*.' Ideas have changed so much

since then! What once seemed simple has now become something quite incomprehensible. What will it be in 1930 (the date originally fixed for the publication of the letters)? In those days love expressed itself more ardently than now.

* * *

There is not space here to do more than make reference to the beginning of this correspondence, in which there is a strong emotional and literary interest. When De Musset was close on twenty-seven years of age he was leading anything but a placid and steady life, and this lady, whom he had previously met, sent him a purse embroidered by herself as a hint not to throw away his money in gambling-hells. This seems to have been the beginning. 'Yes,' wrote De Musset back to Aimée, 'there is friendship for me in the hand which executed this delicate little piece of work, this precious purse which holds a thought of yours in each of its tiny threads, or at least a look of your eyes. When shall I see you again? When will you come back? Shall I still be there? That is what I am thinking about now! And I beg you, in pity, if this letter seems extravagant, not to answer it, but at least not to make me sorry for having written it. A harsh word from you would hurt me more than the rest has pleased me, for now I know you and I love you, and neither you nor I can help ourselves.' This association came at a critical time in his career. Even the day before he received the purse he had been considering the acceptance of a diplomatic appointment at Madrid which he had coveted for some time. Had there been no Aimée he would have accepted, and French literature might have been something less than it is. But with the love between them suddenly fired to passion, all his thoughts, his whole scheme of life was changed. What the future held for him he did not know and hardly cared; what he felt was that now he could not go to Madrid, to which a week previously he would have gone rejoicing. He could not bear the idea of leaving this new love that had come to him. He was restless, undecided. Aimée answered his letter on the day she received it, and he wrote again without any delay. 'I believe that I love you, child,' he said, 'and I am making no mistake. You say that your health is an insuperable obstacle. I do not know such a thing in love. As for your being "a woman older than I, with a face that is growing more and more grave," let me tell my friend of twenty-five that I am twenty-six, that I believe her heart is very serious, but that her young and charming face is very gay and very rosy; that a lounge-chair is not so bad a piece of furniture as you make out; and that, as far as talents go, you have the best of them all—that of being beautiful; and for wit, just what makes the charm and irresistible attraction of yours is the mixture of merriment and reflection, of vivacity and languor. Child, happiness was made for you if it was made for any one in this world! You know my character, you say. You, in turn, are mistaken. I am twelve months older than you in years, but ten years older in experience.' And then from this point the poet-lover goes on to speak of what his experience—at twenty-seven—had taught him of the progress of life's joys and sorrows in the case of the emotional human being. 'My experience,' he wrote, 'is not very alarming, and let me tell you what it has taught me. To dream beautiful dreams and to wish to realise them is the first and inevitable quality of great hearts. But nevertheless, in entering upon life, reality, with its thousand horrors, sooner or later strikes down the still virgin hope from the heights of its flight. This is not a moralist's phrase, but an eternal truth. The first experience, Aimée, consists in suffering; it consists in discovering and feeling that all absolute dreams hardly ever realise themselves, or that if they do they wither and die in contact with the things of this life. A sentiment of bitter reflection is, then, the result of this first trial. The heart wounded to the core, in its first effort, bleeds, and seems to be torn for ever. But nevertheless we live on, and we must love to go on living. We love in fear and trembling, and by degrees we look round and see that life is not so sad as we thought. We come back to ourselves and to happiness, to God and to truth. The heart, made stronger, accepts difficulties, sorrows, and even horrors; sure of itself, it foresees them, fights against them, and sometimes even changes them into blessings. More resigned, it takes more pleasure out of the happy days, longs for them with greater ardour, prolongs them with more care, and finally comes to say to itself, "The evil is nothing after all, since happiness exists." The name of "friend" pleases you. Child, are friendship and love different words? You say my letter destroys your hopes. Your letter makes me thank God! It opens to me a world of hope, of desire, of torment, without doubt, but of god-like delight. Do not shut out this world, my sweet angel; do not doubt, do not look ahead, but smile, answer, be kind and true as you are beautiful. We feel such strength when we are two! Come, then! Oh, come as fast as you can! You could if you would!' The sorrow of his earlier life at which De Musset hints is without doubt the episode of his association with George Sand, which had happened about four years earlier. The story, as revealed in the later letters, passed through some strange vicissitudes. It was an interesting beginning but a poor end. De Musset had not enough of the man and the hero in him for this sort of thing. He lacked character.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER XX.—HOW SIR CHARLES PUT HIS HEAD INTO THE NOOSE.

OU and I, of course, would not have given the matter one moment's consideration. That goes without saying.

Here on the one side were Right, and personal safety, and—ruin irretrievable for thousands of innocent victims. For the fall of Lauristons would not only strip its clients to the bone, but would drag to the ground its corresponding houses all over the country, and would offer unscrupulous traders everywhere acceptable opportunity of defrauding their creditors under plea of losses through the failure of the banks. In its consequences and the devastating wideness of its sweep the disaster would be almost without parallel. And on the other side were Wrong—Wrong, inexcusable and indefensible on any grounds whatsoever—the certainty of the gallows if ever the wrong-doing came to light, even though full restitution were within an ace of accomplishment, and the chance, the bare chance, in time, of possibly righting the wrong.

'Right! Safety! Ruin!—Wrong! Gallows! Chance!' The clock on the mantelpiece beat out the changes with dreadful iteration, and the minutes as they passed clamoured insistently for decision. 'Right! Safety! Ruin!—Wrong! Gallows! Chance!'—every dreadful moment that passed brought the issues to a finer point.

In that terrible silence the soft ticking of the clock beat on Charles Lauriston's tight-strung nerves like the strokes of a bludgeon, like the bell of St Sepulchre's which knelled the victim on his journey to the gallows.

A dreadful balance-sheet this for any man's consideration! And how, in the numbing derangement of so sudden a blow, allot the items to their proper places in the account? Debit and credit, profit and loss, were inextricably mixed, tangled, and interwoven beyond the possibility of unravelment. For what would be profitable to himself in the way of personal safety meant loss to every one else concerned. And what might mean—nay, he knew must mean, in very many respects—uttermost loss to himself, even though he had honour in the sight of men and escaped the gallows and died in his bed at last, might mean restitution and safety for the others.

Yes, you and I would undoubtedly have chosen the clean path of honour—and of safety. Right is right, and Wrong is wrong. There is no middle course, and argument in such a matter is sheerest sophistry. We have, you and I, a most wholesome hatred of that most unwholesome Jesuitical doctrine of any means to an end—of wrong permissible so the end be good; a doctrine and a practice that between them have wrought, perhaps, more ill in the world than any conceivable others. Pray God you never fall into so dire and subtle a temptation as this man!

I do not defend him; that were impossible. I do not palliate his offence; that is unnecessary. What he did, he did with his eyes open. He looked down the gloomy ways and saw sorrow and darkness and loneliness as his inseparable companions, and the menacing shadow of the gallows ever above them, and the possibility of the shadow becoming dreadful substance of raw wood and knotted rope at any moment.

He could escape it all with one word. Just an emphatic 'No!' and his father's memory was given over to dishonour, and John Sax to the gallows, and all who had trusted in them to irremediable ruin, including his wife and children, his sister, innumerable friends, and himself. For there would be less than nothing left, and he did not know to what he could turn his hand. His very name would be a byword and reproach. And on the other hand there was the bare possibility of redemption—financial redemption—at the cost, the certain dreadful cost, of his honour, even if he succeeded, and the certain smaller cost of his life if he failed.

Oh yes, he hesitated. Be very sure of that! He had been born and bred to an honourable estate, and we may not palliate his choice by any consideration of the fact that many a man still more highly born has cast his honour to the winds to gain his own ends.

He had never fouled his honour in any smallest way, and it was harder far to part with it than to die. But he was also a man of proved courage. And—rightly or wrongly—he said to himself, 'By taking on myself this burden of shame and possible death I may be able to make amends and obviate the endless suffering I foresee for all the others. And what am I that I should refuse it? It is laid upon me by no will of my own, though of my own will I accept it! Be mine the suffering and the loss, so the gain be theirs!'

Wrong, utterly wrong, of course! And absolutely inexcusable!

The highest possible proof of true courage, you say, would have been inflexible determination for the right, regardless of any possible consequences. And I agree. And yet, even though it brand me lacking in highest notions of honour, I cannot but admire the curious texture and complexion of this man's courage.

The forlornest hope has usually a crown of glory for its prize; but this most desperate venture sought nothing for itself, and in coldest blood, and for the sake of others, entailed a life of certain misery and the risk of the gallows.

Possibly this very element of desperate risk counted with him in the balance. It would have been so easy for him to escape it all, and to him, perhaps, so despicable.

'As you believe in God, John Sax, tell me—do you believe there is reasonable chance of recovery?' said Lauriston at last, with the weight of the dreadful issue in every word.

'As I believe in God, Sir Charles, I believe there is, if we are spared to it,' said John Sax fervently.

And the clock ticked on and the balances still hung even, and the way of escape was still open. And old John Sax sat there with gray face awaiting his fate at the hands of this man whom he loved and honoured above all men, and who, to save him from it, must sacrifice all he held dearest in life. And the grayness of his face was not all for himself.

'There is no other way?' came muffled and dull from the hidden face at last.

'There is no other way.'

'Then it seems to me that I must travel it, John Sax, and may the God whom we are outraging have mercy upon us both!'

'Amen!' said old John solemnly. 'But have you weighed the whole matter?'

'I have done my best. It is a terrible road you set before me, John. But you shall not travel it alone. If it leads to the gallows we will go there together.'

And old John Sax drew a great breath and expired it in a great sigh. It might be of relief, it might be of much else, for none knew as did he, who had been through it all, to what his young master had set his hand, and all that it involved.

'Yes, it is a hard road, Sir Charles. God grant we win through, though I do not feel as if I had the right to take His name on my lips! It's years since I've dared to set a foot inside a church, and it's been a sore loss to me. I did try to keep on as usual, but somehow I could not stomach it, for it might have brought contumely on them, you see. So, instead, I've wrought more among the sick and the poor. That could bring no scandal on them whatever happened, and if I was hanged it was a comfort to think some would be sorry.'

Charles nodded grave understanding. 'I should have been happier as captain of a foot-regiment with nothing but my pay,' he said quietly. 'But as this thing is laid upon me, I will do all that in me lies to straighten matters, and it is to you, John, that I shall have to look for help.'

'If my life could clear us, I'd lay it down here this minute, Sir Charles; and that would be a sight easier than what we have to do.'

'God have mercy on us!' said Charles once more, with a break in his voice, and squared his shoulders to the fight.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE RUINS OF ANGKOR.

By ADA CHRISTIE.

WHEN so many English tourists go every year to Japan, it seems a great pity that so very few stop on their way to visit the Cambodian ruins of Angkor, ruins considered by many to be the most marvellous in Asia. During about six months in the year the journey can be very easily made from Saigon in Cochin-China, at which port the Messageries Maritimes steamers call. It should also be of interest to English people since the establishment of the *entente cordiale* to visit the flourishing French colonies of Indo-China, where they will certainly meet with every sign of friendliness and receive every help and politeness from officials of all classes. Given a slight knowledge of French, they will find travelling here very easy, even without the aid of Thomas Cook, and the hotels are fairly good. Angkor is now in French territory, the district having lately been acquired from Siam.

There is some uncertainty and confusion about the history of the great building race which raised these monuments, and the date of their erection has varied, according to different authorities, from the fifth to the twelfth century. But it was known that they were built during a period of civilisation which was Indian in origin and in religion, and which filled the land with splendid temples for the worship of the Brahmanical gods. Probably the city of Angkor Thom dates from the eighth century, and the temple monastery, Angkor Wat, from the ninth century. This civilisation seems to have been overthrown by the Siamese in the fourteenth century, and Angkor was deserted and soon buried in the jungle and forgotten. Efforts are now being made by the French to clear the ruins and to save the chief buildings from further decay.

The best time to make the journey is perhaps from the beginning of October to the middle of December, when the lake is at its highest level; but the steamers of the Messageries Fluviales run to within a short distance of Angkor from July to the middle of January. The price of the return ticket by steamer from Mytho (near Saigon), including food, is about three pounds seven shillings. The actual steamer journey on the river and lake lasts about forty-eight hours; but a stay of a day and a night has to be made besides at the hotel at Pnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. Here there are some *wats* or temples to be seen, and the palace of the king, a very nominal ruler under France.

When the steamer reaches the head of the lake the passengers are rowed up the Siemrèap River in native boats for about an hour and a half, and then

have a bullock-cart drive of about the same length of time to Angkor Wat. Hitherto travellers have lodged here in the *salas* or rest-houses near the temple, large huts raised on piles, and have had to take with them servants, beds or mattresses, and all provisions; but an hotel with twenty-six bedrooms should now be ready, which will obviate this. If the traveller returns by the same steamer he has little more than a day and a half for visiting the ruins. He can, however, wait for the next steamer, a week later, and even then will probably find that he has not seen everything.

The great temple is within a walled enclosure measuring about two miles round. Outside the walls is a moat one hundred and sixty yards wide. This is crossed by a broad stone-paved causeway leading to a beautiful colonnade which stretches for one hundred and seventy yards along the western wall, with elaborate entrance gates and porticoes. Inside the walls a park once surrounded the temple, but much of it is now covered with jungle. From the gate a continuation of the paved causeway leads for nearly a quarter of a mile to the wonderful building which in popular legend was said to have been built by angels. It rises in three rectangular and receding terraces, from the highest of which spring five towers like immense pine-cones. The centre tower is one hundred and eighty-five feet from the ground. Round the terraces are beautiful corridors or galleries and double colonnades, with massive carved stone roofs and hundreds of windows filled with carved stone rails. On the lowest terrace is the celebrated gallery of bas-reliefs half a mile in length, covered with sculptured scenes from the Hindu poem the *Rámáyana* and other legends. These sculptures cannot, however, be compared for interest with those of the Hindu ruins in Java. The builders of Angkor were before everything decorators, and from the point of view of the extent and beauty of their decoration they surely cannot be surpassed. There is scarcely a plain stone. Every wall is diapered and covered with beautiful patterns, with friezes of graceful dancing sprites and panels with dancing women in floating draperies and wonderful head-dresses. The terraces rise in rounded lines and ledges and projections; the inside of courts and tanks is decorated with rows of lotus-flowers, or grotesque figures, or other patterns. Along the immense extent of corridor roof there is a profusion of ornament, and at the end of each section of roof there rises in an arch the Naga or seven-headed cobra, the original object of worship in this land. Whether it was incorporated in the Hindu religion or merely used as an ornament is not known; but the carved body of the snake and his immense heads meet one at every turn, forming double arches over every door and portico and on every tower, being used for every buttress or support, and composing miles of balustrade (now mostly destroyed) round the temple, moat, and causeways. In the centre of the four sides of every terrace and corridor and at each corner are magnificent colonnaded porticoes, the doorways having pilasters which are a mass of exquisitely carved foliage, sometimes as sharply cut as if done yesterday. There are beautiful colonnaded courts and long rows of decorated pillars, it is said five thousand columns in all. Innumerable steps lead to different levels, and there are twelve magnificent staircases forty-two feet in height all round the highest terrace. There are long vistas of corridor, with glimpses from windows and doorways over other beautiful parts of the building and from a height over the surrounding jungle. The five great towers are the least beautiful part of the work, and recall the *gopura* of the temples of south India. At each side of the square base of the central tower is a small shrine containing a modern gilt Buddha. This was the quadruple sanctuary of the god, probably Brahma, to whom the temple was dedicated; but all the Hindu gods have disappeared, and the Buddhist monks who live in huts round the temple keep up a few tawdry shrines. In all this wonderful building and in the buildings of the city and its neighbourhood no mortar or cement was ever used.

About two miles from Angkor Wat, reached by a rough bullock-cart track through the jungle, are the remains of the city of Angkor Thom. Its thirty-foot wall is still standing along most of its circuit of eight and a half miles. There are five arched entrance gateways surmounted by towers, which have on each of their four sides a large face of Brahma. Three-headed elephants, with bunches of lotus in the trunks, guard the entrance. Inside the city there is dense jungle, except where the cart-track crosses it and where clearings have been recently made round the chief buildings. These seem all to have been temples, so probably the palaces and houses were of wood. They are all a mass of ruins, with great trees growing in their midst and splitting the walls apart. One most weird and curious building, the Baion, has fifty towers of various sizes, each bearing the four huge and Sphinx-like Brahma faces. Many of the faces are worn and shadowy or split in two; others are tightly clasped by the long roots of trees. Some temples are pyramidal in shape, with galleries running round the different stages, and long, steep flights of steps on each side leading up to a small cella on the top. Later Buddhists began to make a colossal sleeping Buddha out of the stones of one of these temples, and the rough, unfinished outline can still be traced. The decoration of these buildings is in the same style as that of Angkor Wat, but it is simpler and there is less of it. Apparently the only secular erection is a long stone platform, the front sculptured with processions of elephants, which was probably the place from which king and court viewed games and spectacles.

An archæologist, Monsieur Commaille, is living at Angkor, investigating its ruins and those of the surrounding country; for everywhere, buried in thickest jungle, are to be found immense masses of shattered buildings, remains of extensive

monasteries and temples, with like ornamented corridors and colonnades and carved roofs, and all the profusion of ornaments, representing an unparalleled amount of labour.

For those who cannot make the journey before the middle of January it would be possible to do it later, although this might involve some discomfort. To a man, or even to a lady accustomed to rough travelling, the journey would not present any insuperable difficulty up to March or the beginning of April, unless it was a very dry season. The river steamers then only go as far as Pnom Penh, but small Chinese launches of a rough and dirty description continue to run to Kompong Chnang, where there is a *sala* or rest-house and also some French officials. From here a native boat would be necessary. This is about thirty feet long, and has over the centre an arched cover of bamboo and plaited palm-leaf. It is impossible even to kneel upright in it; but as the boat is boarded flat up to within about eight inches of the gunwale, a camp-bed can be put in. Of course a servant must be taken, but it is easy to get a Chinaman who can cook and speak a little French. All provisions and drinking-water must also be carried, as the lake water is very muddy even for cooking purposes. The length of the journey depends on the possibility of sailing instead of rowing, and varies from three and a half to six or seven days. The bullock-cart journey at the end would take about six hours. Of course, an introduction to the French Government at Saigon or to the Résident Supérieur du Cambodge at Pnom Penh would be an advantage; but even without this, travellers would certainly find the officials at the Residency most obliging and ready to give help and information.

# THEIR LOVE-STORY.

PART II.

DEATH visited The Chase, and the two girls were left lonely, and the absent young soldier was master. And then, how did it all come about? The Royalist cause was failing; the girls were alone and unprotected and in want, and surrounded by enemies; and Arthur, wounded, riding home from Warwickshire after Edgehill along the very lanes where he had so often ridden gaily in his student days at Oxford to his expectant home, found his parents dead, his sister a nun, and his sweetheart the year-old wife of another, the mother of another man's child—an old man, a stern Cromwellian, a man of harsh bearing. The wounded young Cavalier had hidden for days, at the peril of his life, in the neighbourhood, and then there had been a meeting. During some festivity at The Chase the wife had slipped out into the night—did she know her lover skulked among the trees?—and they had met. What happened none knew, no letter told. But next day the beautiful young wife was found drowned in the pond, and the old man and the helpless babe were left. Then Arthur had gone back to his king, had fought at Naseby, had fallen at Worcester, and just a few weeks before he died he had married—married a peasant girl, for some chivalrous reason told in a few bald words in a formal old letter; a girl without home or friends, who had done some good deed for the followers of her king, and was suffering for it. The little son—no mention of him occurred in any letter—must have been born after his father's death. It was supposed that Arthur Dabridgecourt, the gay Cavalier, had at that last meeting said or done something to his fair false cousin that was more than her woman's pride could brook, and so she had drowned herself. The fair fame of the king's man remained tarnished in the family annals. Was this the doing of the wronged old Puritan husband? Had he discovered his wife and her cousin in the wood? The estate had been confiscated, and had passed to the child she had deserted, who had taken the name of Dabridgecourt, and after the Restoration had turned again to the loyal party. 'And he was my ancestor!' Edith said. She took her hands from her face and leant one of them on the marble pillar, and raised her beautiful head. 'And the Cavalier, the Cavalier with the unhappy eyes—he does not look like a coward—he was *his* ancestor!'

She looked round her at the outlines of the trees in the dusk; she looked above her at the blue of the summer night's sky, thinly sprinkled with stars; she looked behind her at the great front of the house, with all its windows lit up. Then suddenly she gathered her satin train in her arms and sped across the lawn, two little feet in white satin disturbing the dew on the grass, and taking her to the rose-garden, where a hundred mingled fragrances greeted her. She slipped through the gap in the old yew-hedge, and never paused till she stood in front of the old ruin, the home of her ancestors, the old Chase, deserted a hundred and fifty years before, when the small rooms and winding stairs that had served the simple needs of the country gentle-people of the seventeenth century had proved inadequate for the more exalted ideas of their descendants of the eighteenth. The ruin stood grim and gaunt in the moonlight. A gardener lived in some of the lower rooms, but every one had gone up to the house to-night to catch some glimpse of the gay doings or to help the servants there, and so the gardener's door was padlocked and his windows dark. Most of the upper part of the ruin was roofless, and stood exposed to the winds of heaven.

Edith crept round to where the main entrance gave on to a broad, shallow stairway that broke off abruptly half-way up at a small landing where was one door—a stone doorway, with the Dabridgecourt arms and motto carved over it, and some remains of carving on the thick, studded woodwork underneath. This doorway and the shallow, broad bit of stairway with its famous carved balustrade—of which the balustrade in the picture gallery of the modern house was a copy—was the pride of the Dabridgecourts, and many strangers were brought to see it; but the door itself was barred and padlocked, for the room beyond it was dangerous, floored only with beams, with great gaps between some of them.

Edith paused at the foot of the stair. How many feet had gone up and down that stair! How many feet, quick and eager, or slow and dragging, speeding to love and happiness or going to weariness and misery; all those beautiful ladies whose pearls she wore to deck a beauty that had been theirs, whose blood pulsed through her heart! Edith stooped and looked at the shallow steps; they were worn by the passing of many feet, the feet of the dead. The steps were softly carpeted with moss. 'A carpet is spread for me,' Edith said dreamily. 'I am expected.'

She walked slowly up the ancient moss-grown stairway, letting the train of her gleaming satin gown fall and drag after her; walked slowly, gracefully, consciously, as women walked in the past. At the curve of the great stairway she paused. There was a bright light behind the studded door, gleaming under it, and through the great empty keyhole, and through the mighty crack that ran from hinge to bolt. As she paused her ear was greeted by a soft volume of indefinite sound from within. The modern girl, fearless, curious, strong in her self-reliance, walked on and pushed open the door.

In a moment, as it seemed, she was surrounded by them all. They were standing in a group, looking towards the door as if expecting some one, and she knew it was she for whom they were waiting—stately old men, beautiful old ladies, shy young maidens, gay gallants, velvets and flowered brocades and bright satins, swords and buckled shoes, and laces and jewels, powdered hair and rouged cheeks, and eyes looking at her, oh, so anxiously! And then, from out of the expectant group, dropping their stately curtsies and bowing low with old-time chivalry, there started a shy little brown-eyed girl in the habit of a novice, who seized Edith's hand in both her cold little ones that she scarcely seemed to feel. Edith yielded her hand. She felt no fear, no surprise. Her whole mind was concentrated on the feeling that something was expected of her, some momentous decision required of her. She stood in the centre of the crowd, this tall, modern 'Dana Gibson girl,' in her Paris ball-gown, and they clustered softly round her.

What was this they were all telling her, so eagerly trying to explain, with their courteous, old-world graces and gestures? She stood, straight and tall and fearless, her eyes seeking one face and then another, trying to understand, for no words reached her, only the eagerness of the eyes and the knowledge that they awaited her decision. And then—out of the gloom, at the edge of the richly coloured group beyond them—her eyes were arrested by one face. Where had she seen it lately? The blue satin coat, the rich lace ruffles, the Cavalier locks curling softly on to the collar, and the eyes—the sad, haunted eyes, so full of dignity and reproach—fixed on her, yearning, insistent, with the agony of a soul in torment? . . .

Ah, she knew it all now! How she had wronged that noble heart! What though they had told her he was dead? He had died fighting for his king. Was his a love that could die? What matter though she were all alone, in want, in peril—Cicely a nun, all who loved her dead, silent? . . . Ah! How she hated and feared him, the stern old man, with his pious phrases! He had told her Arthur was dead, and he had lied—lied! . . . Ah! She saw it all now—the shadows in the moonlit wood, and the one shadow that moved, the blood-stained bandage about his brow, the wan cheeks, the eyes that stabbed her, so that her reason fled. . . . Ah! What had she said to him, clinging to him there in the moonlight, washing the blood from his dear face with her tears and her lips? What had he answered her, so tenderly, so wearily? . . . Ah! She was to go back to the husband who had lied to her, to the child who was innocent; she was to remember the honour of the Dabridgecourts. She was to do this, that, in worlds yet to come . . . Ah! How cold the water was! how cold and sweet to die! . . .

'*You* were right! You saved me!' Edith Dabridgecourt cried suddenly, and she pushed through the group that parted to right and left of her; and, holding the little hand of the nun tight in one of hers, she stretched the other to that shadowy figure waiting in the gloom. 'You saved me, and you saved the honour of our house!' she cried. 'But I—oh! forgive me—I had not the strength to go back to him, as you bade me, only to die! And they have blamed you—blamed you all this time—you who were so noble!'

In a moment they were all fading from her, the eager anxiety in their faces gone, their eyes speaking thanks and blessing and gladness. Edith felt the hold of the little nun's hand relax, and looking down at her, met in her eyes a look of benediction. But the shadowy figure who had waited started forward, fell on one knee at Edith's feet, put his arms round her, and kissed the folds of her gown. 'At last!' he whispered. And Edith, looking down at the bent head, with the Cavalier locks falling on the lace collar, let her hand hover over it. 'Arthur!' she said.

. . . . . .

She was lying on one of the beams across the

floor of the great upper room of the ruin, among the cobwebs and the moonlight, when he found her. He put his strong arms round her, and carried her out to safety.

. . . . . .

The county said that Edith Dabridgecourt had treated Sir Edward Lennard very badly, and that it showed such utter lack of feeling to throw him over like that, after his long devotion, in favour of that young American stranger whom she had known for so short a space of time.

THE END.

# THE LAST CLAN-RISING IN SCOTLAND.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Luck o' the Spey*, *The Forgotten Rock*, &c.

OLD memories, pitiable, stirring stories of the feuds of the clans, haunt the mountains, the glens, and the lonely sea-arms of the Highland counties. Not a Ben but has seen fire and sword; not a Strath but has heard death-cries and the slogans of the victors. Dark old days! sad old days! but all in the weft of the tough, enduring web of Scots history.

A hundred names and figures rise out of the past, from the misty legends of the bards to the last real romance of these isles, in the '45. A holy war or a neighbour's vendetta, clear chivalry or black dissimulation, valour or bloody cruelty, cattle-rieving or high politics, the stories are in the main sad; but against the dark, red-tinged tartan of them shines a white redeeming streak, their invincible loyalty to a cause, or a man, or a woman. The Celt, they say, has an aptitude for lost causes, and this utilitarian age a faint, ill-concealed scorn for devotion to anything that does not pay. Yet loyalty is in itself a good thing. A loyalist often wins when he seems to a materialist world to lose; and the story of the last clan-rising, apart from its historical glimpse, is refreshing in its human interest, in the suddenness of its inception and execution, and in its striking evidence of the tenacious survival of a trait of the feudal system—for it happened not so very long ago, less than a hundred years ago—to be precise, on the 13th day of March 1820.

Of course the expression 'clan-rising' here means, not a fight between two Highland clans, but a rising for some common purpose. The last inter-clan battle was apparently between two Mackintoshes and the Macdonalds of Keppoch, at Glenrog, in 1688.

Happily, although the results of the 1820 rising might easily have been serious, it provides neither bloodshed nor the burning of clachans, and the curtain on the long drama of the Highland clan-broils rings down merrily enough on the rescue of a fair woman, in the old town of Elgin, and in the very shadow of the ruins of its gray cathedral.

It is necessary to hark back to trace the evolution of this somewhat remarkable event. The Laigh o' Moray, the rich lands of Pluscarden, the well-tilled acres where the Church—the 'Lanthorn o' the North'—reigned supreme round Elgin, were fat and tempting prizes to the lawless clans of long ago. We know that in the dim ages one of the Macdonalds of the Isles came a-plundering, and left both the Holy Church and the burghers lamenting; but, coming down the years, we hear little more of Macdonald's men, but a great deal of the powerful clan that held, and still holds, sway between the two Craigellachies—the Grants; and the finale of their last cattle-lifting expedition makes a very pretty story of chivalry and a well-kept word of honour. It is hardly necessary for this little record, but is worth the telling.

The Laird of Grant in 1691 cast an eye northward from his eyrie in Strathspey on the rich possibilities of Dallas, Pluscarden, and Duffus, in Morayshire. His men, returning from their successful foray, were caught by the Laird of Gordonstoun, and their leader ingenuously gave up a letter from the Laird of Grant, his warrant, so to speak, for his annexing his neighbour's property. Gordonstoun cannily sought to recover his goods by the sheepskin rather than the glaive, and got a decree from the Court of Session against the Laird of Grant for his losses. So far, so good. But the sheriff-officer who went to Strathspey had a rough time of it. Says the poor man, we 'were seized upon by a pearty of armed men, who most masterfullie and violently struck me with their gunnes; gave me a stobbe with a durke in my shoulder, and a stroak with my owen sword, . . . and offred his liffe to any one of our companie that would hang the rest of us; thereafter laid us doun and secured us with horse-roaps on the ground in the wood, where we leay in cold hunger and great miseries for four dayes and three nights, threatened hourly with present deathe.' So much for the king's writ in Strathspey in the 'good old days'!

And this reception of it was, an it please you, not to avoid payment, but as a protest by a Highland gentleman (who had merely 'lifted' some cattle) against the implication of non-intention to pay and the manner of the attempt to collect it! This is clear from the sequel, which is quaint but refreshing.

Sir Ludovic, the laird, had a son, Brigadier Grant, a man 'distinguished in the camp and the Court, and a bosom-friend of John, the great Duke of Argyle.' Possibly Gordonstoun knew all this, for when he was summoned, or at least invited, to go to Castle Grant to receive his debt in person, he

went. Straightway on receiving his money at Castle Grant, the knight handed it back, with the words, 'This is a present from Robert of Gordonstoun, and I will see my tenants righted myself.' The generosity was quixotic, but it bore instant fruit, for the Brigadier stood up and replied, 'If ever I am Laird o' Grant I will gar the rash bush keep the cow and the pin in the cot-door the sheep in a' time coming;' and this promise was sacredly kept. We hear of no more cattle-raids there, and of few risings until the one which forms the subject of this article, the principal figures in the picture still being of the clan Grant.

The blow over the heart to the Jacobites in the '45 saw the beginning of the end of the clans, as factors in the feudal system; but the ancient spirit survived, and nowhere with more vitality than in Strathspey. Cattle-lifting, as we have seen, had been stopped by the Brigadier Grant's promise in 1691. The Grants, by their numbers, their unity, and their geographical position, exchanged few blows with their neighbours. The protection that their strength gave to their clansmen was repaid in devotion and affection to the name and person of their chieftain. In the Peninsular war the 'good Sir James' raised, first, the Strathspey Fencibles, and immediately afterwards the Ninety-seventh Regiment of the Line, one thousand men, and all from the Grant country. When the Eagle swerved and fell at Waterloo, numbers of half-pay officers and pensioners, non-commissioned officers and privates, returned to the Strath, all of them, as will be shown, loyal clansmen, and needing but a slogan to make them rally round the House of Grant. Then came the death of George III., and, in consequence, a General Election.

The old rough cattle-lifting days had vanished, but the maxim 'Might is Right' still lingered, often leaping out suddenly in the heat of an election. Influence in politics was keenly sought after. The power lay in the hands of leading families, and incredible devices were resorted to by them and their supporters to keep that influence. Elgin was the arena of the political duel between the Grants and the Duffs.

In 1820 the Elgin Parliamentary Burghs consisted of Elgin, Cullen, Banff, Inverurie, and Kintore. To-day this grouping, objectionable in many ways, is continued, Peterhead having been tacked on to the original group. The Grants, through long association, swayed Elgin. The family had succeeded to the Seafield estates and title, and this commanded Cullen. The rival interest was that of the Duffs, who in 1820 held Banff and Inverurie. The system of election in vogue was for the Town Council of each burgh to elect a delegate. These delegates then met, and the election of the member was carried out by their votes. Thus the position of affairs then was: Kintore and Cullen were for Seafield, Banff and Inverurie for the Earl of Fife, while Elgin was doubtful. The energies of the Grants and the Duffs were centred on Elgin. These were rosy times for Town Councillors, political agents, and tradesmen, if somewhat trying to the patience and pockets of the candidates. The burgh potentates had to be continually patted on the back, made much of, feasted, and noticed. The system, of course, spelled corruption. Grant Lodge, the town mansion of the Seafields, was a House Bountiful. The ministers, the elders, the Magistrates, Councillors, and the Deacons of the Trades were generally invited to partake of their Sunday dinner at the 'big hoose,' and many are the stories of the hospitable mahogany.

But, alas! as in the days of Ossian:

> In Alpin, in the days of the heroes,
> Fingal neglected to call some of the Fingalians to the feast he gave at Druim Dialg,
> The proud rage of the heroes was aroused.

When Prince Leopold visited Elgin, Colonel Francis Grant waited at the town's marches, gave him the freedom of the city, and invited the Provost and Town Council to dine with the Prince in Grant Lodge, while the townsfolk fed amply, but with less dignity, on the lawn. The Deacons of the Trades, however, by a pure oversight, had been left out of the invitations by the Town Clerk. They took great offence, and refused either apologies or offers of the entertainment there or at any of the inns, and proceeded with their backers to the Trades Hall to feast and smooth their dignity at their own charges. Once there, they broached a cask of whisky, and their dignified counterblast ended, painful to relate, in their getting roaring drunk and annoying the lieges. All this may seem unromantic, even vulgar detail, but, strangely enough, it was this rift that grew to a wider one in the electioneering lute, and led to the last clan-rising in Scotland.

Mr Archibald Farquharson of Finzean was the Seafield nominee, a supporter of the old order; while General Duff, a brother of Lord Fife, was the Duffs' candidate, and was supposed to be more on the side of reform.

Lord Fife was then in his prime, a great favourite, generous, gracious, popular. Here was an opportunity to further his brother's interests and recover the parliamentary control of the burghs; for the offended Deacons had great influence with the freemen of the burgh, and possibly could control the deciding vote in the Council. His lordship often lived in the town. He called here, sent invitations there, was the soul of affability to the citizens and their wives and daughters. We hear of presents of rings and shawls, of gowns and ladies' gear galore. He scattered money freely among the lower orders, until when he went out he was actually followed by an admiring train of sponging idlers. Canvassing went on merrily. The delightful, free-handed Earl was gaining ground. Excitement rose to boiling-point, for, out of seventeen Town Councillors, seven were for the Duff, eight for the Seafield interest. Day and night intrigues, bribes, bullying, cajoling, every form of influence was tried by both sides to strengthen their numbers on the Council.

Then rose a rumour that the Grants had tried to carry off Lewis Anderson and James Culbard, two of the Fife supporters. Man-stealing was an incident of last century's early electioneering, and it is certain that, if they were wrongly accused in this instance, the Grants of seventy years before did kidnap the Laird of Kinsteary, who had actually presumed to oppose their chief; and, further, they settled the election by carrying him away to the hills until the Laird of Grant was returned for the county!

Whether the attempt in 1820 was a *bonâ-fide* one, or the report of it 'engineered' by the other side, need not be inquired into; but the Duffs' ire was roused, and they determined on a smashing counter-stroke. On the 11th of March, when a douce Councillor (Mr Robert Dick) was taking off his shop's shutters, he was seized from behind, blind-folded, carried up Craig's Close, and round Batchen Lane to Mackenzie's Inn, in Elgin, where a carriage was waiting. His dutiful daughter (who, by the way, had been soothed by two diamond rings) provided him with a change of linen, and the poor man was taken to Burghead, clapped into a boat, and set on the other side of the firth at Dunrobin. There he was hospitably entertained until after the election of a delegate, and then came home leisurely by land.

The same adventure befell no less a personage than a Bailie of the ancient city. Bailie Taylor was captured and carried off; but the seas were unkind, and after a voyage in peril of their lives he and his escort managed to reach Brora, after a passage of seventeen hours!

The coast clear, the Fife party coolly proceeded to call a Council meeting. The Grants refused to attend; the Town Clerk refused to attend; but they arbitrarily chose another and more docile Clerk, and fixed the Wednesday following for the election of a delegate.

The old town was in a white-heat of excitement. Money was mysteriously plentiful. The change-houses were full. Gangs of idlers roamed the streets. Partisan fights flamed up at all hours. Grant Lodge, the Seafields' Elgin house, was the storm-centre, for there Lord Seafield lived in retirement, along with his sisters, Lady Ann and Lady Penuel.

The central figure of this little record, the beautiful Lady Ann, was, we are told, of 'commanding presence, great wit, and force of character.' Her qualities and charm endeared her to her friends; but the Elgin mob did not scruple to insult and jeer at her in the streets, and in the evening encircled the house, howling doggerel verses, oaths, and venomous party cries. 'Doon wi' the Grants!' 'May the Deil pick oot their e'en!' 'Up wi' Lord Fife!' and the like cries made the night hideous. So badly did the cowardly mob behave that at last no one could leave or enter Grant Lodge.

The Lady Ann was, however, a woman of pluck and resource, and on the Sunday morning one of her grooms escaped on a horse, and galloped post-haste to Castle Grant, the gallant beast, it is said, covering the distance—thirty miles—in three hours, and falling dead at the Castle door.

Instantly Strathspey was ablaze. 'Stand fast, Craigellachie!' travelled through the glen like the wind. At Grantown the clansmen turned from the kirk-door at the tuck of drum, and in Cromdale the Reverend Grigor Grant stopped the sermon, intimated the call to arms, and offered a prayer for its success in the Gaelic. Within two hours three hundred men, with the minister at their head, started shoulder to shoulder for Elgin. At the same time Captain Grant, Congash, the Strathspey factor, sent messages in all directions. Abernethy responded nobly. So did Duthil (in the Gaelic, 'Gleann Chearnach,' the Glen of Heroes), under Patrick Grant of Auchterblair, afterwards Field-Marshal Sir Patrick Grant. No fiery cross ever had a more rousing answer than the news that the beloved Lady Ann was in danger. The whole Strath turned out and marched to the rescue.

At Elgin, those of the Council favourable to Lord Fife were in Mackenzie's Inn, a strong body of burghers guarding them. At about three o'clock on Monday morning the house was awakened by a Fife tenant called Inkson, from Speyside, who had ridden post-haste with the news that the Grants were up in arms and at the town's gates calling for blood. The sleeping burghers were awakened by the town's drum, the blowing of bugles, and the clang of bells, and soon they were tumbling over each other in the streets, many half-dressed, women and children shrieking, consternation on all faces. For the rumour had grown, and wild stories fed the panic. The Council, so far from representing the burghers, were escorted for security to the Tolbooth, and a guard mounted there for their protection.

The more reckless mustered at Grant Lodge gates, armed with what weapons they could lay hands on.

Meanwhile upwards of seven hundred Highlanders were well on their way. Astonished folk, awakened by the tramp of feet, asked, 'Whaur 's the market?' 'Och, just at Elgin the morn,' was the answer. Quaintly enough, considering their errand, the accounts state that they waited until the Sabbath was over, and then ordered Peter Bane, the famous Abernethy piper and fiddler, to play up. About two miles from Elgin they halted for a short general review, and the march was continued in military order.

They entered Elgin at five o'clock in the morning, marching up what is now Moss Street, to the strains of 'O Pharig nis seid suas gu braishi,' to Grant Lodge. The sight of the seven hundred brawny clansmen was enough. It was a bloodless battle. The burghers fled, and the Lady Ann was soon among her own people, amid resounding cries of joy and welcome.

General rejoicings followed. Meat and drink for the miniature army was an undertaking, but several

bullocks were killed at Linkwood, provisions laid out on the lawn, and casks of whisky broached. Toasts were drunk, inflaming the already excited Highland blood. They were 'spoiling for a fight;' and the authorities were still alarmed. The Provost, entering Grant Lodge by a back door, went on his knees and begged Lady Ann to interpose and help to keep the peace. The Sheriff and the clergy too waited on her, and in the end, after an assurance that special constables would be sworn in for the protection of Grant Lodge and its inmates, the Highlanders agreed to march home again.

They went by a different route, Lady Ann sending orders to every inn on the road for their delectation. At Forres they made merry, pipe-playing, singing, dancing till the morning, when these lusty souls marched on to their native glens without a halt.

Elgin continued in a ferment for days. Special constables drilled; patrols were organised, pickets and sentries placed. Lord Fife's tenants began to pour in, and at night, after a false alarm, a general parade took place. The windows were ordered to be lighted to detect any Highlander in hiding; but the clansmen were well on their way home, with the exception of a few for whom the mountain-dew at the Lodge had been too much.

On the night of the election the Sheriff marched at the head of the constables for the preservation of the peace. None of the Grant party appeared, and the Fife interest again had a meeting of their own. A number of party meetings took place; but the end of the matter was that Mr Farquharson, the Grant nominee, was declared elected by the Provost's casting vote, and duly sat in the House of Commons.

The kidnapping of the Bailie and the Councillor was reported to the Lord Advocate, and four of Lord Fife's supporters tholed an assize at Inverness on a charge of stellment—that is, man-stealing. They were defended by John Peter Grant of Rothiemurchus, the namesake and ancestor of the present Sheriff-Substitute in the Highland capital; but a flaw in the indictment, convenient or otherwise, spiked the prosecution's guns.

So ended the election that caused the last clan-rising in Scotland. A skeleton account is given in Young's Annals of Elgin, while a fuller one is enshrined in the Gaelic Society's Transactions. The account, apart from the rising, throws a curious light on the rapidly fading picture of the old electioneering times and manners. To us nowadays, when the electors can only be bribed by platform promises of the millennium, when a shilling given for a vote or the innocent act of a careless candidate or agent will invalidate an election, the thought of a town feasted, bribed, and befuddled for months, two of its rulers kidnapped, and—well within a hundred years ago—seven hundred clansmen marching down on it to the rescue of a lady interested in the election, borders upon comic opera.

But the story is redeemed by the bright qualities of courage and loyalty. Let us remember that the Highlanders expected to fight their way against well-armed angry thousands; that they never hesitated; that they marched long distances in an amazingly short time; that when their mission was accomplished and they found themselves in superior numbers to their opponents they observed the law and kept the peace.

The story obeys the convention of fiction in the reward of the heroine, for the news of the chivalry abiding with these men of the hills reached high quarters. While the fair lady was dancing at the ball given by the Peers of Scotland when George IV. came North, he asked one of the lords-in-waiting to point her out. This was done, and the First Gentleman observed with decision, 'Well, truly she is an object fit to raise the chivalry of any clan;' and not long afterwards the Lady Ann was raised to the peerage.

To-day the scene of the last clan-rising is in a beautiful park, given to his native town by Sir George Cooper of Hursley. Grant Lodge stands there still, and retains its name, but Elgin's Library, Reading-room, and Art Gallery take the place of the banqueting and ball rooms of long ago, and a fine Drill Hall stands where the wild Highlanders feasted and toasted after their bloodless victory.

The Lossie winds near, among the trees. The old eyes of the cathedral, full of memories, look down on a scene peaceful to somnolence. On this still autumn evening it is curious to recall the stirring times that this quiet corner of Scotland has seen, from the Wolf of Badenoch's swoop long ago to the last clan-rising in 1820.

Times are, happily, changed! But though the days of forays and clan-feuds are over, their more enduring root-qualities of courage and loyalty have, let us hope, borne fruit; and as I write this, at one of the windows where, no doubt the Lady Ann listened for the slogan of the Grants, the sound of a piper practising in the Drill Hall reminds one that instead of holding in its arms rival cattle-stealing, fighting hordes, the fair province of Moray now sends to that fine regiment the Seaforth Highlanders many hundred loyal claymores for King Edward the Seventh.

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### AN ANTI-FORGERY ELECTRIC PEN.

THE latest acquisition to the commercial office is an ingenious little device the object of which is to render forgery absolutely impossible. The apparatus comprises a small desk a few inches square, fitted with a glass lid, to a portion of which is fixed an aluminium plate. The desk itself contains the essential electric mechanism, consisting of a small accumulator, coil, trembler-blade, a special secondary condenser to render the spark larger and more intense, and an ingenious device which is described as an 'etheric buffer'—a small tube exhausted to a certain point, which is practically a Crooke's tube such as is used in X-ray photography. This tube is designed to take up all resistance and strains that otherwise would be thrown back upon the coil, and which might seriously impair the efficiency of the latter. When any resistance is encountered to the passage of the electric current from the pen-point through the writing medium, this tube commences to glow in precisely the same manner as the Röntgen ray tube, its vivid colouring varying in intensity according to the extent of the resistance. From the coil the intensified current is led through a short length of flexible wire to the barrel of the pen, which in shape and design resembles the ordinary fountain-stylograph. In the barrel is a special design of mercury-interrupter which cuts out the current until the pen is held in the writing position. In the point of the pen is a small piece of metal with which the writing is effected ; but this is connected to a small piston contact within the pen, and must be pressed inwards before the current reaches the stylo-point. Consequently, when writing, it is not only necessary to hold the pen in the writing position, but the point must be well pressed on to the paper before the current makes an impression thereon. The paper is laid on the aluminium plate, and the current flowing from the pen-point at a pressure of ten thousand volts burns its way through the writing material in the form of a small perforation. The letters are thus outlined as it were by pin-pricks, which arrangement prevents the circular interior parts of such letters as o from falling out. The ingenious system of contacts adopted within the pen-barrel completely protects the user from shocks, so that the pen may be used with absolute safety by any one. The spark is of sufficient intensity to burn its passage through six to eight superimposed sheets of ordinary paper, so that the pages of a document may be attested simultaneously, and each is an absolute fac-simile of the other. The perforated outline of the letters is irregular, as the current follows the path of least resistance through the paper, and it is quite impossible for one to forge a signature, since no two signatures are made alike. For signing cheques, bonds, and other papers the pen is of incalculable value, and should prove an excellent acquisition to mercantile establishments.

### READY-MADE CANADIAN FARMS BY EASY PAYMENTS.

The hire-purchase system has entered so extensively into our everyday life, and has proved such a boon to all and sundry, that the latest development of the idea will arouse considerable interest. This is the laying out of ready-made farms in the wheat-belts of North-West Canada, a scheme which has been elaborated by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy. The idea is to erect a home and barn, stock the same, and plough and plant forty acres of a one hundred and sixty acre plot with grain, so that the newly arrived settler, directly he reaches his new home, may be able to continue farming just as if he had returned to his English farm after an absence of a week or two. The price of such a ready-made farm will be about eight hundred or one thousand pounds, and the tenant enters into possession upon payment of 10 per cent. of the purchase-price, and the balance in ten annual instalments. Such a scheme will enable every emigrant possessing, say, one hundred pounds when he reaches the Dominion to become his own master, for obviously a scheme entailing such a small outlay will attract a larger number of prospective farmers than if it were necessary to lay out a thousand pounds at once. The farm being already a going concern, the new tenant will be able to commence work at once, and till the balance of some one hundred and twenty acres of the plot for the next season's crop, while the part already planted before his coming is maturing. On the basis of three pounds of profit per acre, the forty acres would yield, say, one hundred and twenty pounds, from which would have to be deducted the eighty or one hundred pounds payable to the owners. The next year, the whole area being under cultivation, a handsome balance would be left on the year's working after paying the annual instalment. This is one of the most attractive schemes that has yet been elaborated for drawing the British farmer to the bounteous North-West of the Dominion ; and as arrangements are provided for enabling the farmer to extend his acreage as he prospers, he can obtain the freehold of a farm of three hundred and twenty acres within the course of a very few years, and well establish himself on the road to independence.

### AUXILIARY MOTOR-WHEEL FOR BICYCLES.

An inventor has contrived an ingenious and efficient means of converting the ordinary pedal-propelled bicycle to a motor-driven one whenever required. The advantage of the idea is that the motor device can be attached and detached in a few minutes, and does not involve any structural altera-

tion whatever to the mechanism of the cycle; while, when it is attached, the pedalling movements of the rider, whether a lady or a gentleman, are not impeded in the slightest. The attachment comprises a small wheel twenty inches in diameter, shod with a motor tire. This wheel is equipped with a horizontal frame fitted with a one and three-quarter horse-power petrol, valveless, two-stroke motor, to which is coupled up a special type of carburettor and magneto-ignition, the latter being driven by encased bevel gearing. The hub of the wheel carries the engine flywheel and the special six-to-one reducing-gear. The question of the petrol-tank is solved in an ingenious manner, for it is fashioned in the shape and fulfils the duty of a mud-guard. This tank, in addition to carrying sufficient petrol for a journey of a hundred and twenty miles, has also accommodation for a small supply of lubricating oil. The wheel is attached to the bicycle by detaching the rear wheel spindle-nut on the chain-side, and slipping the motor-wheel frame on to the spindle, after which the nut is replaced. The motor-wheel frame is so designed as to permit of certain vertical and lateral movement, so that any vibrations arising from the uneven road-surface are not transmitted to the rider, and no impediment is offered to turning or steering. A single control-lever clipped to the handle-bar, and connected to the motor by a Bowden wire, governs all the movements of the engine, and the pace can be adjusted to a nicety in the most congested traffic. To start off it is only necessary to pedal the machine for a few yards, when the motor takes up the propelling action, and a steady pace of fourteen miles an hour over roads of different gradients may be maintained. When desired, the machine can be reconverted to a pedalling cycle by the detachment of the motor-wheel; and the latter can be easily attached to or detached from a lady's cycle, or taken from a lady's and attached to a gentleman's machine, or *vice versâ*, in a few seconds, as it is made interchangeable. It is certainly the most ingenious and efficient auxiliary power-device that has yet been contrived for combination with the ordinary bicycle.

### TALKING MOVING PICTURES.

One of the latest applications of the kinematograph is the combination of moving pictures with the phonograph, whereby both action and sound are produced. During the past few months several devices of this type have been elaborated, all of which are carried out more or less upon the same lines. The phonograph produces the sounds, either of a song or speech, and the effect is so produced that the movements of the mouths of the characters on the screen synchronise with the utterance of the phonograph, so that the figures in the photographs appear actually to talk and sing as they move and act. The general means of insuring synchrony between the two machines is by means of dials. On the front of the phonograph is a small dial with an illuminated hand which revolves as the record is played. On one corner of the film is another small dial, the hand of which likewise rotates, and the operator at the projector has to see that the movement of the hand on the picture dial corresponds with that on the phonograph. The result is not quite perfect, as it entails no little skill on the part of the operator to keep the speed of the projector-handle the same as that of the phonograph, otherwise lagging or advance on the part of the picture-projection ensues. The best arrangement of this kind that has yet been evolved is that of a French inventor. In this instance the phonograph, though placed beside the screen and therefore some distance from the operator, is nevertheless controlled by him, as the phonograph is electrically driven, and the arrangement is so devised that the picture and phonograph must maintain absolute simultaneous movement, since they are operated together.

### COLLECTING ATMOSPHERIC ELECTRICITY BY RADIUM.

There has recently been exhibited a highly ingenious device for collecting electricity from the atmosphere by means of radium. The apparatus consists of a spiral piece of metal which is coated with soluble salts of radium. This spiral is suspended from a special weather-proof insulator attached to some elevated device, such as a pole, balloon, or kite. The radium ionises the air, enabling the aerial to acquire the potential of the elevation. At the base of the aerial is fitted an electroscope, which is so arranged as to discharge to earth automatically every few seconds. By this means electric chimes may be operated by radium-collected etheric electricity, and many other interesting experiments effected.

### THE FIRST AFGHAN BRIDGE.

Afghanistan, which has so long been a closed country, has at last succumbed to the march of civilisation and modern science, for the first metal bridge in that country has recently been erected by the leading bridge-building engineers of the Indian Empire, Messrs Burn & Company, Limited, of Calcutta. The bridge, which has a span of three hundred and six feet, is of the suspension type, and is thrown across the Kabul River at the mouth of the Diroontah River, seven miles from Jelalabad, almost on the spot where the Tenth Hussars lost several men in fording the waterway in the 1842 campaign. The bridge has a width of ten feet, and was built to give pedestrian and vehicular communication between the two countries. Owing to the extreme ruggedness of the country, its erection was a difficult task, especially in regard to the approaches, which had to be blasted out of the solid rock fringing the famous river at this point. Yet despite this heavy tussle with Nature, and the fact that native labourers who were entirely foreign to the work had to be employed, the bridge was completed in the

actual working time of five months—a remarkable performance considering the conditions prevailing. Hitherto a quaint native raft-ferry has sufficed to maintain communication between the opposite banks, and has long proved totally inadequate for the increasing traffic. The ironwork was prepared in India at the famous ironworks of the engineers, now a century and a quarter old, and the bridge was opened amid much jubilation and ceremony by his Majesty the Amir, who delivered an impressive speech, emphasising the great advantages of the structure as compared with the old and dangerous methods of crossing the river. The hillsides were packed with hordes of interested natives, and the opening of the bridge was a topic of conversation for several days, the Afghans experiencing a quaint delight in crossing and recrossing from one side of the river to the other by this means.

### AN INSTANTANEOUS GAS-LEAK INDICATOR.

The dangers of leaking gas are only too well known to require repetition, and now an ingenious and simple little device has been evolved which enables such an escape to be immediately detected. The principle of the indicator is in accordance with a well-known scientific law—that of the diffusion of gases—and this is turned to novel advantage. In appearance the device resembles a small watch, and the mechanical application of the fundamental principle is effected by the use of an elastic metal chamber, the bottom of which is formed of a porous tile through which the diffusion takes place. The dial of the indicator is marked on one side of the zero mark 'Light gas,' and on the other 'Heavy gas,' and there is a cock connecting to each section. When the detector is brought into an atmosphere contaminated with gas the gaseous atoms diffuse through the porous tile into the closed chamber with greater rapidity than the enclosed air passes out, thus causing pressure by increased volume upon the elastic surface of the chamber, and the motion thus given is communicated to mechanism which causes the dial-hand or index-finger to move one way or the other over the dial. In the course of two or three minutes the maximum effect of the gas is attained, as the needle ceases to move. The two cocks already mentioned are left open until an observation is about to be made, and then, before investigation is carried out in a suspected area, they are closed and a brass cap placed over the porous tile. When the contaminated atmosphere is entered this last-named cap is removed, and instantly the presence of any gas is positively betrayed by the movement of the dial-hand. For detecting existence of gas the little instrument is extremely useful and infallible.

### ELECTRICITY FROM THE WIND.

Since we mentioned, some months ago, the great strides that have been made on the Continent in connection with the harnessing of the wind to furnish electricity for power and lighting purposes, English engineers have devoted their attention to this problem, and now it is possible to secure a complete plant to fulfil varying requirements at a nominal cost. A typical installation of this type has recently been placed in operation at a private country residence in Worcester. The wind-wheel or turbine is twenty-four feet in diameter, and is mounted on a steel tower seventy-five feet high, and placed some four hundred yards from the house. At the foot of the tower is a small electric generator driven by the revolving wheel above, and the current is transmitted to the house by bare overhead copper wires. The wheel runs at speeds varying from four hundred to sixteen hundred revolutions per minute, and the electricity furnished by this means serves to light the house (about one hundred lamps being distributed over the building), and drives a chaff-cutter, a circular saw, and a root-pulping machine. The accumulator battery from which the energy is drawn and the controlling instruments are installed in a small outbuilding, so that the whole is very compact and easy of access. The plant is entirely automatic in its action, and the wheel can be stopped and restarted when required with perfect ease. Similarly, should there be an excessive wind-velocity, the special tails fitted to the wind-turbine tend to bring the wheel out of the wind, so that the predetermined wheel-velocity may not be exceeded. It has been found that fourteen units of electricity have been produced in twelve hours with a wind averaging fifteen miles per hour; but, taking the average wind-speed in the neighbourhood where the plant has been erected at about nine miles per hour, this is sufficient to supply about five thousand units per annum. Considering that the number of days per year when no wind prevails in these islands is so small, it is surprising that greater advantage has not been taken of this inexpensive means of securing electric energy for various purposes. Certainly it solves the question of enabling country houses to secure a constant steady light of the most scientific character at a very small cost.

### COLOUR-MATCHING BY ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.

A valuable discovery has recently been made and an invention placed on the market which will be hailed with satisfaction by almost every one connected with the textile trades. Most people are aware of the difficulty with which the process of matching colours by night is fraught, and especially colours which are presented in fabrics made from wool, cotton, or silk. Colours which appear one shade by daylight look totally different in the light of gas or electricity, and when the dark days of winter or the thick fogs of November are prevalent much time is lost in waiting for daylight to match the colours. The discovery consists of a process which eliminates the pernicious yellow rays from artificial light, and presents the material to be

matched in its proper shade. The invention to carry out this process takes the form of a screen known as the 'ora' colour-screen, which is a neat, flat, blotter-like arrangement composed of sheets of coloured transparencies in combination. The material to be matched is placed on one end of the screen, and the other end is bent up in concave form so as to reflect the light upon the material. The effect is obvious, for on a small pattern being cut in two and one part placed on the screen and the other held away from it, they will in many cases appear to be of quite different shades. For drapers and dealers in fancy silks and such-like articles the invention will prove most useful, since it will admit of matching colours at all times of the day or night. The screens are sold at the modest prices of five shillings, seven and sixpence, and ten shillings. The inventor is a gentleman well known in the woollen trade in the West End of London.

### SISAL HEMP IN YUCATAN.

There is an interesting chapter on the raising of henequen or sisal hemp from the plantations in Yucatan in the volume entitled *The American Egypt, Travels in Yucatan*, by C. Arnold and F. J. T. Frost (Hutchinson & Co.). From this source the growers are said to have derived eighty million pounds sterling within the past fifteen years. The fibre known as sisal hemp is obtained from a species of cactus, the *Agave Sisalensis*, first cultivated around the port of Sisal in Yucatan. From its fleshy leaves is crushed out a fine fibre, which resists damp better than ordinary hemp, and is valuable for making ships' cables. It is very largely used for the corn-binding machines of America and Canada, where wire cannot be used, while sisal is strong and cheap. The first plantation was founded in 1850, and the demand for the fibre was slow at first. The Spanish American war of 1898 gave it a boom, when the Manila hemp crops were destroyed or stopped. Now more and more ground is being reclaimed for its growth. The leaves are cut from plants at the end of the fifth year; the average yield of each plant annually is thirty-two leaves. These are crushed, and the fibre is extracted, dried in the sun, and pressed into bales for transport. There are now four hundred plantations, which yield about four hundred per cent., through their being worked on a system which the authors of this book say is virtually the slave labour of Mayan Indians, and which is by them duly exposed.

### STAMP-FIXING MACHINE.

This machine is the outcome of a long series of experiments by Mr. C. Michaelson, as absolute accuracy combined with simple yet strong mechanism was necessary to make it a commercial success. It weighs between nine and ten pounds, and is enclosed in a locked case made of polished oak suitable for office desk-work. The stamps are inserted in the machine in spool form, the Government having under consideration at the present time the printing of stamps in spool form to supply those who may wish to use such a machine. The stamps are fed to a pair of pressure rollers, and by the act of raising the master-lever in front of the machine a stamp is fed forward to the perforation-line and just clear of the feed-slot. On the lever being brought down it engages first with a cutting blade which separates the stamps at the perforation, when the blade springs clear, and the lever engages the pressure-pad which affixes the stamp to the letter. The moistening is done by passing the letter or card to be stamped through and under a flat metal tube containing a wick hung on a light-tension spring which enables the moistener to adjust itself to any thickness of letter. The moistening apparatus is supplied with water from a feed-tap connected to a suitable metal chamber. Each full lift of the main lever actuates a check counting-arrangement, and indicates on a dial the number of stamps used. The machine is capable of stamping five hundred letters in twenty minutes. It is claimed for this invention that it is a great time and labour saving device, and that it is hygienic in its action, as stamp-licking is entirely superseded. There can be no pilfering of stamps where the machine is in use, the stamps being under lock and key, and every one used is recorded. The entire operation of bringing a stamp forward, cutting it off, affixing it, and recording takes but one second. The machine is made in single or double movements, to supply halfpenny and penny stamps, or each only; while the price is a moderate one, to make the machine popular.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

## BECAUSE.

Because I love you, lonely, silent places
Are musical with echoes of your voice,
And stars and flowers and little children's faces
Flash back your smile and make my heart rejoice.

Because you love me, I have utter loathing
For all that is not high and pure and true;
What I have been is in my eyes as nothing
To what I will be, growing worthier you.

Because I love you, all I love are dearer,
All beauty is more beautiful to see;
Because you love me, God Himself comes nearer—
The God of Love who gave your love to me.

R. Ada Tyack.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# THE MAJOR'S CLOCK.

By A. W. ARNOLD, Author of *The Colonel's Murillo, At the Sign of the Silver Bell,* &c.

## CHAPTER I.

AFTER the restoration of the Bourbons whole regiments were disbanded, so I, like many a better man, received my *congé;* and in disgust I shook the dust of Paris off my feet and returned to my paternal home. It was rarely I found myself in the capital, but having to go there on some legal business three years afterwards, I naturally made my way to my old haunts, on the chance of meeting some old comrades. There were many military cafés, but Helder's and Lembling's were the most famous, and just leaving the latter as I approached it, whom should I meet but my old friend François Dorisart. I had not seen him for five long years, when we were in hospital together from wounds received on the disastrous day of Salamanca. Of course our delight was mutual. He told me he had come into a fortune, and that he was married, and lived in the Quartier St Germain. He insisted on my taking up my sojourn there while I remained in Paris.

'Well, Dorisart,' I said as we sat smoking in the evening, 'you have certainly fallen on your feet. You have a very beautiful and charming wife, a splendid house, and,' I added, pointing to a magnificent bronze gilt clock above us on the mantelpiece, 'some fine things in it.'

'You are right there,' he answered. 'And as for that clock, *mon ami,* it is my "mascot;" nothing would make me part with that; and I will tell you how I got it.

'Two months after Salamanca we were ordered to start for Russia. We had got as far as Pampeluna, when I and many others caught typhoid fever. Fully one-third of those who caught it died; and, *ma foi!* it left me as weak as a rat. The regiment of course continued its march, but the colonel left a brigadier and a dozen men to look after us. As the medicine major said we should not be fit for service for months, and as we should only be an incubus if we remained, we were told to go to Paris, where we were to report ourselves to the medical board. I had a carriage to myself, and the others, about two dozen of them, were in wagons. We were within five leagues of Irun, on the frontier, when we stopped at midday at a monastery.

'My father was a general, but he was killed at Marengo. My mother's family was ruined by the Revolution, so she had but a wretched pittance of a pension to exist upon. My only brother, who had been a notary, was dead, so that it fell to me to supplement her little income as best I could. All the loot I had gained had been lost at Salamanca. As it was on the great highway to Spain, everything of value in this monastery had been taken long ago. Still, seeing that it was the last chance I should have, I determined to have a look round, and, as good-luck would have it, hidden away under some cassocks in the sacristy I saw that very clock, which, besides telling the time, showed the day of the month, and though I did not know it then, it had also an alarm attached to it.

'"Oh, that clock does not belong to us," said the abbot; "it was only left here last night by a nobleman."

'"Oh, very well," I replied, "as it does not belong to you, I may as well take care of it;" and I ordered it to be taken to my carriage.

'However angry the abbot may have been, with marvellous cleverness he dissembled his wrath.

'"You are weak from fever," he said. "I will return good for evil; I will give you some wonderful old Solera that will completely restore you."

'We were on the point of starting, and I hesitated; but he pressed me to try it, and, like an imbecile, I fell completely into the trap. He soon returned with a very old crusted bottle. The cork certainly came out very easily, but I thought nothing of that. Filling a glass, he offered it to me. Now as he, so he had told me, had spent a good


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deal of his life in Rome, he was soaked with the traditions of the "Eternal City;" so I was not such a fool as to taste it before he had had some himself, and I told him to drink that glass and give me the next. The rogue trembled all over and turned as white as a sheet.

'"Go," I said, "before I put a bullet in you;" and this he did, remarkably quickly.

'But as he had this fine wine in the place, and thinking it might be good for those who had been ill, we made the monks show us where it was kept, and as we drank some of it there, we lost a little time. This was just what the abbot had desired in the first place; for though the delay was not really very long, it was long enough for his purpose. So many guerillas had been strung up for one thing, and we were so near the frontier for another, that perhaps the men grew careless. Anyway, we had not gone far when we found ourselves in the middle of a short but very dangerous pass.

'"*Prenez garde*," suddenly shouted the brigadier.

'I sprang out of the carriage in a moment, and looking up, I saw on a crag, at a giddy height—a height which only those shod with the hemp sandals that we call *espadilles*, and the Spaniards *alparagatas*, could ever reach—two of the monks and a couple of men. One of these latter was armed with a blunderbuss.

'The next moment they poured a volley into us, and this was taken up by two others, who had remained *perdu* till we had passed, rather lower down, a little in our rear. The bullets did us little harm, for they were wretched marksmen; but the pellets from the blunderbuss peppered the mules of my carriage, and the frightened animals darted off, and the next moment, the front wheel striking a stone projection, the vehicle toppled sideways against the side of the road. In a moment our fellows had dismounted and returned the fire. We soon silenced the two in the rear, but with those who were higher up it was quite another thing. Had they only been good marksmen they might have picked us off one after another; but the one with the blunderbuss caused no end of trouble. True that for killing purposes he was too far off, but the confounded shot excited and stung the animals, and of course the troopers also, and many of the helpless invalids were injured.

'Vainly I shouted that I would give a louis to the man who brought the fellow down.

'"It is no good, *mon capitaine*," cried the brigadier. "We must retreat."

'"Give me your carbine," I said hastily.

'The brass blunderbuss shone brightly in the sun and made a good target. Though I fired straight up at the fellow I missed him, but by a piece of luck I saw a twig quiver a good two metres immediately beneath him. Again I fired, this time aiming into space, but two metres or more above him, just as he happened to be raising his weapon to his shoulder. The bullet struck him fairly and squarely in the chest, and he threw up his arms, clutched a monk beside him, and both fell forward into a ridge beneath.

'"Never mind them," I cried amidst the exclamations of the men at my successful shot; "fire higher and settle the two." But these latter did not give us the chance, as they quickly got behind a boulder.

'Thus left in peace, we turned our attention to those who were wounded, but luckily their injuries were of a trivial character; and then we examined the carriage. This was past any repair. I was taking the clock out, with the intention of putting it in one of the wagons, when in our rear we heard a trumpet; and coming towards us at a fast trot I saw some twenty of our dragoons, escorting five carriages, and I sent one of the men to meet them.

'"Who is it?" I cried to the man as he returned.

'"A Mons. Moyart," he replied.

'I had expected, on seeing such an escort, some general of importance, and was consequently mystified. However, the next moment a tall, thin, gray-haired gentleman with rather a Jewish type of face and a very suave manner got out of the carriage.

'"I knew you were in front, sir," he said; "we were only just in time."

'"Your arrival, sir," I replied, "was certainly lucky on account of the breakdown of my carriage; otherwise I don't think we had much to fear."

'In the politest manner he insisted on my sharing his carriage (a very fine travelling-berline) with him, even sending out his secretary, though there would have been plenty of room for him.

'Before starting for Russia the Emperor had issued very stringent orders against looting. In some few instances these orders were carried out; but the marshals and those in high command, knowing the Emperor was hundreds of leagues away, practically ignored them, and after a time so did every one else. This Moyart, who started life as a lawyer, had, it appeared, been sent by the Emperor, at the suggestion of the authorities of the Louvre—for he was a very fine judge of pictures and bric-à-brac—to report what was going on; just as Mons. Quiter had been previously sent, at the request of Kellerman, to sort and arrange the Spanish archives at Simancas. He was armed with all the powers of a provost-marshal, and could seize for the benefit of the nation all articles that had been looted. However, he had only got five carriages full; for, as all, from the marshals downwards, were tarred with the same brush, every impediment had been put in his way.

'So I very naturally, knowing nothing of the man then, and not knowing for what purpose he had gone to Spain, gladly accepted his kind offer. Carefully wrapping my clock in a cloak—for it was going—I set it on the seat, little thinking of the innocent way I was falling into another trap that, at the abbot's instigation, the plausible rogue was setting for me. When we arrived late in the evening at Irun his escort returned to Spain; and we, after a good meal about ten, started for Bayonne. Hitherto he had

been very taciturn, but the wine and the good meal he had had made him talkative.

'On the surface I could not have wanted a pleasanter companion. He was well read and had come across many celebrated men, especially artists and men of letters. He complained bitterly of the task he had been set, saying he had made more enemies in the last few weeks than he had made all his life; and then it was that I learnt his mission. I thought I should have sunk through the seat, for right in front of us was my clock, and armed as he was with the powers of a provost-marshal, I saw at once I was completely at his mercy. If he chose to help himself to my clock (if he only found out I had got one), nothing I could do would prevent him. In spite of the cloak thrown over it, I heard its soft, sweet tones striking the hours. Luckily, however, Moyart was deaf—so deaf that one found it somewhat fatiguing to keep up a continued conversation with him—so that he did not hear it; but for all that I was now thoroughly alarmed, and racked my brains thinking what plausible excuse I could make for continuing the journey by myself. However, for the time being, the great thing was to make myself as agreeable to the man as I could, and in this I venture to think I succeeded, though I should have liked to wring his neck if I had dared.

'Night came at length, and we drew the blinds and settled ourselves down to sleep. On the score of its being hot and close, I took off my coat and put it over the clock as an additional measure to stifle the chimes. It was some time ere I fell asleep. Just as the dawn was breaking the carriage stopped, and this woke both of us up.

'"Where are we?" asked Moyart.

'I looked out to see. It was a beautiful autumn morning. The mists were rising in the valley and the first pink rays of the rising sun just showing on the crest of the purple mountains. Suddenly my clock slowly and distinctly struck six, for somehow the jolting of the carriage must have moved the coverings.

'"*Mon dieu*," said my companion, with his hand to his ear, "what lovely bells!"

'For a moment I was too horrified to speak. "Yes," I replied, getting between him and the clock; "it must be the bells of the village church."

'"Well, I don't see any church," he said, pulling up the blind on his side.

'"Perchance, then," I continued, at the same time stuffing the cloak once more over the clock as the old man was looking out of the window, "it is some distant monastery, and the holy brethren are going to compline or something of that sort."

'"Compline?" he repeated. "More likely to a fine breakfast. Anyway, compline is not at this time of day."

'I saw I had made a mistake, but I was so flustered that I do not know exactly what I said.

'Fresh horses were soon put in, we drew the blinds again, and my companion was soon off to sleep once more. I was not going to run the risk of his hearing those chimes again; at any cost that must be stopped. It was a serious matter to me. I had been in Spain for three years, and this was the only reward I had got, and, come what might, I meant to keep it. I sat up and listened intently. Yes, the collector was asleep; there was no doubt about that; so I carefully took off the wraps from the clock and turned it round preparatory to taking off the pendulum, so as to stop it altogether. I should have liked to draw up the blinds, only I feared it would wake him. I was feeling about in the dark for the confounded pendulum when suddenly there was no end of a noise, enough to take the roof off; and, what is more, it kept on, for I had actually turned on the alarm. It seemed as though the Evil One himself was in the thing. I thought it would never leave off.

'"*Sacré bleu*," shouted Moyart, for we could hardly hear ourselves speak, "what on earth have you got there?"

'Concealment was no longer possible.

'"Well, the fact of it is, sir," I replied in apologetic tones when the din had ceased, "it's a very valuable clock. You must clearly understand that it does not belong to me; and I am only taking care of it. It is for a very dear friend that I am doing this."

'"Oh, are you?" he said dryly. "Well, just pull up the blinds and let's have a look at it. *Ma foi*," he continued with conviction, as he gazed at the beautiful article in deep admiration, "that is a beauty! There's one other like it, and only one, and that now belongs to M. le Duc de Choiseul. Yes," he continued, examining it critically, "and what's more, it's an historical clock."

'"The deuce it is!" I said to myself, thinking he meant to make that an excuse to take it. "You don't mean it, sir?" I said in awe-struck tones.

'"Oh yes," he replied. "Observe that lace-work * at the base of *fleur de lys*, which is only found on articles belonging to the king; and look at the exquisite modelling of that Venus and Cupid, and the whole *tout ensemble*. I will tell you the history of that clock. The two clocks were made by Osmond, to the order of Louis Quinze, and given by him to Louis the Dauphin (you see the dolphins are introduced in the ornamentation) before the latter's marriage to the Infanta in 1746. It is very rare for a clock of that size to mark the days of the month. The Dauphin, among other presents, sent that one to his *fiancée* at Madrid, and kept the other for himself, telling her how they could mutually mark off the days till the auspicious day of their wedding arrived."

'Of course I pretended to be very much interested in all this, and flattered him and told him how

* There is a fine specimen of this lace-work and dolphins on two Louis Quinze candlesticks which belonged to Louis the Dauphin, in the Wallace Collection, Gallery XX. Case A.

much I was impressed by his great historical knowledge. I fully expected that he would claim my clock at once, but he only leant back in deep thought, and, to my surprise, said nothing more. Of course I was on tenter-hooks all the time. I did not know what I could say or do, when Fortune (as I thought at the time) suddenly came to my aid, for the horses just then slackened their pace, and, looking out, I saw the rear-guard of a regiment of the line just in front of us.

'"What is your number?" I asked.

'"The Fifty-seventh."

'In a moment I saw my chance, for I knew slightly—but that did not matter—a fellow named Bercy in that regiment, so I asked about him, and was told that he was with the advance-guard. Anxiously, as we passed the regiment, I looked out for Bercy. He naturally was as much surprised to see me as I had been to hear of him, and I shouted out that I would see him farther on. Then I explained to my companion what a dear friend Bercy was, and how lucky I was to come across him, as I had very important news to tell him. A peculiar smile came over Moyart's face, but in a genial tone he said I should very soon have the chance of seeing my dear friend, as we were coming to a very decent inn, where we should get a vastly superior meal to any that could be had at an *auberge* in Bayonne.

'In his own estimation Moyart was a great judge of cookery. The landlord of this inn, he informed me, could make an omelette *aux truffles* quite up to any that might be got at "Les Trois Provençaux," and the trout too was excellent.

'"This Spanish war," he continued, "must have made his fortune;" and, to my unbounded delight, I thought he had forgotten all about my clock, for the rest of the short intervening space was spent in praising the merits of this wonderful innkeeper of "L'Écu d'Or," and comparing his efforts with those of various *chefs* of famous Parisian restaurants.

'Meanwhile I had quickly made up my mind, once we alighted, to continue the journey alone or attach myself to the Fifty-seventh, but I kept that to myself.

'Carefully taking up my treasured article, I followed Moyart into the inn, and while he was ordering *déjeuner* I saw the innkeeper's wife. I told her I would pay her well if she would take care of it; accordingly she promised to put it in her own room, and took the clock upstairs. Far down the road I saw the dust above the marching regiment. Leaving word that I would be back soon, I set off to meet it. Then for the first time—for I was still an invalid, and had not thrown off the effects of the typhoid—I found out how weak I was. I ought, of course, to have gone back at once to the inn, but I walked on slowly, and at last met Bercy, and told him how I was placed.

'"Oh, that will be all right," he said. "I will see the colonel; anyway, when we reach Bayonne you can get a good carriage."

'I certainly could not have been away from "L'Écu d'Or" more than twenty minutes, and I took it for granted that Moyart would be an hour over the wonderful meal he was going to order. Judge, then, my horror when I saw, while I was but two hundred metres from the inn, the confounded thief and his secretary hastily getting into his berline, followed by the landlord carrying a bundle. The door was banged and the vehicle disappeared in a cloud of dust. A horrible foreboding came over me. Of course I could not be sure, but instinct told me that he had got my clock.

'In a hastily scribbled note from Moyart I read: "I have taken quite a fancy to the clock, and, as it does not belong to you, I may as well take care of it for you."

'My very words to the abbot on the previous day.

'But I don't want to dwell upon that. A spasm of rage shot through me; I was speechless with anger. There are some memories in life that one does not care to talk of or even think about—the flight of Moyart with my clock is one; but one thing I do know, and that is, that swearing, not of a loud or vulgar nature, but the deep internal variety, was the only thing that gave me, for many a long day, any real relief.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE LIMIT.

By T. C. Bridges.

THAT the properly trained athlete can endure far greater and more lengthy physical strain than the ordinary man is self-evident. But man is not a machine, and there are limits beyond which it is not only unwise but extremely dangerous to go. The wise man recognises these limits, and, keeping within them, enjoys health and strength to the end of his days; the foolish—alas that there should be so many athletic fools!—attempt too much, and the penalty that outraged nature exacts is a heavy one.

Every winter there are two six-day go-as-you-please races at Madison Square Garden in New York, one for cyclists, the other for pedestrians. The former is for international teams, and the winners usually cover about two thousand seven hundred miles in the time. They actually keep up an average speed of nearly nineteen miles an hour for one hundred and forty-four hours in succession. In other words, the winning team could race a liner like the *Umbria* from Queenstown to New York, and almost beat her.

Does any sane person imagine that a human

being exists who can endure such a prolonged and terrible strain without suffering for it to the end of his life. Listen to what a spectator says of the finish in one of these races: 'Seven teams retired during the contest, and several riders are in hospital suffering from severe injuries caused by falling from their bicycles and other accidents. Nearly all the survivors presented a pitiable appearance from utter exhaustion and lack of sleep. Their faces were yellow and sunken, and their eyes bloodshot.'

This sounds sufficiently horrible, but the results of the six-day pedestrian contests are even worse. Out of forty-two teams who entered in a recent contest only fifteen were on the track at the finish. The scene on the last evening was a pitiable one, the men staggering along in a semi-conscious condition. Haggard, leg-worn, and half-blind, they struggled on, their trainers driving them as if they were a pack of dogs. Some had actually lost a stone and a half in weight during the six days. The winners, who had covered seven hundred and seventy miles, received prizes equivalent to a thousand pounds; but—and this seems the most repulsive part of the whole business—they had spent nearly two hundred pounds in food and drugs to keep them up.

Some readers will say at once, 'But this was in America. We don't do that kind of thing in this country.' Unfortunately we cannot afford to smile superiorly, and assert that Britons recognise the limit and remain within it; and instances in plenty can be adduced to prove this assertion.

About three years ago a Bolton man undertook the extraordinary feat of walking two thousand five hundred miles in one thousand one hundred hours. The conditions were that he should cover two and a quarter miles every consecutive hour, with one hundred hours' allowance for intervals. The track was round a public bowling-green, and the task was performed in the middle of winter. The weather was very severe, and the unfortunate man suffered fearfully in consequence. He became so weary that when he slept attendants had to thrust needles into his flesh to awake him, and on the last day was so weak that several times he was actually blown down by the strong wind. The account of his performance ends with the statement that 'he finished the last two and a quarter miles in a state of semi-consciousness, and was loudly cheered by a large crowd.'

You notice that you will always find a crowd to cheer performances of this kind. There is something essentially cruel about a crowd, even though its members may be individually humane; and the cruelty of the crowd is one factor which causes men to undertake feats which may almost be described as superhuman, and which certainly cannot be counted under the head of legitimate sport.

It is very doubtful, indeed, whether any pedestrian feats of this description can be called sporting. That those who undertake them and carry them through have any amount of grit and pluck is not to be doubted for a moment; but is there anything edifying in watching a man tramping round and round a track, hour after hour, day after day, battling against intense weakness and his natural longing for sleep? Certainly, when it comes to pricking him awake with needles or dosing him with drugs the verdict is beyond doubt. It is not sport but sheer brutality. No one has ever suggested that 'doping' a racehorse is the act of a sportsman. Shall we, then, permit a wider license in the treatment of the human athlete?

Speaking of horses, it may be safely asserted that there is nothing unsportsman-like in matching a number of trained thoroughbreds to gallop against one another over any ordinary distance. But those long-distance rides which have become popular on the Continent of late years come under a very different heading.

The most notorious of these performances was the Brussels-Ostend military ride. Seventeen of the horses died either during the race or within twenty-four hours afterwards, and four or five more had to be shot as useless. In spite of the popular outcry, this was followed a couple of years later by a French cavalry ride from Paris to Deauville. The fifty miles was covered by the winner in four hours, fourteen minutes, forty-five seconds, and this in blazing August weather. We are told that one lieutenant tried to gallop all the way, and when his horse fell going up a hill he injected ether to revive it. The poor brute struggled on again, and finished the race, then dropped, and was carried to a stable, where it died. Another horse also died in its stable immediately after finishing the race.

The Austro-German race from Berlin to Vienna was even more brutal. Of the seventy-two Germans who came in every one brought in his horse in such a condition that, if even it had not to be shot at once, its utility was at an end. The distance by the nearest road is three hundred and sixty-one miles, and that the winner accomplished the journey in eighty-five hours is a testimony to the amazing endurance of man's best friend, and to the callous brutality of its rider. How very different from the famous feat of Squire Osbaldestone, who in 1831 rode two hundred miles in ten hours! He changed horses every four miles, using sixteen horses for the task; and, being himself in thorough training, he was none the worse for his amazing gallop.

Few shows are more popular on the music-hall stage than exhibitions of extraordinary muscular power. Man is always morbidly interested in seeing how much his brother-man can endure without breaking a blood-vessel or otherwise collapsing. But are these things sport in any true meaning of the word? Does not the heart of the exhibition strong man suffer? Are not his arteries enlarged? Is he not laying up for himself all kinds of trouble in the years to come, and probably shortening his life? But this question of perilous public performances is a very wide one, too much so to be treated here. Looping the loop, high diving into shallow tanks,

parachuting from enormous heights, jumping in and out of barrels blindfolded—these and scores more of similar feats attract a public that has no true sporting taste, but goes to watch them merely in order to tickle a jaded appetite with the chance of a horrible fatality. Almost without exception, these sensational feats lie quite outside the sphere of true sport.

The holiday season will soon be with us again, and we are certain to read the usual harrowing list of accidents by cliff and mountain, river and sea. A very large proportion of these fatalities are caused by persons undertaking tasks for which they are physically unfit. For a man in hard training, who possesses a steady head, and is properly dressed and equipped, to climb a snow-clad peak is a thoroughly sporting feat. For another, fresh from an office-stool, unaccustomed to great heights, and imperfectly equipped, to attempt a similar climb is madness, frequently amounting to sheer suicide.

The Alpine accident list for one recent year shows that there were seventy-five fatal accidents and three hundred and fifty others, the death-roll of quite a respectable battle. Among all the killed and injured less than 5 per cent. were people who might with any justice be termed mountaineers.

Here is a typical example of the fashion in which lives are cast away in the Alps. In July 1907 two middle-aged ladies, together with three girl-friends, started up the Birnlucke, in the Tyrolese Alps. Though the mountain is eight thousand feet high, they were dressed in light summer frocks and high-heeled shoes, carried parasols, and took only one guide. Half-way up, clouds rolled across the sky, and the guide begged them to return. But they only laughed, and presently three men-friends joined them, and they continued the climb. Near the top a sudden, furious snowstorm burst, and very soon they were over their knees in snow. The cold was intense; the wind howled with blizzard force. Soon all five of the women were exhausted. The men had to drag and carry them through the drifts to the shelter of an overhanging rock; and, leaving one of their number to guard the rest, they hurried down to the half-way hut for food and blankets. Before they could get back the two elder ladies were dead, and the three girls very nearly so. Every one of the party, including the guide, was badly frost-bitten.

Such cases, though not all entailing like terribly tragic results, might be cited by the score. A young Englishman started up Pilatus in thin summer shoes. Not unnaturally he slipped on a grassy slope and rolled a long way, catching up on the sheer brink of a two-hundred-foot precipice. Another, attempting to cross the Mer-de-Glace above Chamonix in cycling-shoes, fell into a crevasse, from which he was rescued with much difficulty, half-frozen but still alive. A husband and wife, reaching the head of a steep *couloir* above St Gervais les Bains, were mad enough to start sliding down the steep, smooth rocks, as 'the easiest way back to the village.' Once started, they could not stop. The poor lady was smashed to pieces, almost every bone in her body being broken; the man was desperately injured.

Similar amazing rashness is constantly seen in this country. Not long ago a visitor to Dover attempted to scale the cliffs at a point where they are three hundred feet high. He got half-way up, and found he could neither advance nor return. It was hours before a rope-ladder was lowered, and he was rescued with very great difficulty from the dangerous dilemma in which his own foolish daring had placed him.

A crazy ambition to break records is responsible for many foolhardy exploits. Even a really great athlete such as Captain Webb lost his life in an attempt to do what no one had ever done before—namely, to swim the Niagara Rapids. Yet his fate has not deterred others from attempting the impossible. Four years ago Jack Glenister, an American swimmer of some repute, announced that he would venture through the Whirlpool Rapids. He had no sooner entered the water than he was whirled helplessly away in the furious current. Over and over again he disappeared from view, and the spectators who watched him as he was hurled against the rocks never expected to see him alive again. However, he was rescued a mile lower down, and pulled out, battered, bleeding, and delirious. It was days before he recovered his senses after his awful experience.

The border-line between legitimate sport and foolhardiness is not, after all, especially difficult to define. Every person must have a pretty good notion of what he can accomplish without actually injuring himself, and beyond that limit no one has any right to go. The honest ambition to excel in any form of athletics or sport is altogether admirable; the mere desire to win a wager or to perform a feat so dangerous that it has never before been accomplished is a foolish flying in the face of Providence.

# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,
Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

## CHAPTER XXI.—HOW SIR CHARLES TROD THE SHADOWY WAY.

MR PENNEFEATHER was at Grosvenor Place as soon as the news reached him.

'I am shocked beyond measure, Sir Charles,' was his greeting. 'I was with Sir George yesterday morning by his special request, and he seemed much as usual, and very determined to have this matter of Miss Lauriston's settled with proper regard to her safety, in which I fully agreed with him.'

'What matter is that, Mr Pennefeather? I have not heard about it yet. I was at Ealing on Saturday, and my sister has been so overcome that I have hardly seen her.'

'Ah, you had not heard? It was settled, I imagine, on Friday night, and she spoke to Sir George on Saturday, after you left town probably. She is going to marry M. de Montessonne'——

And, instantly and instinctively, Charles brought the matter to the touchstone of the new and perilous circumstances in which he stood. Charlotte's fortune must stand at considerably over one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. If her marriage entailed the payment of it, it meant disaster. This in a flash. Mr Pennefeather's next words, however, dissipated his fears for the moment.

'Sir George was giving me directions as to the settlement of her money strictly on herself. He spoke very freely to me, as he was in the habit of doing, and I think I had his full mind on the subject. I will submit a draft scheme to you within a day or two, and I suggest that in your sister's interests you insist upon its being carried out in its entirety. Otherwise, the Marquis may play ducks and drakes with her money—for political purposes, I mean; I suggest nothing else. I believe him to be a most honourable gentleman in every way. But undoubtedly this marriage will be a great thing for him in his present circumstances, and we must see to it that your sister is properly secured.'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Sir George's will is in my hands also. It is very short. He leaves everything to you, with but one stipulation, Miss Lauriston being already amply provided for by her mother's estate.'

'And the stipulation?'

'That if at any time you, of your own free-will, cease to take an active share in the management of the bank, your interest therein, as derived from him, is to be devoted to the foundation and maintenance of an asylum for idiots.' And Mr Pennefeather smiled gravely as he said it.

'I am afraid he had the fear that I would throw over the bank and go back to the army,' said Charles quietly. 'But I have no such intention. Lauristons must of course have a Lauriston at the helm.'

'Of course. Poets, they say, are born, not made; and without a doubt Lauristons are born bankers. And the helm could not be in safer hands than your own, my dear Sir Charles. You will command all the confidence which your esteemed father always enjoyed. And if he had the advantage of experience, you have all the advantages of youth; and for experience you will have the benefit of John Sax. I have a very great respect for John Sax.'

'He is a man among ten thousand. He will be invaluable to me.'

'You and he are sole executors, by the way,' said the solicitor, with a nod of approval. 'So you will have everything in your own hands. My own relations with you, Sir Charles, will, I hope, be as intimate and friendly as they were with your father.'

'I trust so, Mr Pennefeather. Where my father bestowed his confidence I am quite sure I may do so.'

Mr Pennefeather went his way satisfied as to the security of his position, and Charles went upstairs to find his sister.

It was characteristic of her that, when she came to him in the little morning-room which his wife as a rule made use of when she was in town, her eyes were swollen with much weeping, and her face puffed almost beyond recognition. Yet between her and her father there had never been any very great affection or even cordiality. Her fads and fancies and affectations had irritated Sir George to the point of brusqueness with her at times, and he was always happier in his mind and temper when she was out of the house.

'Oh Charles!' she sobbed with a fresh outburst, 'I really cannot believe it yet. Yesterday at this time he was as well as you or I, and now'——

'He is at rest, Charlotte, and undue grief will benefit neither you nor him.'

'No, no! But yet, oh, how dreadful it is, and how little one knows! In the midst of life we are in death, and any moment may be our last! How terribly true it is! I have not slept all night, not one single wink; and Honeybun has been trying to make me eat, but I could not take a bite—just a dish of tea and not another thing. We must just have faith, I suppose; for what else is there, you know?' and she ravelled off at last in a forlorn sigh.

Charles had made no attempt to stop her till she was run down. He had long since learnt the wisdom of that.

'I came,' he said when she had finished, 'to speak with you of M. de Montessonne.'

'Ah yes! The poor Etienne! He will have to wait a time now, I suppose. We could hardly get married immediately;' and she looked doubtfully across at him.

'As your own good sense tells you, hardly immediately, with any decency. But the delay need not be a very extended one. Our father, I think, indicated his views as to your settlements.'

'Oh yes; and I am sure he was quite right, and very thoughtful for me. You see, Etienne cannot deny that he is a very faithful Bourbonist. Has he not proved it by spending on them every sou he saved? And I certainly would not wish my money thrown after his, and all to no purpose.'

'That is, I think, the wise view to take, and Mr Pennefeather is preparing the necessary documents. All I wished to say in the matter was this. You have not yet discussed it with M. de Montessonne, I presume.'

'Oh, my dear, what chance have I had? He came yesterday afternoon; but when he heard he went away again, of course.'

'Quite so. Well, it is just possible the marquis may not see things quite from our point of view. It is indeed likely, and one could not blame him perhaps. All the same, in your own interests, you must be firm, and our views must prevail. You quite understand?'

'Oh, quite! Father made it quite plain to me. He said that as Marquise de Montessonne, with my fortune behind me, I should be somebody. But the wife of a marquis who teaches French for a living would be nobody.'

'That is the position exactly, if only you will not permit yourself to be persuaded out of it.'

'I will not, I assure you, Charles. I know it is for my good. I can really be very firm when occasion calls for it.'

'If you are not firm in this matter you will probably have little occasion for it in future.'

'I quite understand.'

And Charles went away fairly well satisfied that she would carry her point, for he knew of old that she could be as obstinate as a mule when she chose, and especially where her own convenience or interests were concerned.

Then he sent off a groom with a letter breaking the news to his wife, begging her not to think of coming in to town, and promising to come out to them the following Saturday.

For the first time in his life he found relief in the thought that some days must elapse before he saw those who were dearer to him than his own life, and his face quivered and his teeth clenched over it. It was the first chill touch of the shadowy way in which he had deliberately set his feet.

### CHAPTER XXII.—HOW ALL THE WORLD TURNED OUT TO HONOUR SIR GEORGE.

SIR GEORGE'S funeral was the occasion of unusual pomp and magnificence, not so much in itself as in the quite extraordinary display of ceremonious grief it called forth from almost every stable in the West End, and in many cases from the owners of the stables as well.

Charles would have wished it otherwise, but that could not be. There were so many among the great and wealthy who desired to show their respect and gratitude to the great banker—many, indeed, with ample cause, and many again perhaps not entirely without provident thought for the future.

The Prince of Wales conveyed his condolences and intimated his intention of sending a carriage to join the procession, and the rest of the world followed suit.

The Lord Mayor's carriage outvied the Prince's in splendour, his coachman and footmen, from powdered heads to bulging calves, exhaling such a sense of opulence as they passed as to call forth loud and admiring comment from the crowds.

There were in addition two royal dukes, four ordinary dukes, five marquises, six earls, three viscounts, one bishop, and barons, baronets, and knights—or their carriages—too numerous to mention, and not by any means in their rightful order of precedence, except in the case of the Prince's equipage and the Lord Mayor's. The rest fell in just as they happened to arrive and managed to get into line, with volcanic outflow of language anything but becoming to the occasion, and otherwise as little damage as might be.

Mr Pitt was there in person, bearing his heavy burdens with serenity, and heedless of the scowls that greeted him; and Mr Fox; and his one-time friend Edmund Burke, come over from Beaconsfield on purpose, and with little thought that he would himself be figuring as principal in an equally lugubrious procession two months later; and the Speaker of the House was there, and Mr Windham, and ever so many more—all testifying before all the world to the high esteem and confidence in which the great banker was held.

The Marquis de Montessonne made a very brave show, in a handsome hired coach which cost him many weeks' fees; but under forthcoming circumstances he judged it money not ill spent.

In all, Miss Lauriston, from her darkened window, counted over one hundred and fifty carriages, and was not a little uplifted in spirit, and even somewhat mitigated in her grief, thereby.

And the crowd revelled in the show of horseflesh and coroneted panels, and scowled at Mr Pitt, and audibly wished itself in the shoes of the dead man's son.

And the dead man's son looked out upon them

with a quiet face and wished he had died on Dunkirk sands.

John Sax and he rode together in the first coach—driven by Jerry MacClootie, who had come over from Ealing for the purpose—and tried to avoid one another's eyes. For Charles felt that if their eyes should chance to meet, with all their hidden knowledge of the hideous actual facts in them, he for one must break into hysterical laughter, so monstrously incongruous was the whole hollow show. He was overwrought, you see, and no wonder.

'My God! My God! John Sax!' he said through clenched teeth. 'Suppose they knew! Suppose they knew!'

'And that, please God, they never will!' said John Sax steadfastly.

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### CHAPTER XXIII.—HOW THE FETTERS BIT.

THERE was no break in the even tenor of business matters at the bank.

Sir George was gone. Sir Charles ruled in his stead, sat in his chair in his private sanctum, and gripped the reins with a firm hand and a face set inflexibly to the necessities of the case. Under John Sax's direction, and with his assistance, he did what had to be done.

What direful deeds and what heart-breaking emotion may lie behind a few simple words!

Charles Lauriston did what had to be done! And he slept little of a night during that week, but lay through the grim, black hours staring starkly into the black void above him, thankful for the restful darkness which allowed him to drop the mask and agonise unseen. And when at times Nature insisted, and he fell into short, troubled sleeps, he dreamt that the great mahogany bedposts were the beams of the gallows, and woke striving to tear the rope from his neck.

Not lightly, nor without suffering, did he enter on the shadowy road, and John Sax looked anxiously at Sir Charles's set white face each morning with a cold dread at his heart lest he should break down utterly and land them on the rocks. For he himself had been through it all, and he understood to the full the wrench and the heart-break and the self-derogation, until one's better self had been elbowed aside, and the new, lower self grew case-hardened and dulled to the higher and sweeter things of life, and by degrees accommodated itself to the galling load and the bite of the fetter.

'It is telling on you, Sir Charles,' said John Sax with concern in the privacy of the sanctum one morning.

'Yes, John,' with the weariness of the black, sleepless hours in his eyes. 'One does not part company with all that is good and sweet in life without feeling it.'

'Try more exercise, sir. I used to walk ten miles every morning before coming to the bank. It did me a world of good.'

And next morning Charles had out the Devil before the world was astir, and left him no grounds for complaint of lack of exercise before he had done with him.

A black, black week!—the blackest week of his life!—and it left its mark upon him for ever.

The sudden jerk into supreme power, with the immense responsibilities entailed thereby, would have sufficed to age any man. And here, behind and beyond all that, was the menace and the shadow and the grim black fact. No wonder he showed it.

To all with whom he came into contact, however, his bearing was gracious and courteous as ever; and as to the gravity and repression of his looks, the suddenness of Sir George's death was sufficient to account for that.

But when Saturday came, and he was free to join his wife and children, for the first time in his life he found himself dreading the ordeal. Would Mary's spiritual insight pierce his mask and read the torture of his soul? He feared it. He feared it greatly. For the first time in his life the thought of meeting her clear, calm eyes troubled him. Could he bear himself before them as he had done when his soul was white and his hands were clean! He doubted it.

To soothe his jangled nerves he galloped away along the Edgeware Road, and never drew rein till he reached Edgeware itself. Then he turned to the west and rode through Stanmore and Harrow Weald to Harrow, and so came down on Ealing from the north. And as he sped past Harrow Hill his eye fell on Mother Goose's cherry-grounds, and Mavie's urgent voice rang in his ear again: 'Oh daddie, I'd sooner have you a tinker than a thief!' And his face dyed crimson as he urged the Devil on his way.

And so when he galloped up the drive of the Red House his face was somewhat less like an ivory carving, and he had braced himself to meet their innocent comments with something approaching composure.

*(To be continued.)*

# NORFOLK ISLAND AND ITS PEOPLE.

## THE DESCENDANTS OF THE 'BOUNTY' MUTINEERS.

SITUATED in latitude twenty-nine degrees three minutes south longitude, one hundred and sixty-eight degrees east, with an area of ten square miles, Norfolk Island was discovered by Captain Cook in 1774. The name brings to the mind of most people mental pictures of its convict associations rather than its connection with the romantic story of the *Bounty* mutiny. It is six miles long, and three miles at its widest part, and therefore in every way more suitable for the development of the Pitcairn Islanders than was their own beloved 'Rock in the West,' as they so aptly termed it. As the population increased Pitcairn Island was found to be too small, so in 1855 the British Government decided to offer them Norfolk Island, just then about to be abandoned as a convict station. This offer was accepted by the Pitcairners, and they were landed at Norfolk Island on the 8th of June 1856. The present population of Norfolk Island is nearly eight hundred.

The story of the good ship *Bounty* and the bold, bad mutineers, together with the many favourable accounts written of their descendants, had, whilst I was in my teens, caused within me a desire to see Norfolk Island. Many, many years elapsed before that wish was gratified. In those days, when the island was governed by the people, who elected their own magistrates and councillors (the Chief Magistrate being in authority), no strangers were permitted to make a home there except under very exceptional circumstances. I had become acquainted with Mr Byron Adams, the then Chief Magistrate, who was on a visit to Sydney, New South Wales, and I besought his influence to get permission from the islanders to settle there. On his return a public meeting was held; and, as I had no intention of starting business on the island, my request was granted. I therefore booked my passage by a small schooner trading between Sydney and Norfolk Island, and awaited her arrival in port. She was delayed for three weeks, having been sheltering at Lord Howe Island from the winter storms. Finally, one spring morning we set sail, and everything gave promise of a fair-weather trip.

It was Sunday morning, and the cry of 'Land ho!' sounded through the boat. We were instantly on the alert, and then began the usual struggle for personal belongings and *et ceteras* which is characteristic of the weaker sex at such times. At last we were ready, everything having been squeezed into the smallest possible compass; and, well wrapped up and ready for landing, we emerged from our cabin. What a pretty scene the island presented! The hills were crowned with verdure that looked like coverings of bright-green plush intersected with pale-red ribbon, the terra-cotta coloured roads which wind in and out of the hills conveying that effect to the eye. We appeared to sail nearly all round the island, the various beauty-spots being pointed out to us as we passed them. On nearing the landing-place the captain seemed rather vexed that no preparation had been made to meet us. We saw one or two men on shore, but it was all so calm and peaceful that one would hardly suppose the place was inhabited; then, coming to the conclusion that all the boats were at the Cascade, another landing-place, he proceeded to sail thither. There is no harbour, and the whaling-boats meet all vessels, taking off passengers and cargo—a very difficult matter when there is a rough sea. When near the Cascade we saw a great crowd on shore, and then two boats put off and came alongside. The occupants sprang aboard, and after the exchange of greetings and family news the men resumed their places in the boats. As the waves brought the big whaleboat to the vessel's side the captain took us, one after the other, and dropped us into the arms of the giant whaler below. The schooner's crew, in their 'Sunday best,' with the exception of some who were left on board to look after the vessel, got into the other boat. It took us a long time to reach the Cascade, the boat being anchored so far out. Our boat was brought alongside a natural pier (since destroyed by a violent storm), composed of immense boulders, which jutted out to sea for a considerable distance. The other boat having reached the pier first, the captain stood on a big rock and sang out to me as the boat came near, 'The next wave will bring her alongside. Be ready, and when I call out "Now!" give me your hand, and make a good spring for this rock.' I followed directions, and soon found myself standing beside him on the slippery rock. As the succeeding waves brought up the boat my companions were landed in like manner. After several hurried introductions to those immediately around us, we were driven away to our future home. What a lovely drive it was that bright spring day! Over the green hills, passing smiling valleys already showing evidence of the gardener's craft though it was still early in spring, then on over a long stretch of road level as a bowling-green. These roads are a pleasure to use, and are kept in order by virtue of one of the old island laws, which compels every male between the ages of sixteen and sixty to devote so many weeks' labour annually to their maintenance. On we drove, through Ferny Lane—a lovely avenue of tree-ferns—past the famous Pine Avenue, and thence to Hundred Acres. We were soon established in the cottage which, with kindly forethought, Mr Adams had rented

for our use. During our stay on the island that gentleman showed great kindness and courtesy. He it was to whom we constantly appealed when in difficulty, and he never failed us. I am afraid we were a source of trouble to that excellent man, who, a few months afterwards, met with a shocking death. In company with others he was out whaling, and, having captured a whale, the men were returning home. They had two boats, the one with the whale attached going first, the other (in which was the Chief Magistrate) being a considerable distance behind. Another whale, infuriated at losing its mate, rushed up, and, seeing this boat, attacked it savagely. It was capsized and smashed, and the occupants were cast into the water. Poor Adams was fatally injured. His companions took it in turn to hold him up *for six hours*. He implored them to leave him and save themselves, as he realised that he could not survive; but they would not leave him. The first boat's crew, seeing no sign of the others, returned to search for them. The injured man was landed and taken home, but soon succumbed to his terrible injuries. His coat was washed up on the beach next day. In him the Norfolkers lost their truest and most universally respected friend.

Our furniture arrived by very small degrees, for the carts are particularly small and the horses not strong, being entirely grass-fed. The hoofs of the latter are innocent of shoes, and grow to an abnormal extent. Poor patient brutes! they are more like donkeys than horses, for they take as much 'whip' as one cares to give them without being in the least disturbed.

For several days we were besieged with visitors, all anxious to see the 'strangers.' In those first few days everything seemed so strange — no baker, butcher, grocer, or milkman calling. On inquiry, we found that for beef—no mutton is obtainable, for there are very few sheep on the island—we should have to wait till some one was killing, and that happened only once every few weeks; and for bread—well, all baked their own. Almost everything that is consumed in the way of fruit, vegetables, grain, and meat is home-grown, bananas and *kumeras* (sweet potatoes) forming the staple food. Very little labour is required to till the soil, which is so rich and the climate so favourable that one can throw seeds almost anywhere and reap a bountiful harvest. All the men are accustomed to gardening, smith-work, &c., and many, through working on the boats, are good cooks.

We soon found that the Norfolkers have many good traits, but pre-eminent is their extreme good-nature. If one has anything more than his neighbours, they have but to ask to receive; and this applies not only to farming implements, but to furniture and household utensils, and even to wearing apparel. It is a matter for astonishment to a stranger to see one of the men hunting round the island from farm to farm to find out who has his coffee-mill or something else of a portable nature. Each borrower passes the article on in turn to the next one requiring it. If a boatload of fish is brought in, they are handed round to every one on the island, a supply being taken to any one unable to go to the boat.

Another admirable feature in the character of the men is that they have never been known to desert a distressed comrade. Some time previous to my arrival three men were out fishing, and, rough weather coming on, the boat was capsized and all the occupants thrown into the sea. One was unable to swim, so the other two held him up until assistance was rendered from the shore, *three hours later*. This act was the more praiseworthy in that the assisted man was not one of their own people.

The Norfolkers are splendid swimmers, being taught, in fact, almost from infancy. At eleven o'clock each forenoon the school children of all ages from three upwards are taken by their teachers to the beach, there to spend their playtime. And what fun they have swimming, diving, and splashing each other, laughing merrily the while! Happy youngsters! it does one good to watch them. I saw a little girl of eight go into the surf, climb a high rock, and throw herself backward into the sea, to reappear several yards away, her mother standing on the beach laughing. Some years ago two women went to Nepean Island, a mile from the mainland, to gather birds' eggs. Whilst busy at this their boat, being insecurely fastened, was carried unnoticed out to sea. Undismayed, they simply swam home.

Besides possessing these natatorial accomplishments, they are all good riders, men, women, and children being as much at home in the saddle as they are in the water. They are absolutely strangers to fear. The women-folk use men's saddles, putting the left foot in the stirrup on the left side and throwing the right stirrup over the saddle, thus making an improvised side-saddle. At the time of my visit there were but few side-saddles on the island, but nevertheless one is always to be found for a 'stranger.' A paper-chase on horseback is frequently indulged in; and accidents seldom occur, though the islanders appear to ride so recklessly.

Dancing is an amusement of which both young and old are extremely fond. I saw at one ball a great-grandmother taking part in a first set, and dancing more capably than many of the younger ones.

A Norfolk Island wedding is a function to be remembered, the catering for the dinner presenting novel features. Friends and relatives bring their quota of comestibles—some turkeys, others fowls, eggs, &c. Word is sent to two or three of the best cooks—and the island boasts not a few experts—to come and assist in the preparations. As a rule the dinner is held at the residence of the bride's parents, long tables being placed along the veranda, which is covered with flowers and shrubbery; and, as the average veranda is ten feet wide, there is ample room for the guests, who usually number upwards

of a hundred. The repast finished, a riding party is arranged, the bride and bridegroom being of the company; others of the guests enjoy music, tennis, and cards. After tea, dancing is indulged in till the 'wee sma' hours,' when the party breaks up.

Their method of conducting picnics seems very unorthodox to a stranger. I was invited to one held at Emily Bay, and on arriving there found a number of young girls laying long white tablecloths on the grass and unloading hampers. I remarked that none of the sterner sex were visible, and was told that the men were out in boats fishing and collecting sea-birds' eggs. Eventually the boats arrived well laden. All hands set to work, and in an incredibly short time the fish were cooked and a kerosene-tinful of birds' eggs boiled. These and other delicacies from the baskets were spread, including lemon-tarts, in the making of which they are experts. After dinner games were played by the children, some of whom took a trip to Nepean Island. On their return another tempting meal was partaken of, and all went home tired and strictly sober, for no intoxicants can be obtained on the island except when supplied by the doctor.

On the 8th June the anniversary of the landing of the Pitcairners on Norfolk Island is commemorated by an open-air feast. Every one on the island is expected to contribute edibles and attend, and strangers are made particularly welcome. Cricket is afterwards played—'Norfolk against the World'—and a grand ball given in the evening. *En passant*, it may be mentioned that concerts, picnics, and balls—fancy dress or masked—are free.

The ruins of the water-mill are still to be seen, and the surrounding vegetation is kept green by the waters of the mill-stream. The valleys through which it flows are very productive, growing oranges and bananas in profusion.

What is known as 'the town' (or more properly Kingstown) consists of a few scattered houses near Emily Bay. Many of them are commodious buildings, and were originally used as barracks, officers' quarters, &c. Being built of stone, the majority have bravely withstood the ravages of time, and are still habitable, notably the pretty cottage allotted in convict times to the Commandant, and in later days to the Chief Magistrate. The old barracks are now used as a courthouse and ballroom, and what was at one time the military stores, a large two-story building, is now the Anglican Church. Parts of the walls of the old prison—the scene of so much vice, tyrannical brutality, and helpless suffering, of which so much has been written by Price Warung, Marcus Clarke, and others—are still standing. At one time the Norfolkers carted away many loads of the fallen stone for building purposes; but the New South Wales Government stopped the practice, although the prison is fast crumbling to absolute decay. Surrounding some of the other buildings also was a high stone wall. Around the barracks, military stores, &c. a thick stone wall still stands, in which are loopholes where the guns were placed to command the prison-yard and adjacent beach in case the prisoners attempted to escape. Poor wretches! what chances of escape were there? Surrounded by the ocean as they were, and with no food available except guavas, starvation or surrender would not have been long delayed. Lemons and oranges were growing wild in the scrub-land; but in order that no sustenance should be afforded the fugitives, the orange-trees were destroyed and the lemons left.

What monuments of enforced industry these convicts left! They planted the pines in the avenue, the tree-ferns in Ferny Lane, and built bridges, houses, stone fences, and roads. At the rear of what used to be the Commandant's house is a high wall, extending for a considerable distance, built of sods, and having several archways. No amount of inquiry on my part could elicit any information regarding this. It is supposed to have been built either as an enclosure for cattle or for the purpose of providing work for the convicts.

Battle Bridge derived its name from a fight between a gang of convicts at work there and the officials in charge. In the *mêlée* one of the latter was thrown bodily over the bridge into the stream below. On the road leading from Longridge to town I was shown a spot at which, as some lady-visitors (wives and daughters of prominent men) were being shown over the island, the carriage was stopped where some convicts were working, and the horses taken from the shafts and the men harnessed to the carriage, to jog the gentle ladies round to view the sights, a little daughter of one of them clapping her hands and laughing at the 'funny men.' While thus engaged, the impromptu jinrikisha-men, smarting under the indignity, agreed to rush the vehicle over a cliff, and thus wreak vengeance on the occupants. Their plan was, however, frustrated through one turning informer. In the face of treatment such as this, can it be wondered at that rebellion smouldered, albeit hopelessly, all through the period of convict occupation?

When preparations were being made for the removal of the convicts, some of them begged hard to be allowed to remain, but they were all taken to New Norfolk, in Tasmania, the authorities believing that they would exert an evil influence over the simple-minded Pitcairners. Many animals were left for the use of the new arrivals, including horses, cattle, pigs, goats, and sheep. The younger men, on landing, regarded the horses curiously, never having seen the like before, but they were not long in putting their usefulness to the test. The goats have long since disappeared, the sheep have dwindled to insignificant numbers, and the quality of the other animals has deteriorated.

Ball's Bay, at the eastern corner of the island, is a wild, weird-looking place. The cliffs are high and almost perpendicular, and are covered almost to the water's edge with tangled creepers and shrubs. The bay runs back a considerable distance, and on calm days the waves are small and come in slowly with a

dirge-like *whis-sh*, eerie in the extreme. When the sea is too rough for outgoing passengers to use the boats at either Sydney Bay or the Cascade (which, however, occurs only at rare intervals), the cliffs at Ball's Bay must be descended. The timid sex on these occasions invariably become terrified; but it is usual for two stalwart men each to take an arm, and half-carry, half-drag them down to the boat. It is a hazardous journey, as one false step would probably cause the fall of the whole party into the waters below.

Sydney Bay is hardly worthy of the name, being merely a small indentation in the land. Here, when weather permits, passengers from the incoming vessels are landed at a strong wooden pier. There is nothing whatever to break the force of the waves. It once happened that the boat of a pleasure-party, comprising both sexes, was carried past the pier and round a point, where all on board were capsized, though fortunately no lives were lost. I have never heard of a Norfolker being drowned.

When the mail-bags are landed from the boat they are taken to a small building in 'the town,' and the mails sorted in a very primitive manner. The postmaster, standing in the middle of the room, empties the bags all around him, and the expectant residents stand near. As he stoops, picking up a letter or a parcel, he calls out the name thereon, and the individual steps forward and receives his mail. Should the name of an absent person be called, some one volunteers to deliver the letter. I was not aware of this custom, and on receiving my first letters felt vexed that they should pass through the hands of unofficial people before being delivered. I meekly inquired for the postman; but the bearer only laughed, and informed me that I was under an obligation, he having ridden two miles to deliver them to me.

All around this coast are visible the effects of the encroaching sea. In some places one can stand on the cliff, and, looking down, see grass and pine-trees growing far below, the piece of land supporting them having been torn out bodily and thrown down. The shape can be fitted in by the eye to the scalloped edges of the cliff. Elsewhere small bays have been formed, where nothing remains of the land but a mass of stones, which roll backwards and forwards in the surf. The sea is even encroaching on the cemetery, the lower part of which is under water at high-tide.

One of the finest sights of the island is the Pine Avenue, which runs in a perfectly straight line from Longridge to the Melanesian Mission. It was formerly a mile and a half in length, but a considerable portion of the avenue ran through the grounds of the mission, and much of this was cut down. Many of the trees outside the grounds have decayed, and have never been replaced. It seems to be no one's business to repair anything, which is to be deplored; for, as you stand at the Longridge end and look towards the mission, the view down the avenue is not easily forgotten.

This island is the home of the stately Norfolk Island pine, which grows here to an immense size, the very old trees occasionally measuring twelve feet in diameter. In former times they were ruthlessly destroyed, the Norfolkers, with an utter disregard of future requirements, cutting down several trees at once, and choosing the finest parts for building or other purposes, the remainder being left to decay. When it is considered that these magnificent trees take a hundred years to mature, and that the island is so small in extent, the folly of this waste is apparent. The New South Wales Government, however, on taking over the island, wisely imposed a charge for each tree cut down, whether used or not. During a thunderstorm it is not unusual to see several horsemen sheltering under one, and emerging therefrom perfectly dry.

The headquarters of the Melanesian Mission are situated at the south-western corner of the island, one thousand acres having been purchased from the Norfolkers in 1866. It has the appearance of a small village. The missionaries have comfortable cottages, smaller ones being provided for the married converts. The late Archdeacon Palmer very courteously showed me through St Barnabas Church and grounds. Their beautiful memorial chapel was built to perpetuate the memory of Bishop Patteson, and is solely for the use of the mission. Excepting at night, in Advent and Lent, the service is conducted in Mota, a simple polyglot language constructed by the missionaries to facilitate their labours; and this all the students have to learn. St Barnabas is a very handsome structure both inside and out. The floors are tiled; and the seats, arranged end-on to the altar, are beautifully inlaid with mother-of-pearl brought by the natives under training from their own islands. A native organist was playing at the time of my visit. Between two and three hundred of these natives are under instruction at the mission. They are brought here from the various islands by the mission steamer *Southern Cross*. Besides being taught Christianity, they are shown how to pick up the 'white man's burden' in the fields. If any amongst them show musical ability they are taught to sing and to play. The women prove apt pupils at housework, and are given small weekly allowances, which they invariably spend in purchasing perfumes. Both sexes adorn their otherwise bare heads with bright flowers on all occasions, the scarlet hibiscus being used by preference. Small ornamented sticks of bamboo are worn in the manner of ear-rings. The missionaries are very good to them, joining in games of cricket, &c. They are better fed and housed than many of their white brethren, and seem very happy. They cannot accustom themselves to sleeping in beds, but roll themselves in blankets on the floor. I was shown a baby born at the mission two days previously; its skin was of a piebald colour, and I was assured that the children are perfectly white when born. As an inducement to good conduct and to foster contentment, the natives are occasionally

given a day to themselves, which they spend in the bush in the ways of their forefathers, eating their food in the native style and refreshing sweet memory in a practical manner. When sufficient instruction has been imparted, the most intelligent are sent back as teachers to their homes to convert others by precept and example.

Nepean Island, a large, bare rock, is a mile from the coast. On it grows a solitary pine, stunted, blighted, and forlorn; but there is no sign of other vegetation. It is frequently visited by the women-folk for the purpose of collecting shells, as those found there are prettier than the shells on their own coast. When the weather can be depended upon it shares with Phillip Island popularity as a picnic resort.

Phillip Island is three miles from the mainland. Once covered with verdure, it is now barren and bare through some misguided person stocking it with rabbits, with apparent disregard to their fecundity. It is amazing how they manage to exist, for they have almost denuned the island of vegetation; though it is said their herbivorous instincts have been perverted to cannibalism in the fierce struggle to sustain life. Besides the rabbits, the only signs of animal life are the gannets, which resemble huge geese. A few pines still remain, their roots washed bare; but in a little while they will disappear like the others into the greedy maw of ocean. In one place a basalt precipice dips eight hundred feet sheer to the water below, the highest part of the island being one thousand and thirty feet above sea-level. Phillip Island was at one time frequently visited for rabbits and for birds' eggs. There is a tradition that in the days of the 'system' one unfortunate convict, goaded by cruelty, swam the three miles to Phillip Island. The alarm was raised, and a boat was quickly manned and went in pursuit. When the boat drew near, the convict, seeing that escape was hopeless, jumped in despair from the cliff into the ocean, and was never seen again. The sea-birds cluster here in immense numbers, and their eggs are brought to Norfolk Island in boatloads. Very nice and dainty they are, having a more delicate flavour than ordinary hens' eggs, and being prettily marked all over with dots and splashes. These birds also abound on Nepean Island, the eggs being so plentiful that one cannot walk without treading on them, the birds meanwhile circling overhead and uttering deafening screams.

After two years I tired of the quiet life, and longed to renew acquaintance with the bustle and strife of busy Sydney. The little schooner *Oscar Robinson* was about to sail for that port, so I sent my chattels on board, and was driven down to Sydney Bay, where the vessel lay at anchor. The captain met me and advised me not to go on board that night, as, the weather being unfavourable, he intended taking her round to the Cascade, where I could embark next day. He had been waiting several days for a fair wind. Next day was wet and squally; and early in the afternoon news flew over the island that the *Oscar Robinson* was wrecked, having been blown on to the rocks whilst an attempt was being made to take her to the Cascade. My belongings were brought ashore, unpacked, and hung out to dry. The schooner was sold for a few pounds to an islander, who made her stanch enough to be taken to Sydney for thorough repair. A whaleboat was then manned, and an effort made to tow her out; this failed, and further attempts were postponed till a 'moon tide.' When the tide was favourable they managed to get her out, and I once more took my passage, packed up my things, and was ready to start, when the Chief Magistrate sent word that he would not allow any women to sail in her, as he did not deem her safe. Once more I unpacked and waited; then, when another schooner called, and was leaving for Noumea, in New Caledonia, I decided to take passage by her and catch the M.M. steamer *Tanais* at Noumea for Sydney. For the third time I gathered my goods, when, to my dismay, the Chief Magistrate again declared I should not go, as the number of passengers had been exceeded. I likened myself to Bruce's spider; and when the mission steamer *Ysabel* called in, bound for Sydney, I again packed up—I was becoming an expert by this time—and was at last enabled to leave, six months having elapsed since my first attempt to take my departure.

## SOME EARLY POST-OFFICE REPORTS.

By R. S. Smyth.

HETHER, because of the extent to which the postal question had occupied the attention of the public for some years preceding the introduction of the 'penny-post' in 1840, it was not considered desirable to bring it prominently forward in the years immediately following, or whether it had not occurred to the several Postmasters-General who ruled in the interval that they should give an account of their stewardship, it would be difficult to say; but, from whatever cause, it was not until 1854 that the first report appeared. This report has been out of print for, I believe, very many years. The introductory paragraph, which refers to 'the Lords of the Treasury having sanctioned my proposal that an annual report should be made setting forth the progress, changes, and improvements effected in the Post-Office during each preceding year,' shows that the suggestion came from the Postmaster-General. The report for 1854, being the first, contained, as might be expected, a 'Historical

Summary;' but as the history of the Post-Office is now pretty generally known from the works of subsequent writers, only a brief reference to some of the less-known yet interesting facts mentioned in the summary need be made.

The conveyance of letters was at first only by personal friends and special messengers; then, in addition to these, by common carriers with pack-horses. But as under the peculiar system of the times horses were never changed during a journey, however long, but took whatever rest was necessary at the different stages, it can be readily understood that letters reached their destination very slowly. Subsequently these carriers were licensed, and it is on record that a number of them sent in a petition to the effect that 'certain haglers and others, unlicensed carriers, do presume to outgo the authorised pack-horses, and deliver their letters before the authorised wagons, carts, and pack-horses can arrive, which is contrary to the known laws of the realm.'*

A letter-post was not established by the Government till the reign of James I.; but then it was to foreign countries only, 'for the benefit of English merchants.' No inland post was established till 1635. In that year the Postmaster of England was commanded 'to settle a running post or two to run night and day between London and Edinburgh, to go thither and come back again in six days, and to take with them all such letters as shall be directed to any town on or near that road.' It was at the same time ordered that 'byposts' be connected with many places on the main line, 'to bring in and carry out the letters from Lincoln, Hull, and other towns.' Similar posts to Chester and Holyhead and to Exeter and Plymouth were decided on, and others were promised. The postage of letters varied from twopence to sixpence in England, according to distance, and to any place in Scotland eightpence. The conveyance of letters by persons other than 'those employed by the Postmaster' having been prohibited, great dissatisfaction was caused, as it was considered 'an unwarrantable stretch of the Royal prerogative;' but the prohibition remained. Originally the Postmaster was allowed to take the profits in consideration of his bearing the charges; but as the revenue increased the office of Postmaster was 'farmed,' and this practice of 'farming' was continued as regards the 'byposts' till the end of the eighteenth century. Cromwell and his Parliament made great changes, and the ordinance under which these were effected is candid enough to give as a motive for the further establishing of posts, 'that they will be the best means to discover and prevent many wicked designs against the Commonwealth.' How it was intended the 'discoveries' should be made may, I think, be readily supposed. As regards Scotland, although, as has been stated, a post between London and Edinburgh had been established, no provision was made for an internal post in that country, and it was not till 1695 that the Scottish Parliament passed an Act for the general establishment of a letter-post.

In 1683 a 'penny-post' for London and its suburbs was set up by Robert Murray, an upholsterer. It was, however, denounced by the ultra-Protestant party as a contrivance of the Jesuits, and it was alleged that 'if the bags were examined they would be found full of Popish plots.' Nevertheless the undertaking was continued for some years, and so successfully that the profits excited the envy of the Government, who seized it on the ground of its being an infringement on the Crown. It is interesting to know that a *halfpenny* (local) post was established, or at least attempted, in 1708; it was intended to be in opposition to the penny-post, but the enterprise was suppressed.

In a letter written by the late Mr F. J. Scudamore (of the Accountant-General's Department) which appears in the report, it is stated that the accounts of the Post-Office are preserved in an unbroken series from 1685. The net annual revenue then was sixty-two thousand six hundred and eighty-three pounds, and the number of Postmasters one hundred and seventy-four. (Now the latter number over twenty-three thousand.) Mr Scudamore adds that 'in the records not only the quaint orthography peculiar to our ancestors, and varying from period to period, but the changes which were gradually wrought in the handwriting of the nation, may be observed. Indeed, those who are anxious regarding the latter changes can nowhere so effectually study their scarcely perceptible but not the less certain operation than in the records of this department.'

A statute passed in 1710 repealed previous statutes, and provided for the establishment of 'a General Post-Office for the three kingdoms and the Colonies under one head, who was to bear the style of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General, and who was empowered to keep one chief letter-office in London, one in Edinburgh, one in Dublin, *one in New York*, and one in the West Indies.'

The packet establishment in 1764 consisted of *five New York boats*, six Dover boats, and four Harwich boats, and cost the department ten thousand pounds a year. It may be mentioned that these packets during war-times, 'when every sea was covered with French privateers,' gave the Postmaster-General great and constant anxiety. The orders to the captains of such vessels were urgent: 'that they shall run when they can, fight when they can no longer run, and throw the mails overboard when fighting will no longer avail.' Swift boats to escape the enemy were built, but they proved to be too low in the water, and were not successful. Then it was determined to build 'boats of force to withstand the enemy,' and 'boats of force' were built accordingly. To encourage the crews to greater 'exertion' in the combats in which they would be engaged, they were allowed to take prizes

* It is satisfactory to know, however, that the primeval slowness of transit which the petitioners sought to perpetuate was not recognised. The petition was dismissed.

if such fell in their way, and they received pensions for wounds according to a code drawn up with a nice discrimination of the relative value of different parts of the body, and with an amusing profusion of the technical terms of anatomy. Thus, after a fierce engagement that took place in 1705, we find that E. James had a donation of five pounds because a musket-shot had grazed the tibia of his left leg; that G. Treluden had twelve pounds because a shot had divided the frontal muscles and fractured the skull; that T. Williams had the same sum because a shell had stuck fast in his left foot; and that J. Cook, who received a shot in the hinder-part of his head, whereby a large division of the scalp was made, had a donation of six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence for present relief, and a pension of the same amount. The following scale of pensions for wounds was afterwards promulgated: 'Each arm or leg amputated above the elbow or knee, eight pounds per annum; below the knee, twenty nobles; loss of the sight of one eye, four pounds; of the pupil of the eye, five pounds; of the sight of both eyes, twelve pounds; of the pupils of both eyes, fourteen pounds.' It was stated that in fixing this scale it was considered how much the hurt affected the body, and allowance was made accordingly.

In 1827 a concession was made to the public by rescinding the rule which imposed double postage 'on two letters written on one sheet of paper, and even on a letter and a bill if written on the same sheet.'

In 1830, on the opening of the line between Liverpool and Manchester, mails were for the first time conveyed by railway. In illustration of the greatly increased cost of the conveyance of mails by railway as compared with that by coaches, Mr Scudamore's letter shows that in 1844 the Post-Office received from the coach contractor two hundred pounds a year for the privilege of conveying the mails twice a day between Lancaster and Carlisle, when exactly ten years later the same service performed by the railway cost the department about twelve thousand pounds a year!

After the surmounting of many difficulties with the view of shortening the route to India, then *vid* the Cape, the mails were in 1835 conveyed for the first time by the direct route through the Mediterranean and over the Isthmus of Suez, a line of communication subsequently extended to China and Australia.

As showing the immediate effect of the introduction of the 'penny-post,' it may be stated that while the net revenue in 1839–40 was one million six hundred and thirty-four thousand pounds, in the following year, when the reduction took place, it fell to five hundred thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine pounds, and it did not recover itself for more than twenty years afterwards. Of course postal facilities involving much expense had in the meantime been immensely increased.

So far back as 1857 the practice existed of advertising for defaced postage-stamps on the pretence that a certain number would enable the advertiser to procure admission for a child into some specified charitable institution. In the report for that year the Postmaster-General says that, 'thinking it possible there was a fraudulent purpose in view, I have several times directed an inquiry to be made, but have always found there was no truth whatever in the alleged object, and generally that the whole proceeding was the work of an unknown person actuated apparently by a silly desire to give trouble.' A similar reference to the practice, which had continued, appears in a subsequent report.

In 1858 an order was issued rendering compulsory, to the extent of one rate, the prepayment of inland letters. It was, however, received unfavourably; so much so that it immediately became necessary to withdraw it. The Postmaster-General mentions six reasons that were urged by the public against the order, all of which he answers apparently to his own satisfaction. One of these was that 'all persons may occasionally be without stamps;' but to this he replies: 'So also may they be without paper, pens, or ink; with this difference in favour of the stamps, that they may be purchased at the Post-Office *where the letters must be sent*.' This argument is by no means convincing; the fact that post-offices are sometimes closed appears to have been overlooked.

The Postmaster-General was magnanimous enough to conclude one of his early reports as follows: 'The sharp and watchful criticism of the public eye, even though it be sometimes founded on a mistaken view, is far from being an evil to any Government department; none can expect immunity from it, and probably the Post-Office—the good administration of which concerns every class of the people and depends greatly on a care of minute detail—is more likely to benefit by it than any other.'

## THE FIRST DAISY.

I saw a daisy yesterday
In a quiet green meadow place.
'Twas as if tired earth had wakened
And looked into my face!

My heart went back across the years
To sweet fields far away,
And I heard the children's laughter
In guileless sport and play.

And earth, that seemed so grim and sad
With the ache and pain of old,
Leapt from our age of iron
Into the age of gold!

Dreams that were dead and long in peace
Came back and spoke to me,
With songs I had forgotten,
And the murmur of the sea.

'Twas but a daisy's peeping smile
That made my sad heart sing,
And the youth of the world upleaping,
Wide-eyed, at the kiss of spring!

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT.

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# FRENCH PERSONAL NOTES.

IT was recently pointed out in a French paper that the space between the English and French coasts is growing yearly wider owing to the falling away of the cliffs on either side of the Channel and the encroachment of the sea. The distance between the two countries is relatively small, but they are still very far apart as regards mutual knowledge.

Family life in France is a close tie, notwithstanding the fact that marriages are based upon finance and arranged with a view to future bread-and-butter. The contract of marriage is as much a matter of business as is a commercial partnership in England; but the dirty work is all done beforehand, behind the scenes, and not in the presence of the principals, who may know as little of each other as a Mussulman knows of the veiled lady in the harem. A friend of rank and fortune once told the writer how she met her future husband for the first time. She was taken to a ball by her mother, who pointed out two eligible candidates from whom to choose. She expressed a lukewarm preference for one of the candidates—'*Il n'est pas mal*' were her words—and the following day the matter was settled by the respective parents. Even girls of fourteen years old know the exact amount of their dowries, and discuss their chances in the matrimonial lottery. Yet no one can say that these bargain-marriages have proved greater failures than hap-hazard, love-at-first-sight phenomena:

> Plaisir d'amour dure un moment,
> Chagrin d'amour toute la vie.

It must also be remembered that the French husband is lord and master of his household. For instance, without his written authority a wife may not sign a lease or open a banking account, and in some cases make a will.

From their appearance, it is patent that French children are not brought up on the same simple food as British children; they dine late, and eat of the same dishes and drink the same wines as their elders. This is probably from motives of economy and to avoid extra meals; but there are very many English nurses and nursery-governesses in French families, with whom they in some cases spend a lifetime. These upper servants appear at their masters' tables with their charges, sometimes at a side-table; and there is no doubt that they are valued for their gentility of behaviour at meals, their modesty, and decent bearing. On the other hand, French servants live anyhow on the top story, rise very early, work very hard, save money, and disregard the sort of pride or self-respect which is the birthright of even charwomen. Are there not abyssmal depths of caste among the latter class in Great Britain? The French servants care not how they eat, sitting or standing at the bare table; their conversation is absolutely coarse and unrestrained, and they are ready to run errands or undertake any kind of work required of them.

The affection and respect of children for their parents, and of parents for their children, in France is great and abiding, and extends also to their relatives. This is proved by the way a family will support and defend one of their own who is in trouble, short of felony, or in a losing cause, whether in the right or in the wrong. Hence their respect for death: the crape of the women and the black garb of the men, who when in mourning may not appear at the club or on the racecourse, still less at the theatre or in any place of amusement, public or private, for months at a time. Anniversaries are solemnly kept and graves visited with great regularity.

The Code Napoléon does not allow freak wills such as often cause divisions in families *outre-Manche*. The law of succession is so strictly laid down that a man may just as well die intestate as not; all disputes are practically obviated by the code.

In a letter to Mr John Durand, dated 20th December 1873, Taine drew up a list of physiological and psychological traits to be observed when studying national character. He noted certain qualities of his countrymen in the letter, among them 'excitability,' especially during revolutions. They become mad, sublime, or ferocious; hence


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panic, or *furia francese*. 'No Dutch or English ballast to be found in them; in an instant they go out of their minds. In this they resemble women. Prompt to action in gesture and emotion, they require to be amused and hate to be dull.' In the great Revolution the Abbé Maury saved his life by a *mot*. When the crowd shouted '*A la lanterne!*' he replied, 'Will you see me better?' Another, like to be condemned to death, asked if he might not be allowed a substitute, as in military service. The joke got him an acquittal. Their ideals are the things which are agreeable, piquant, or pleasing.

Full of levity and frivolity, they are incapable of considering grave questions for any length of time; they love gaiety, song, amiability, and beauty. The French are of a very sociable disposition, and conversation at table or in a drawing-room is general. Neighbours do not address each other in subdued tones; they have no British reserve or shyness to overcome. A host or hostess, seeing two guests talking with lowered voices, will inquire across the table the subject of their conversation, for fear the two have become bored by the general subject and want a change, or perhaps have something of great interest to communicate—some startling event or piece of news within their knowledge. This custom is somewhat embarrassing to strangers who are not good French scholars. At the great clubs in Paris—there are only five, the Jockey Club, Rue Royale, Union, Agricole, Union Artistique—it is necessary for a member to make himself acquainted with as many of his fellow-members as possible. To sit alone is considered churlish and eccentric, and a reflection upon colleagues as inferiors; so that conversation is carried on in groups—except in the library, where silence is kept. A new member is, on his election, introduced to all the friends of his proposer and seconder as a matter of course.

Taine attributes the sociability of his countrymen to vanity and a desire to shine and give proof of wit and politeness in company. Often at dinner-parties an elderly professional man or professional diner-out will constitute himself honorary chairman as it were, monopolise the conversation, and direct it into his favourite channels, with a running fire of paradox and contradiction.

In Paris one evening a well-known journalist, a specialist on the Vatican and Church matters, had his own way during dinner. He afterwards retired early on the plea of business engagements—in reality because he felt himself put in the shade by another guest, a young poet, who read some original verses at his hostess's request; his deep, sonorous voice and impressive manner, devoid of rant, were too much for the self-elected chairman. Good or bad, the verses sounded admirable.

Much of Victor Hugo's lyric poetry is beautiful in sound and shallow in meaning; the same may be said of many of his speeches, in which he urged the Chamber of Peers with great eloquence to abolish poverty and misery among the people, but suggested no remedies or any means to that noble end. The only concrete policy to which he adhered during his long career was the abolition of capital punishment. He was otherwise inconstant, both in his public and private life—two households in Paris and at Jersey, &c., his wife's and Juliette Drouét's.

Thrift is so excessive in France as to become almost a vice; it is carried to extremes at the expense of legitimate pride and morality; consequently money has greater purchasing-power in certain ways than elsewhere, and can buy honour. Among the working classes the equivocal position of a daughter is not considered disgraceful or shameful so long as there is enough money and some sort of permanence in the liaison. Parents remain on friendly terms with their daughter, who visits them and assists them; in some cases she pays for the education of younger brothers and sisters—in short, contributes to the family income.

*Profiter* is a household word in French life; it means the advantage of obtaining something for nothing. The general rule is, not to hesitate to ask and never to refuse. Guy de Maupassant, the genius who died insane, described the thrift amounting to avarice of niggardly Norman and Picardy peasants, and their eye to the main chance with sacrifice of honour. To be impecunious is somewhat of a disgrace; there was a time when Balzac could not become a candidate for the Academy on account of his poverty. Tradesmen and innkeepers will prevent their grown-up daughters from marrying if there is no immediate financial gain in view; they feel that they are losing their labour, and will be obliged to hire extra servants to replace them—a sacrifice of their children's happiness.

There are no horses or pianos at the farmhouses. All day long, Sundays included, men, women, and children may be seen stooping at work in the fields. In the cities the post-offices are thronged with maid-servants placing their savings in the bank or sending the money home. Tradesmen give servants a commission of 5 per cent. on all purchases; this is an established custom, and is called *le sou du franc*. Although the masses hold Government and railway bonds, the most popular method of investment at a low rate of interest is the acquisition of freehold house-property; it is felt that there is something safe and reliable about house-property—something that cannot vanish. The *modus operandi* of the retired small Paris tradesman or *concierge* is as follows: he buys a plot of ground at Poissy or Melun, somewhere in the Seine valley, builds a house on it, plants vegetables, and lives happily for the rest of his life. His son may be a clerk in a bank, and spend week-ends with his parents; but, better still, he may be a civil servant—the ideal of the bourgeois. The number of civil servants was quite recently calculated at the enormous total of

eight hundred thousand. Although Government salaries are small, they are a certain and welcome increase to the family exchequer, and lend additional social status.

There are some four million landowners in France; land has been much divided up even since pre-revolutionary times; but the *corvée*, feudal rights of the seigneurs, and taxes crushed the small proprietors and made them little better than starving serfs, unable to support themselves or their families, and hastened the great Revolution. The few genuine historical houses that still remain, whose titles are not papal or self-assumed, are not great territorial landowners, such as exist in other European countries. The descendants of Napoleon's aristocracy have not acquired land, and many have already disappeared, representatives of that imperial Court of which it was said 'the conversation of the princesses was no better than the cooks' in distinction of thought and elevation of mind.'

There is a safeguard established by French law to prevent spendthrifts from squandering their fortunes. When it is apparent that a member of a family, male or female, who has attained his or her majority, is extravagant beyond reason, the nearest relations concerned may assemble in council and make application to a judge for the appointment of a *conseil judiciaire* or legal guardian. If sufficient cause be shown the judge appoints a *conseil*, generally an advocate of standing, who has complete control over his client's money, sets aside what he thinks proper for the payment of debts, and allows any sum he chooses, great or small in proportion, for the support of his charge, to whom all credit is barred. This method of guarding the family fortune is very often resorted to in the case of *fils de famille* who have gambled or spent too much money; not a few French houses have been saved from themselves and from complete ruin by it. The chief partner in a well-known firm of motor manufacturers was only released from his *conseil* a short time ago on his own application, but not before he had produced his books to show the profits and income he was earning in the business. Dr J. Horace Round quotes an instance when Cardinal Wolsey, at the height of his power, was appointed guardian of the young Earl of Northumberland, and laid down the exact annual sum to be expended on his wife, his household, retinue, and stables.

'The religious sense,' wrote Taine in his above-mentioned letter, 'is weak. God is diminished and foreshortened or treated like a comrade, as in Béranger's poems;' or scolded, as in Victor Hugo. The religious question in France is delicate and problematical, but less complicated than in Great Britain. The late Lord Bute, in his inaugural address at St Andrews, said: 'Talking about the Reformation is like dancing upon egg-shells.' Since the Edict of Nantes and dragooning under Louis XIV. there has been no religious struggle in France, no Oxford Movement embracing a considerable number of intellectuals. Now and again individuals —a Lamennais, a Renan, or a Loisy—break away from the ancient Church like the portion of an overhanging cliff sodden from winter rains; but what are called fancy religions have never taken root. Christian Science, the Shakers, Mormonism, or self-styled prophets of the type of Thomas Lake Harris arouse the keen French sense of the ridiculous. The Catholic and, in a lesser degree, the Reformed or Huguenot religions are all that count. The Latin races are less inclined to changes of creed than the Anglo-Saxon; three hundred religions and only one sauce still holds good for the Anglo-Saxons.

It is impossible to make any accurate forecast as to the future of religion in France. Modernist writers think that the majority of the population will lapse into indifference, and the Catholic Church become a sect for rich people who can afford and are willing to support their priests and bishops. The reactionaries and the clerical party are gloomy. Reports of depleted seminaries and of decrease in recruits for the priesthood seem to bear out their pessimist attitude. It does not appear that more than 10 per cent. of the population practise their religion, and the question arises as to whether the rural districts, which are accustomed to State-paid religion, will now come forward to fill the gap in the budget of the Church. The priesthood was formerly a career for a farmer's son, as it is in Ireland; but this is no longer the case, now that the Government grants are withdrawn.

The heroine Joan of Arc is claimed both by the clerical party and by their adversaries, the Freemasons—the latter maintaining that the Maid was put to death by Churchmen. In fact, politics are inseparable from religion; usually the hero of one side is the *bête noire* of the other, as in the case of Giordano Bruno in Italy and Dreyfus in France. No doubt the beatification of the Maid of Orleans at Rome will give an opportunity for a reactionary demonstration against the Republic.

In delineating French character, questions of taste and culture are important. These comprise minor considerations of dress and cookery. The great literature of France is on a par with our own; perhaps it is not too much to boast that all literature of the moderns could be spared save the French and English. The rich series of memoir-writers in French history is unsurpassed; in chronological order they descend from Geoffroi de Villehardouin and Joinville (the friend and companion of St Louis in the Crusades), Froissart the Valenciennes cleric, and Philippe de Commynes to St Simon and the contemporaries. So much for the personal side of their literature.

It does not appear that the race is cultured simply from the result of long hours of academic study in childhood and the severity of the course of training they have to undergo—for in-

stance, seven years to become a doctor of medicine —but from natural, perhaps climatic, causes. There is no more cultured race in the world. The vulgarity sprung from ignorance of a yellow press and low music-hall songs from England and the United States is an imported article which the Custom-House should tax severely. It is interesting to remember that the United States adopt the reverse plan: they admit at a low rate what is commonplace, vulgar, or offensive, and place a prohibitive tariff upon celebrated pictures or works of art that appeal to the higher senses and culture of mankind and are in themselves object-lessons.

If England sets the fashion in men's clothes, Frenchwomen lead the world in the matter of the dress of their own sex. Not physically more beautiful than other European nations, and having less pretty faces, they yield to none in grace, attraction, and the arts that please, and they own a *cachet* to which none can attain; they are also perfectly natural in manner and voice, and know not affectation.

The French have long been recognised as the first cooks in Europe. We have nothing approaching the variety of their dishes, so much so that the unsophisticated tourist is as much amazed, after his perennial beef and mutton, as if human flesh had been placed before him. As regards the less elaborate dishes, every one at the humblest inn or in the poorest household can make an omelet. Their salads, ignored by us, are numerous, and their choice of dishes and ways of preparing them legion, although the price of provisions is often much higher than in England.

A point on which great stress is laid and which is much discussed among the French to-day is British hypocrisy. Robert Louis Stevenson held that the French are more frank as a race; but George Gissing, in the *Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, his own autobiography, considered that hypocrisy with us is national and not individual—at least, such was his plea for the defence—that we publicly condemn vice with copy-book headings for the great benefit of the majority. Whether this defence is sufficient is a matter of opinion. So different is the moral aspect of the two nations that a French statesman convicted of immorality in his private life would not suffer any disgrace or the loss of his position or office; it would be argued that his private life did not concern his public career as long as it did not interfere with his duty to the State. With us a Cavour would be impossible, and yet he was one of the builders of United Italy.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXIV.—HOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, SIR CHARLES FEARED TO MEET HIS WIFE'S EYES.

HOW they rejoiced in his coming, though the youngsters did their best to moderate their exuberance to a level befitting the fact of their grandfather's death!

They had loved him dearly, but his restrained, Scottish nature had never permitted him to show the half of what he felt for them, although they had fathomed it all the same, and rejoiced in it, and turned it to fullest account.

They flew out at their father as usual.

'How are you, Sir Charles?' was Mavie's greeting. 'We are so glad to see you, Sir Charles. Her ladyship awaits you in her room.'

'Minx!' said her father, pinching her ear as he kissed her.—'Well, Charlie! And Etienne! And John Sax! I left both your grandfathers well and hearty.—And how have you all been behaving since I saw you last?' as Mavie dragged him up the steps.

'Oh, we've all been just as good as good. And how have you been yourself, Sir Charles?'

'It has been rather a trying time, Mavie. It's like getting one's head above water to get to Ealing again.'

'Yes, I'm sure, Sir Charles. Well, we're all going to be very good, Sir Charles, and as little of nuisances as possible.'

'That will be rather hard on you, won't it?'

Mavie opened the door of her mother's room, and announced, 'Your ladyship, Sir Charles Lauriston!' And he braced himself to meet the clear, sweet eyes, as he had never needed to in his life before, and knew it with a pang as a necessary part of his burden and his punishment.

Did she find in the face and eyes she loved something that had never been there before—reservations, concealments, a touch of the shadows? Or was it only his own knowledge and apprehension of these things that suggested it?

'I have been wearying for you, my dear,' she said, with the tender northern intonation which was sweeter to him than sweetest music. 'And you have been having a very trying time, I can see.'

'Yes, it has been a very trying time altogether, Mary. It came so very unexpectedly, you see. And the responsibilities are very great, for he always kept a great deal in his own hands, and I am picking up the threads as best I can.'

'What a good thing John Sax is left to you!'

'I could not get on at all without John Sax. He knows far more about things than I do. But you have not heard the latest news, Mary. Charlotte is going to marry M. de Montessonne.'

'Charlotte!—the marquis!'

'Or he—her. I am not quite sure how it came about. But the result is the same in any case.'

'Why, I never dreamed there was anything between them—nor, indeed, that she still thought of marriage.'

'Well, well! I am surprised. It will be a good thing for the marquis and Etienne, I suppose,' she said thoughtfully—'if he does not throw her fortune away on politics.'

'We are guarding against that. Everything is settled on herself. He can only use her income.'

'That is very wise. I do hope she will be happy. I think he is nice. His manners are certainly all that could be desired, and he has borne his misfortunes manfully.'

'I don't see why they should not be happy. He contributes a certain position, she the money to support it. And a turn of the wheel may at any time set him in his place again in France, in which case Charlotte would feel that she has not lived entirely in vain.'

'And they are both past youthful foolishnesses,' said Lady Lauriston with a smile.

'One might have thought so! One of them is, at all events. We must just hope it will turn out for their happiness.'

'What surprising changes in one short week!'

'Yes, indeed!' said he, and prayed God in his heart—and that with no feeling of irreverence—that she might never learn how great in very truth those changes had been.

Even the children felt their father different in some way from the father of a week ago, though—or perhaps because—he did his utmost to seem to them the same. But childish instincts, unblunted by the rough attrition of the world, are wonderfully keen, and they felt the change, and argued it among themselves.

It was a quieter week-end than they had any of them spent for many a day. But this the children accepted as not unnatural under the circumstances.

'When you've had a funeral in the family,' said Mavie, 'with the Prince of Wales's carriage and the Lord Mayor's and one hundred and fifty others, and dukes and earls as common as blackberries, and all of them using the very worst of language—the drivers, I mean—I haven't a doubt why you're bound to feel more or less tired, you know. And I've heard them carry on most dreadfully when there haven't been more than twenty-five or thirty in Grosvenor Place all at once. Why, I heard one awful man say'——

'You'd better not, miss, or I'll tell Hepsy,' warned Charles.

'Ugh! Tell-tale!'

'No, I'm not. But little girls have no right to listen to such things.'

'I didn't listen. I couldn't help hearing.'

'Well, you shouldn't remember, then.'

'But you can't forget when you don't want to remember sometimes.'

'Well, anyway, ladies don't repeat things like that.'

'Yes, they do. Lady Jane Appledore does.'

'She's an old frump. Don't you take after her, or you'll be another.—Marquises don't swear in France, do they, Etienne?'

'Oh, never!'

No, this Sunday was different from those that had gone before. The children were sent to church; but, for the first time for many a day, Sir Charles did not accompany them. And indeed he looked very weary, and as if the only things in the world he desired were rest and quietness. The shadow—seen or unseen, of the past and of the future—was over them, and to none of them was life ever to be again quite the same as it had been before.

It is hard of a sudden to assume a mask when all one's life has borne a frank and open face, and harder still to wear it with equanimity.

Hardest of all Charles Lauriston found the attempt to meet as of old the loving questioning of his wife's clear eyes. Out of the sweet depths of her soul she had always looked into his and been satisfied. Now, for the first time, she found things there that were beyond her. The stirring of the depths had obscured them.

And he? He tried his bravest to meet her look with sincerity, but the wax was in the honey, and it was no longer clear.

His heart was sick within him, no matter how he strove to justify his action by the bitterness of his necessity. His wife saw that he was troubled, but set it down to the trying days through which he had passed. Her heart could not by any possibility have fathomed the shadowy deeps in which his soul writhed. Love made her very wise. She made no attempt to probe the trouble, only showed that she was cognisant of it, and did her simple best to soothe it.

'For your sake, dear, I wish this had not come. You are doing too much, I fear,' she said gently as they sat alone together that Sunday morning.

Ah God, how much too much!

'It is a very great responsibility. I shall get used to it in time. If I see you worrying about me I shall be afraid to come to Ealing.'

'Never that, I hope,' she smiled. 'You shall just bring all your burdens here and find rest. Or, rather, you shall leave them all in town, and find still greater rest.'

'I will try. You must put up with me as well as you can.'

'We will put up with you,' she smiled again. 'Try us as often as you can, and leave all the loads behind you. Don't let the bank wear you out as it did your father. I, at all events, have no craving for overgreat wealth.'

'Nor I. But it is like a great machine, you see, and it must go on and on, and the man who guides it feels the weight.'

'I wish it could stop, and set you free and give you back to me.'

'Sometime, maybe—sometime, but not yet; not for many years yet.'

How gladly he would have exchanged it all for a pittance and the clean possession of his own soul freed from its bonds! But it could not be. He was bound to the wheel, even to the breaking of his life if need be, and all that he could do was to bear the torture with a quiet face, and strive his best to save her even the sight of it.

He took a short ramble with the children in the afternoon, and for the first time in his life found their light-hearted chatter and frolicsomeness jar upon him.

He tried his utmost not to show it, but they all felt it vaguely. The perfect harmony of their intercourse was disturbed, for the tightened chords of his nature were strained and out of tune.

To cover his own deficiencies, and provide them food for talk, he broke the news of the coming marriage between Aunt Charlotte and M. de Montessonne, and did it in such a way as almost to upset Mavie's equanimity.

'So you and Etienne are like to become related, Mavie,' he began.

'Oh!' and she whirled round on the boys, all a-bristle with indignation, in the belief that some one had betrayed her, and that her father was about to laugh at her. 'Who told you?'

'Who told me? Why, Aunt Charlotte.'

'Aunt Charlotte! And who told her?'

'M. de Montessonne, I should suppose.'

'But how did he know?' with a dagger-look at the unconscious Etienne.

'How did he know, child! I suppose he knew his own mind, and judged it for his own happiness that they should get married.'

'Aunt Charlotte and Monsieur de Montessonne?'

'Yes. Who else?'

'Oh! Ah! Do you hear, Etienne? My aunt is going to marry your grandfather. Now, let me see! What relation shall I be to you?' and the pretty brows knitted tightly over the problem.

'Why, you're going to'—— began Charlie.

'Silly! You don't understand. Be quiet and let me think.—When Aunt Charlotte marries your grandfather she'll be your grandmother, and I should think I'll be your aunt. And when he marries my aunt he'll be my uncle and you're his grandson, and I'll be—— What shall I be, father? Shall I be Etienne's grandaunt?'

'It is rather complicated, isn't it?' said her father. 'Anyway, it's evident you will be in a position requiring great sobriety of deportment.'

'Yes, indeed. It makes me feel quite old already.—Etienne, do put your hat straight, and see that you wash your hands as soon as you reach home.' And the consideration of this piece of news gave them ample food for thought and talk, and occupied all their minds, to the relief of his.

*(To be continued.)*

# GROWING THE BIG RED APPLE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

By J. T. Bealby, Author of *Canada*, *Fruit-Ranching in British Columbia*, &c.

BRITISH COLUMBIA produces some of the most beautiful apples in the world; even the Golden Russets blush with bright pink cheeks and the Ribston Pippins rival in colour the ripest of Morello cherries. A country which produces such beautiful fruit must, we unconsciously reason, be itself beautiful, and the life of the men who grow that fruit must be perfectly delightful.

The country is indeed beautiful. The orchards, most of them as yet quite infants in years, are strung along the valleys—the deep, narrow valleys—by which the interior of British Columbia is trenched, either overlooking the river which has grooved the valley or clinging to the skirts of the mountains which frame about the lovely lakes.

As for the fruit-grower's life—well, here is a typical day.

At 5.30 A.M., just as I was waking up from the slumbers of the blest, my ears were assailed by a sudden roar, followed by a continuous rumbling as of a heavy surf pounding a rock-bound coast. It was a sudden tempest hurling itself down the lake with the fierce vehemence which the wind does at times display in the mountainous, wind-sheltered valley in which my ranch is situated. Ere the rush of the devouring gale had thundered five minutes in my ears, I was startled by hearing a harsh, resonant clangour, followed by a strident, grinding after-wail.

A foreboding seized me: 'There goes the windmill!'

And sure enough, almost before I reached the foot of the stairs, I heard my man's voice inquiring for me.

'Well, Harry, what is it?'

'It's the mill. The piston-rod has snapped.' And he went on to tell me exactly how.

After a hurried breakfast I rose to go out to the mill. As I pushed back my chair my wife observed, 'We shall want some wood cut to-day. There is hardly sufficient to cook the dinner with, and there will be none for tea unless you cut some.'

We do not, of course, consume the wood ourselves. Wood is our only and indispensable fuel.

'All right, you shall have some,' I replied.

The pump underneath the mill was put together in sections. We—Harry and I—set to work to unscrew the chamber of the plunger so that we might be able to take out the bottom part of the broken piston-rod. We turned and turned. The heavy piece of iron was becoming unscrewed beautifully.

'Ah, look at that!' exclaimed Harry suddenly in a tone of deep disgust.

I glanced down. We had unscrewed the chamber of the piston-rod at the bottom instead of at the top. What was to be done? We had pipe-wrenches; but they were too small to span the barrel of the pump, and unless we could hold it fast we would not get out the broken piston-rod.

'Well, you will have to go into Nelson,' I said, 'and see if you can borrow a chain-wrench from the hardware people. And you had better take the wagon and bring back a load of coke at the same time.'

Off went Harry. The matter was urgent, for the tank was empty, and water was wanted—in fact water *must* be had—for the greenhouses that morning. It was three miles to Nelson, and the way lay over a rough mountain road, so narrow in places that there is no room for a man on foot to pass the wagon-wheels.

Whilst Harry was gone I turned my attention to the wood for tea. I had sawn off no more than a couple of short lengths when I heard a shrill, excited outcry on the other side of the house. I dropped the saw and ran. There was the gentle, placid cow picking out the daintiest morsels from amongst the young leaves and twigs of the apple-trees. At such sacrilege my hair stood on end. After a hot chase the impious beast was induced, very unwillingly, to return to her brown pasture, for it was now autumn and the British Columbia sun had scorched all the greenness out of the grass.

I set to work to mend the gap which the cow had made in breaking into Paradise. (It was not the innocent, cherubic, red-cheeked apple which had beguiled this bovine Eve, but the humbler, though more tempting, leaf.) Before I was half through the job an urgent message came from the house:

'You're wanted at the telephone. Can you come?'

It was the office of the railway company. 'We've got a box of plants for you. They're in bond, and should be cleared to-day.'

'All right. Thank you. I will see to it at once.'

Did that mean a second journey for Harry? No. I rang up a Customs broker and instructed him to clear for me. I rang up the gasworks in search of Harry.

'Your man left five minutes ago,' was the comforting reply I received.

I rang up the hardware store. 'Your man's just left. You'll get him at the warehouse.'

I rang up the warehouse.

'Well, I've got a big load of coke, sir,' came Harry's voice, 'and I shall have to go back for the plants. And you know it will keep me back half-an-hour or more, and you want the chain-wrench. You must have water'——

'Can't be helped. You must bring 'em. You won't have time to go again this afternoon.'

I finished mending the broken fence. I returned to the wood-pile and resumed my sawing of wood for tea. A few more lengths fell off. Then I beheld Harry entering the yard, driving the horses before him on the long reins, but without the wagon.

Again a premonition of disaster seized me. I was by this time an adept in the interpretation of such occult warnings.

'What's the matter now?' I cried. But it was not information as to the fact I was seeking; it was a nearer definition of the circumstances—the details. 'Where's your wagon?'

'I've had to leave it on the road'—— began Harry.

'Why, what's wrong?'

'One of the hind-wheels went smash. All the spokes have come out, and the wagon'——

'Has gone over?' I interrupted.

'No, she's not gone over. She's still in the middle of the road.'

'And can you get past her—I mean with the light wagon?'

'Oh yes;' and then Harry began to explain in full detail how the accident happened, and all about it.

'Then put Molly to the light wagon, and go and fetch the box of plants and the chain-wrench, and let us take the pump to pieces.'

In half-an-hour Harry was back with the chain-wrench. We had just got it nicely fitted on to the barrel of the pump, when there came an imperative 'Coo-e-e-e!' from the house.

'Hello!' I cried. 'What is it? The 'phone?'

'Yes; can you come at once?'

'Can't you take the message?'

'No; they want *you*,' my wife replied.

I did go at once. I took the receiver and put it to my ear, and called into the mouthpiece, giving my name.

The kind person who had called me had a thirst for exact information that did not altogether commend itself to me then. The voice called, 'Is that you, Mr XYZ?'

'Yes,' I responded. I was not in the mood to volunteer more gratuitous information.

'Oh, have you any parsley?'

'Yes, lots.'

'Will you let your man leave me five cents' worth next time he comes along?'

'Certainly. Who is it?'

'Mrs So-and-so.'

'Thank you. Good-bye.'

Five cents corresponds to the English halfpenny in its purchasing power, at any rate of parsley. I thought just then that the stereotyped valediction was worth all the money. But probably my interlocutor divined that a little walk would render my muscles more supple and easy for manipulating the chain-wrench.

But why go on with the veracious history of that eventful day? I have said enough to illustrate some at least of the adverse conditions under which the big red apple is produced in a British Columbia orchard. Surely the Evil One must have possessed that cow that morning! Or was it that we were still 'tenderfeet,' and our experience was like the leaf of the apple—green? At any rate, in Canadian phraseology, we were 'up against it' with a vengeance!

But it is time to look at the other side of the picture.

Our house, built, as nearly all Canadian houses are, of wood, with a broad, shady veranda running nearly all round it, stands on the shore of Lake Kootenay, of which in the leafy time of summer we get glimpses down the tunnelled vista of a chain of rose-arches. For the house is embosomed in cherry-trees, the branches of which actually brush against it. One of these said cherry-trees, in the summer of 1909, produced four hundred and fifty pounds of fruit, and of this I sold four hundred and thirty-two pounds for a gross sum of ninety-three dollars twenty-five cents, equivalent to a net yield of, say, seventy dollars (equal to fourteen pounds). That was the profit from *one* fourteen-year-old tree, the cherry being a Black Tartarian; and the fruit travelled all the way to Winnipeg, a distance of one thousand and one miles, before being sold for more than tenpence halfpenny per pound wholesale. I understand the consumer in that part of the world sometimes pays as much as two shillings and sixpence per pound for his cherries! That same season I sent a box of Royal Ann (Napoleon Bigarreau) cherries to London, Ontario, a distance of two thousand five hundred miles, and they arrived in 'very good condition.'

I was not speaking altogether in metaphor when I said the cow had broken into Paradise. When the cherry-trees are in blossom, not only are the branches 'feathered' to the very tips, but bunches of white blossom adorn the main trunk and the thick parts of the principal limbs. Then, and also when the apples, pears, and plums are full of bloom, the orchard is in appearance like unto a veritable Paradise. Overhead is a limpid blue sky, before us the unruffled waters of the lake, as bright and glittering as a gigantic sheet of steel, reflecting every cranny and protuberance of the mountains opposite, and etching every twig and branch with magical vividness, and all about us the hot and buoyant sunshine. Apple-blossoms! Last May I measured several of the waxy-white blooms of the Gravenstein apple; they had a diameter of more than two inches each! And the annual yield is in strict proportion. A seven-year-old tree will give over one hundred and twenty pounds of fruit, and its crop will sell for four dollars fifty cents (equal to eighteen shillings and ninepence) to seven dollars fifty cents (equal to thirty-one shillings and threepence); while trees in full bearing produce as much as two hundred and eighty pounds up to nine hundred pounds, the gross profit being forty-three shillings to one hundred and fifty shillings, or at the rate of one hundred and ten pounds to, say, three hundred pounds per acre.

The factor which has most to do with bringing about these truly remarkable results is the climate. Equally good results are obtained on soils of very different character. The prevalent soil of the interior of British Columbia is a light-red loam; but grit (disintegrated granite) and sand produce apples which have beaten all competitors on the show-table—for example, Ribston Pippins at the great Spokane Apple Show in November 1909. The growth which a tree favourably situated will make in a single season almost passes belief. Little grafts, only two inches long, put on in April will by the following October measure four feet six inches in length, and near the base will have developed four to eight well-set fruit spurs. No wonder, then, that apple-trees in British Columbia orchards yield fruit in the fourth and fifth year after planting; nor is it any wonder that trees which grow at such a remarkably rapid rate are brittle and frequently break, especially under the load of fruit which they carry. It is not at all an uncommon sight to see a little apple-tree surrounded by a small forest of props, till it looks like the skeleton framework of a circular tent.

Nor is it the apple alone that thrives in this wonderful way. All other hardy fruit grows equally well, and is equally prolific. During the summer of 1909, for instance, the crop of plums in my orchard was so extraordinary that, in spite of props, the branches broke under the weight of the fruit they bore. Young trees, not more than six or seven years old, groaned under burdens of one hundred to one hundred and sixty pounds of fruit, the value of the yield of a single tree ranging from three dollars to ten dollars (equal to twelve shillings and sixpence to forty-two shillings). When you recall the fact that plum-trees are usually planted over one hundred and thirty to the acre, you can realise something of the profit of an orchard in British Columbia.

Apples are planted forty-eight to seventy to the acre, and estimating a profit of fifty shillings only per tree, we see that an acre of orchard in bearing will yield a revenue of well over a hundred pounds. The expenses of cultivation are not heavy, the chief items being for cultivation pure and simple, for manuring, and for spraying. The soil of British Columbia, regarded as a factor for the production of fruit, is in general somewhat deficient in nitrogen.

This is best supplied by ploughing in clover. Hence the manuring of the fruit-trees is very often effected by turning in a crop of clover. Spraying, even if done twice, or as much as three times, a year, costs only a very few pence per tree. Spraying is compulsory by law. Government inspectors visit the orchards in the spring, and if they discover any indications of fungoid growths or insect ravages, they instantly order the owner of the ranch to spray, generally with a mixture of lime and sulphur, with or without a small proportion of salt.

Thanks to these measures, and to the unsleeping vigilance of the authorities at the entry ports of the province, British Columbia fruit is remarkably free from blemishes. I have never seen a worm-eaten apple since I came into the country. One of the first things that arrests the attention of the newcomer is the silvery brightness and smoothness of the bark of the apple-trees. Not a sign of canker; scarcely a rugged or corrugated trunk. And the colour of the fruit! It is simply astonishing. A well-packed box of, say, M'Intosh Red or Jonathan or Spitzenberg apples is a sight which, once seen, is not readily forgotten.

Fruit-packing has been elevated almost into a fine art. Apples, pears, plums, peaches, cherries, currants, strawberries, tomatoes, are all packed in boxes of regulation size and shape, the dimensions being fixed by law. The apple-box is so arranged as to hold approximately forty pounds, no matter what the size of the apple. There are several models of arrangement of the fruit in the box, distinguished by the number of tiers or layers placed one upon the other. This information—that is, the number of tiers, together with the name of the variety, and the name and postal address of the grower or packer—must by law be plainly stamped upon the end of each box. If the fruit is to travel far the box is lined with paper, and each apple is wrapped separately in a sort of coarse tissue-paper. The aim of the packer is to make the apples tight both ways in the box, and to leave the top tier perfectly regular when viewed both endwise and across the box. Cherries too, although it may sound somewhat strange, are packed with symmetrical regularity and often with the most skilful evenness in shallow boxes, and when fringed about with an edging of white cardboard, are irresistibly tempting.

The life of the fruit-grower in British Columbia is, so far as the surroundings—the scenery and the climate—go, perfectly delightful. But it is not at all the life of a lotus-eater. *Dolce far niente* is unknown to the conscientious orchardist during the fruit-season—that is, from the middle of June to the middle of November. The climate is indeed excellent, but the big red apple, for which the province is justly celebrated, is not produced without much vigilance, care, and labour, incessantly renewed day by day and week by week. Fruit of such sterling excellence is like the reputation of the professional man; it is not got without the expenditure of a considerable amount of toil and intelligence. But then, again, like the reputation of the successful law pleader or the successful physician, it possesses a proportionally enhanced value. Whereas the ordinary price of a box of apples may be two dollars, the price fetched by a box which has won a big prize at one of the great apple shows of the West may range all the way up to ten dollars, and at least one instance is on record of apples of the Winter Banana variety fetching twelve dollars per box wholesale, equivalent to a price of one shilling and threepence per pound. This, it need hardly be observed, was an exceptional case.

At present the orchards of British Columbia produce but little more than is needed to meet the demands of the home local markets. But hundreds of acres are being planted every year, and planted with varieties (e.g. Northern Spy) that sell well in the vast and constantly growing market of the Prairie provinces; though a great many acres are being set out with apples, such as Cox's Orange Pippin, Spitzenberg, and Yellow Newtown Pippin, destined for London, Liverpool, Glasgow, and other British markets.

## THE MAJOR'S CLOCK.

### CHAPTER II.

ORE than a year had passed. On the previous night of the 18th October 1813, at the end of the third and last day of the battle of Leipzig, our army had commenced the retreat. The Emperor himself had gone, leaving MacDonald's Corps (to which my regiment belonged), along with Regnier's and Lauriston's, to cover it. Personally I had no idea that the retreat had been ordered. For fifteen hours the day before I had been in the saddle, and, soaked to the skin, had passed the night on a baker's oven with a few of my troopers around me. A fatal mistake was made in allowing the caissons to be blown up. Each tell-tale explosion informed our foes only too surely that the retreat had really commenced, and gave them fresh hope. Luckily, however, they had suffered so severely, and their troops were so fatigued, that they could not at first take full advantage of it. But even the deafening noises of these explosions in different parts of the city had failed to wake me; and it was only the shaking of my *marshal de logis* to inform me that the next house was on fire that roused me from my slumbers.

Of my squadron only thirty men could be found. Utter confusion reigned everywhere; the chain of authority was completely broken. It was a case of every man for himself. Quietly, even leaving their arms and accoutrements behind, and in many cases donning civilian clothes, some men had got over the bridge while there was yet time.

'Thus about midday of the 19th, with the rain steadily falling, I found myself with a small remnant of my men in a narrow street which led to the bridge that crossed the Elster a little beyond the Thor gate on the Frankfort road.

'"Make way there! Make way there!" suddenly shouted some Poles behind us.

'By pure weight, by trampling down some, and by pricking men and horses with their lances, they had got thus far, but they got no farther, for the wheels of two wagons had become locked, and for the time the way was completely blocked, and they were obliged to turn back. In the midst of them I saw their brave and beloved Prince Poniatowski, who had only three days before been made a marshal. His handsome face was deadly white; his left arm was in a sling; his fingers shone with rings; even his epaulettes had diamonds in them (for he had all Murat's love of finery); thus the gallant Pole passed on to meet his death at the river.

'At that moment an explosion, certainly far louder than any we had previously heard, took place; still, we paid little attention to it. Thicker and thicker grew the crowd of panic-stricken fugitives. Artillery, infantry, were all jammed together, cursing and swearing at the delay. And, to add to the terrible confusion, some bullocks got mixed up with wagons full of wounded, and also some private carriages; while the shells went whistling overhead and falling into the houses, setting them alight. Soon we came to a complete halt.

'Suddenly a cry arose that the bridge across the Elster, our only hope of escape, had been blown up. Men whose courage till that moment had kept them up turned white with despair. They cursed the Emperor, saying he had deserted them again, as he had done in Egypt and Russia; they cursed their marshals and their officers. Many threw down their arms and threatened to surrender; though others reminded them that they would gain nothing by doing that, as they would get no mercy from Blucher's butchers in any case.

'We happened at that moment to be opposite a rope-shop, which of course was strongly barricaded. Suddenly a *bourrelier* (harness-maker) of artillery commenced kicking and banging the large doors at the side of the shop, saying that he knew there was a passage that led into the next street. Drowning men catch at any straw. Certain death seemed to await us if the shells set the houses alight.

'"He is right, *mes enfants*," I cried, for I knew the plan of the town well. "Smash the doors and follow me."

'"Yes," said Mayron, my old *marshal de logis*, who had been in Leipzig before during the campaign of Jena; "and I know where there is a ford."

'I was about to jump off my horse, when I heard an agonised voice calling me by name.

'"Save me; oh, save me, Captain Dorisart! If there's really a ford, could a carriage get through?"

'I turned round. It was Moyart! For a moment I was too surprised to speak.

'"No," I said bitterly at length, "especially if it is full of other people's clocks."

'Then my conscience smote me, for during the long months when I was recovering from the fever, and the bitter remembrance of the lost clock came into my head, my good mother, in her poverty, had often told me that I must learn to forgive him.

'"I have wronged you," he cried, getting out of his carriage; "but only save me, only let me get to Paris, for private reasons, ere the Emperor does, or I shall be ruined if he finds out something. You shall have the clock; and take this," he continued, pressing a morocco case into my hand. "If you are married, give it to your wife; or if not, to your *fiancée*."

'I said nothing; it seemed to me that fear had driven the poor wretch out of his senses; for the man must be wandering to talk to me about wives or *fiancées* when I had only my pay to live on. The door by this time had given way and the crowd was pressing through.

'"Follow me," I said to Moyart. "Take hold of the stirrup-leather."

'"I can't," he said. "I am too weak. I have been a prisoner for months in Russia. Then after I escaped I caught a fever at Dresden. I am only just out of bed."

'Then I looked more closely at him, and saw how hollow his cheeks were, and that his eyes had an extraordinary unnatural brightness in them. Poor wretch! I felt certain that he would never reach Paris, for I knew what was in front of us. The river, and the river only, was our hope now, and this had to be swum. It was no time for words. Dismounting, I seized him—he was as light as a feather in spite of his height—and got him into the saddle. Shouting to the few men of my squadron who were near to follow me, and leading my horse, I forced my way to the passage.

'"*Prenez garde! prenez garde!*" came from all sides.

'A bullock, goaded into madness, was charging right and left. Suddenly it took a turn to the left into the narrow pathway, which was really a rope-walk. *Ciel*, how those in front ran! But, anyway, it cleared the way for us who followed it. We then found ourselves in a narrow street not far from the walls. Most of the men made to the left, towards the bridge and Reicherts Garden (it was by the latter Poniatowski, we learned afterwards, had reached the fatal river), because they knew that the Russians and Prussians were closing in on the north-west.

'"To the right, then first to the left, and through the Rastaht gate!" shouted the *marshal de logis*. "I know the way to the ford."

'Then I got on my horse, and, with Moyart clinging closely to me, followed by perhaps a dozen of my own men and some artillery-men who had cut the traces of their horses, was soon in the swampy fields, racing towards the Elster, which in normal weather is but a little stream, but the terrible continuous rain we had had for a week had made it a very formidable obstacle. Thus when I reached the bank and saw the fast-flowing, muddy, swollen stream beside me, my courage almost sank. Galloping on, we passed Thomas's Mill.

'"Here's the ford, *mon capitaine*," shouted Mayron as he reached the shelving bank that led to it.

'But as I heard the rush and gurgle of the waters, and saw the bubbles and the yellow leaves in the centre floating quickly along the surface, I hesitated. Some, however, waded in, but in a moment their horses were swept off their legs, and I saw them carried down and heard their piteous cries for help. That was enough, so I rode on, for in the distance I saw some woods, and thought if I could only reach them I might have time to look about; but, alas! I was not to have the chance, for a sudden cry of "*Cosaques!*" arose, and, sure enough, on our right flank I saw a whole *pulk* of these barbarous brutes waving their lances, and, with loud "Hurrahs!" coming towards us as fast as their little *sotnias* (ponies) could bring them. These savages always charge in a group; they have no regular formations; but seeing us in scattered bodies tearing along the bank, they at once opened out like a fan.

'Now had I been alone on my own horse, which was a remarkably fleet one, I would have risked reaching the cover of the trees; but in a charge it had been shot under me on the first day of the battle. It happened that as I was taking my pistols from their holsters a typical heavy German *Junker* came thundering up, shouting out to me to surrender. For answer I shot him through the right shoulder; his sword dropped, and he involuntarily pulled up. Covering him with my other weapon, I ordered him to get off his horse, and rode off on it. It was a great, heavy, pounding animal of enormous strength—in fact, half a cart-horse; but, as good luck would have it, in the present circumstances having to carry two, it was far better than my old one. I saw it was no good to continue; I was bound to be cut off from the woods, for the bulk of my foes were not two hundred metres from me, while others, apparently guessing my intention, made to the right to head me off. There was nothing, therefore, to be done—for my steed was very slow—but to trust to Providence and plunge into the boiling stream. Taking my pistols from their cases, I stuffed them under my epaulettes to keep them dry.

'"Hold tight!" I shouted to Moyart.

'"Let me get off! Let me die! Holy Virgin, protect me!" he cried; and he continued to beg and implore me to let him descend, so great was his terror.

'I paid no heed to him, and, pricking up my horse, I plunged in. My companion gave a shuddering cry, a deep gasp; and well the poor wretch might, for, oh, *ciel!* the water was cold; but the fine, powerful beast beneath us swam well under his double burden. We made way, but were fast being swept down; and when in the centre the animal tried to turn and swim with the current, and it was only with great difficulty that I could keep his head to the opposite bank. If his strength would but last out, I hoped soon to grasp the overhanging willows.

'"*Vorwarts, vorwarts!*" I shouted to encourage him, as, snorting and shaking his head, the brave creature continued his fight for life. The progress was slow, but that we were gradually lessening the distance there was no doubt; in fact, we were more than three-quarters over when, with wild shouts, the Cossacks reached the bank behind us. Some few had pistols, and the bullets splashed around us.

'All this time poor Moyart, with chattering teeth, was calling in a spasmodic way on the Virgin for help. Suddenly he ceased, gave a stifled cry, a gasp, and clutched me convulsively, and I knew he was hit; and though in a measure I was protected by his body, every moment I expected the same fate myself. But what, perhaps, I dreaded even more was that my horse should be struck; for in that case, with Moyart clinging to me, I knew I should have no chance, and must sink like a stone. But Providence, so my mother always said afterwards, in answer to her prayers, watched over me; for we had been swept down so far that we had reached the ford. In desperation I urged my brave steed on; he made a final effort, his feet touched the ground, and dripping from head to foot, I rode him triumphantly up the bank, amid yells of disappointment from my foes. In the fixed, hard grip of death, Moyart had got so firm a hold of my belt that as I dismounted I brought his body with me, and it was only by cutting the belt that I freed myself from the corpse.

'Fastening my panting horse to a tree, I quickly searched the body. I had hardly placed all the papers and valuables in my pocket, when I heard a cry for help from Mayron, who had entered the stream about the same time as myself. All this time the Cossacks on the bank continued to fire at me and those in the water. As far as I was concerned, as soon as I reached the land I paid little attention to them, for I was too far off to receive much harm from their old horse-pistols; but one of them had evidently got a superior weapon, for as I ran forward to help Mayron I received a bullet right over the heart. Providentially it struck the case that Moyart had given me; but for that, I must have been killed. The shock made me reel, but it was the last the fellow had the

chance of firing; for I drew my pistol, and standing behind a tree, took steady aim at him. The first pistol was damp and missed fire, but the bullet from the second struck him fair in the chest. This was more than the others bargained for, and the effect was extraordinary, for with one accord, on seeing their comrade's fate, they all turned and fled. I had always heard these Cossacks were arrant cowards, but I never reckoned on their cowardice being so great as this. Thus I was enabled without the slightest hindrance to save the life of the *marshal de logis*, who, half out of the water, was clutching a branch, and yet was too cold and entangled by weeds to get to land. Leaving him, I got two more to land, and with their help we saved some horses whose riders, alas! had been drowned, and then set off for Lindenau, where we fell in with Oudinot's corps of two divisions of the young Guard, who were covering our retreat.

*(To be continued.)*

# A STRANGE MAUSOLEUM.

By S. Baring-Gould.

O little interest was excited in the year 1907 in Plymouth by the opening of the mausoleum of Sir James Tillie of Pentillie Castle, that stands in a picturesque position above the Tamar where it forms its most tortuous windings.

The mausoleum is a lofty brick tower on a platform ascended by a flight of steps, and originally consisted of two stories. It was erected to receive the body of Sir James Tillie, knight, who died on the 15th November 1713, and by his will directed that his body should be disposed of in a manner described by himself in a memorandum he had left with his wife.

Hals, who wrote in the middle of the eighteenth century, and whose manuscript *History of Cornwall* is in the British Museum, says: 'Sir James Tillie, . . . by his last will and testament, obliged his adopted heir, one Woolley, his sister's son, not only to assume his name (having no legitimate issue), but that he should not inter his body after death in the earth, but fasten it in the chair when he died with iron, his hat, wig, rings, gloves, and best apparel on, shoes and stockings, and surround the same with an oak chest, box, or coffin, in which his books and papers should be laid, with pen and ink also; and build for reception thereof, in a certain field of his lands, a walled vault or grot, to be arched with moorstone; in which repository it should be laid without Christian burial; for that, as he said but an hour before he died, in two years' space he would be at Pentillie again. Over this vault his heir likewise was obliged to build a fine chamber, and set therein the pictures of himself, his lady, and adopted heir for ever; and at the end of this vault or chamber to erect a spire or lofty monument of stone, from thence for spectators to overlook the contiguous country, Plymouth Sound and harbour; all which, as I am told, is accordingly performed by his heir, whose successors are obliged to repair the same for ever out of his lands and rents, under penalty of losing both.

'However, I hear lately, notwithstanding this his promise of returning in two years to Pentillie, that Sir James's body is eaten out with worms, and his bones or skeleton fallen to the ground from the chair wherein it was seated, about four years after it was set up; his wig, books, wearing apparel, also rotten in the box or chair where it was laid.'

As far as we can judge, there was no subterranean vault. The chamber in which sat the body of Sir James was the lower stage of the tower, and this could be looked into through two slits in the stone; the door was bricked up. It was through these slits that the curious observer could study the process of decay in the body of Sir James.

When he had completely gone to pieces, his descendant opened the chamber and set up in it a statue of the knight seated in his chair, in wig and full dress, carved in sandstone, precisely as the corpse had been placed; and as the roof of the chamber fell in, this could be seen very distinctly through the slits above mentioned. But what was done with the bones no one seems to know. Now, during last summer it became necessary to open the mausoleum, for a tree had grown up in the midst, which not only obscured the sight of the statue, but also menaced the tower. Accordingly the present owner of Pentillie, Mr Coryton, broke into the mausoleum and had the tree cut down.

The news that Sir James Tillie's resting-place had been opened spread like wildfire in Plymouth, and troops of people came out to see if any relics of the strange knight remained, and it was with difficulty that they were prevented from invading the precincts. However, no bones were found; and it is supposed that the last heiress of the Tillies, who conveyed the property to the Corytons, and who was a pious woman, was shocked at the idea of her ancestor's bones lying scattered on the floor of the chamber, and that she had them privately removed and buried in the churchyard of St Mellion, the parish church.

And now a few words about Sir James. He was the son of a labourer at St Kevern in Cornwall, and had been put as a horseman in the stables of Sir John Coryton of Newton Ferrers in St Mellion. As he was a sharp boy, Sir John took him from the

stables and put him with an attorney, and eventually made him his steward. Moreover, when Sir John Coryton died, he made him trustee for his children. James Tillie managed to feather his nest pretty well; and he married the daughter of Sir Harry Verney, the Parliamentarian, who was executed under Charles II., and by her obtained a good deal of money. His ward, the younger Sir John Coryton, married the daughter and heiress of a wealthy City knight who had been Lord Mayor of London; and on his death without issue Tillie, now a widower, speedily married the widow, the heiress of the Lord Mayor, and annexed all her property. His ambition now was to found a family. He built Pentillie Castle, and got James II. to knight him.

Hals, writing before his death, says: 'Soon after James II. came to the Crown, this gentleman by a great sum of money and false representation of himself obtained the favour of Knighthood at his hands, but that King some short while after beinge inform'd that Mr Tillie was at first but a groom or horseman to Sir John Coryton, that he was no Gentleman of blood or arms, and yet gave as his coat-armour the arms of Count Tilly of Germany, ordered the Heralds to enquire into this matter; who, finding this information true, by the King's order entered his chamber at London, took down these arms, tore others in pieces, and fastened them all to horse-tails and drew them through the streets of London, to his perpetual disgrace, and disgraced him from the dignity of that being, and imposed a fine of £500 upon him for so doing.'

Hals was wrong as to the amount of the fine, which, Mr Luttrell informs us, was two hundred pounds.

There was a very ancient family of Tilly of Cannington in Somersetshire, but Sir James did not venture to adopt its arms; and his nephew was obliged to obtain a grant of arms from the Heralds' College in 1733 that in no way resembled the coat borne by the Tillys of Cannington.

The portraits of Sir James and his lady and nephew that were to adorn the upper chamber of the tower have been removed, and are now in Pentillie Castle. The long will of Sir James may still be read in Somerset House. It is somewhat pathetic to see how he laboured to secure Pentillie Castle and his large estates to one of his own family and to continue his name. But man provides and Heaven decides; and eventually the Tillies expired in an heiress who brought the property back to the Corytons, whom, there can be little doubt, as steward, he had unscrupulously plundered.

# BETTY AND I IN THE AIR.

By FIAMA.

BETTY and I believe firmly that new experiences are the salt of life. Therefore, when she telephoned to me one day, and announced that her cousin Bob had entered his balloon for the coming great balloon contest, and proposed taking us as passengers, I accepted enthusiastically. I had to run the gauntlet of opposition from various members of the family when I sprang the news upon them, but the gloomy prophecies of an early death in no way damped my ardour. My brother-in-law, generally known by the sobriquet of the 'irascible major,' expressed himself forcibly: 'Infernal nonsense I call it! Of all the silly fools, recommend me to these aeronauts!' And as this did not sufficiently impress me: 'Fact is, you're too *stupid* to appreciate the danger,' was his parting thrust.

'My dear,' said Aunt Amelia, 'since you are bent on this folly, provide yourself with a large cotton umbrella, which would doubtless be invaluable as a parachute in case of emergency.'

One gentleman of my acquaintance, of foreign persuasion and jealous disposition, came to take a last farewell, with a funereal expression of countenance. 'It is not kind to those who care for you,' he said. 'You have not the right to do anything with Joe Pardy.' Suppressing hysterical laughter, I assured him, on the authority of those who know, that there was far less jeopardy in ballooning than in crossing Piccadilly Circus.

'The question is—clothes,' said Betty when we met to discuss. 'Every one will don her best bib and tucker to see us start. We must look workman-like and sporting; and, don't forget, knickerbockers under a short skirt, in case of a reverse. But I don't see why we shouldn't wear becoming hats!' Bob insisted on a dress-rehearsal, and disposed summarily of Betty's picture headgear. 'Oh, very well; I'll wear a beehive, then, if it is only circumference that counts,' she said graciously. Bob was particularly insistent on the length of our hat-pins, being anxious to come down with the sight of both eyes unimpaired.

He told us the balloon was to carry four, which was the competition complement of passengers. I noticed Betty was rather suspiciously indifferent when he named the chosen 'fourth.' Bob is a dear, but not observant. 'He has been up with me before, and knows enough to do what I tell him,' he explained.

The auspicious day dawned, the most glorious of ballooning-days, to our earthly idea—hot sun and a gentle breeze. Betty was unusually silent as we sat in the motor on our way to the starting-point. 'I signed my will last night,' she announced; 'not that there's one iota of danger, but you never know.'

Arriving at our destination and entering the holy of holies railed off from the spectators, we soon lost the sense of our own importance as we watched the stir of preparation for the race. Thirteen or fourteen balloons were swaying with the breeze, looking like huge prehistoric monsters straining at the leash impatient to be off. We found Bob and the 'fourth' busy packing instruments, maps, and other necessary impedimenta into the basket. We were allowed a quarter of an hour of grace to bid farewell to friends beyond the 'pale,' and went round receiving wishes of 'good-luck,' 'safe-descent,' and hand-shakes somewhat disconcerting in their finality. And then came a peremptory summons from Bob. At last! Excitement thrilled and tingled in our veins.

Betty grasped my arm.

'Not nervous?' I asked.

'No!' scornfully. 'But swear one thing; if I'm sick you won't tell the family. And whatever happens, don't let Bob have reason to say women are in the way on these occasions.'

We climbed into the basket—Bob and I on one side, Betty and the 'fourth' balancing us on the other—and when our turn arrived were hauled and bumped to the starting-point, and there held down by about twenty men straining every muscle while our lifting-power was checked. It was the aim of each competitor to carry as much ballast as possible for manœuvring purposes.

Then came the signal: 'Right! Let go!' and we were off, soaring up and up, smoothly, easily, like some great bird glorying in the freedom of flight; up and up, endlessly it seemed, right into the blue vault of heaven, the world sinking under us, while the cheering of people on roofs and other points of vantage grew fainter and fainter, till at last we seemed to hover in space, waiting, a great stillness all about us, and a panorama below which simply took my breath away. I suppose, in aerial navigation, like everything else, familiarity blunts the senses, but the first experience is—well, just indescribable.

'Well, how do you like it? Six thousand feet,' said Bob, breaking the spell.

'I don't know—yet,' I answered weakly and somewhat breathlessly, trying not to realise that there was only that frail little basket between us and illimitable space. And then, on a sudden impulse, I knelt down and peered over. The feeling wasn't even akin to fear; only, I had wanted a new sensation, and I got it to the full! In less than ten minutes I felt absolutely normal, and was able without a qualm to lean over the world and help to adjust my end of the basket-leaf, which is let down to spread the maps on. The atmosphere was as clear as crystal, and London (looking like a tiny little hamlet) and the surrounding country for miles and miles stretched below us—a marvellous view.

'That *can't* be Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park?' exclaimed Betty.

It really appeared to be a tiny little green table-centre, with the round pond resembling a finger-bowl at one end. What astonished us was that all the buildings seemed to be of the same height; and here and there tiny objects like black beetles were crawling in and out, which we knew to be those monsters of terror to the ordinary mortal—motor-omnibuses!

Then, all of a sudden, I became deaf. Horrible tales of pressure on the brain at high altitudes, bleeding noses, and bursting heads flashed across me. Mentally registering a Spartan vow to suffer silently, I said nothing.

But, to my relief, 'Funny thing, but I'm deaf,' came Betty's voice from the other side of the basket.

'That's nothing. Swallow,' said Bob unsympathetically but to the point.

It is heavenly to be a balloon-passenger, but the post of sky-pilot is certainly no sinecure. What with shifting the ballast-bags, watching the risings and descents, following the map, noting the currents, and keeping the log (I think they call it), our two companions were at work from start to finish.

Above, below, behind, and in front of us were dotted the other competitors in the race, all taking slightly different courses, according to the currents they had struck.

'There's an awful smell of gas,' said Betty about this juncture, rather as if she were alluding to a bedroom pipe; 'and I am dying of thirst;' which was a natural consequence of the 'escape' that we did not realise at the time.

'Here, have some tea, then,' said Bob, with one hand doling out sand—some of which came back in our faces owing to our quicker rate of descent—and with the other holding out the thermos flask; 'only, for Heaven's sake! help yourselves—no time for polite conventionalities up here—or you'll have it sitting on the dome of St Paul's.'

Sure enough, we were gradually and unaccountably sinking. Bob told us afterwards he rather suspected a leak.

Betty and I luckily in no way appreciated the awkwardness, not to say risk, of descending in the middle of the City, and wondered why the 'fourth,' under Bob's orders, was hurriedly letting down the trail-rope and making other mysterious preparations, Bob meanwhile throwing out ballast for all he was worth. Two whole precious bags had disappeared before, to our relief, the statoscope showed we were rising.

'It was a confounded down-current,' said Bob, wiping his brow. 'Now, if only the sun will come out again and warm us a bit, up we'll go.' And, as if in answer to his words, King Sol appeared smilingly, and with the consequent expansion of gas we rose again.

Betty and I were by this time enthusiastically excited over our prospects in the race, eagerly

scanning the positions of our rivals, and following our progress on the map, our hopes falling below zero when the 'fourth' pointed out that we were travelling in a wrong direction for the goal, now some seventeen miles away. How we prayed for a more favourable current!

'We are going to post some cards,' announced the 'fourth' in a momentary lull in his labours. There ensued a slight whispered controversy as to the destination of Betty's, and then we leant over—Betty thrusting the beehive with no little difficulty between the ropes—and watched the little white things fluttering earthward with red ribbons attached. This gave me the first sensation of giddiness I had yet felt.

It is only when you have some connection with earth, Bob explained, that there is a tendency to giddiness; for this reason he had tried to distract our attention when the trail-rope went over, a drop of three hundred feet sheer.

It was a most curious sight when about this time one of the other competitors passed immediately beneath, travelling in an opposite direction, so close that the occupants of the basket could almost touch our trail-rope, and were within easy speaking-distance. We looked down on their balloon—rather like the top of a melon it appeared—and speculated as to what might have happened if we had bumped. Bob remarked that it was about as near as he ever wanted to be to another, and it gave you some idea of what it will be like when the sky is a public road frequented by 'air-hogs.'

We had cleared London and the suburbs by this time, and, in place of the hitherto cloudless ether, the balloon seemed to be resting on a thick brown heat-haze; it lay dark and menacing on the horizon at our level, while above was the clearest liquid turquoise, against which some of our rivals stood carved out with vivid distinctness. One or two had what appeared to be pale-yellow comets' tails, by which we knew they were letting out sand.

'Not enough ballast left,' announced Bob. 'No help for it; we'd better begin to look out for a likely spot to come down.'

'Oh no! *Must* we?' Betty and I exclaimed in a breath. The excitement of the contest was tingling in every nerve, and we would willingly have shed *any* garment as ballast. Betty suggested parting with the tea-basket, utterly callous as to the human beetles it might crush below. Yes, we were slowly but surely nearing Mother Terra.

'Take the glasses and see that there are no telegraph-wires,' called Bob to the 'fourth.'

A cock crowing and other small but distinct sounds were borne upwards, showing that the distance was rapidly lessening.

'Be ready to bend your knees and hold on to the ropes for the bump,' Bob directed.

'Where ignorance is bliss'—— Betty and I were undaunted at the prospect of bumps.

'Oh! try to go on a bit.' This from Betty. 'I see a heavenly park over there. There's sure to be a lovely house, and they'll give us tea.'

Being a member of the S.P.C.A., I called out that we were in danger of annihilating a flock of sheep, but all my appeals fell on deaf ears, for Bob was exerting every sinew and holding on to the valve with might and main. No wonder, for all the precious ballast—almost as precious as the last provisions to a shipwrecked crew—which was left to us, with some four thousand feet between us and the hard earth, was one bag and a half! I have a dim recollection of Betty on her knees, frantically scraping together handfuls of sand-leakage at the bottom of the basket.

After that we went down so quickly that it is difficult to recall sensations. A few vague lilliputian forms running in the fields below, a shout from Bob to them to catch the trail-rope, then, 'Stoop right down and hold the bottom ropes'—and a bump.

Over! I thought; but in a second up we shot again, how high, from my lowly position at the bottom of the basket, I couldn't judge. Also—tell it not *in* Gath—I had my eyes shut. Anyhow, it *felt* likes miles. Then, 'Out with the anchor,' with a few stronger words interspersed between gasps.

This order from Bob was followed by a succession of jerks, violently shaking us backwards and forwards, as the anchor caught in the furrows of the field. Then more bumps and another rebound like a rocket skywards. Of how many times this gentle proceeding was repeated I lost count. I remember hearing a final order to 'rip,' and opening one eye and catching sight of the gas-bag deflating slowly, like the toy 'dying pig,' and dying very, very hard. And then, at last, tired out, the monster lay, crushing down the best part of a field of beans, which hitherto had blossomed innocently and peacefully, unconscious of the coming bolt from the blue.

Out we clambered, rather shaky about the lower limbs, but still undaunted.

'What *do* I look like?' was Betty's first question, the eternal feminine asserting itself, as she adjusted the beehive, which had assumed a rakish angle.

'One moment,' said the 'fourth,' camera posed. 'Thank you!'

'Oh!' groaned Betty.

In less time than it takes to write the field was full of farm-hands and men of all descriptions springing from goodness knows where, newspaper reporters arriving on motor-bicycles, not forgetting the ubiquitous policeman, pomposity personified, all gesticulating, questioning, trampling. Alas for the bean-field and damages!

Betty and I grasped the tea-basket, climbed a gate into the next field, and there stretched ourselves luxuriously on the grass midst the buttercups and daisies. It was all so remote and peaceful, with an insistent cuckoo calling overhead, that it

was difficult to realise that we had descended from the sky.

'Heavenly, wasn't it,' I sighed, 'in spite of the come-down?'

Suffice it to say, we were both ready and eager to go up again on the spot, had it been possible.

In less than half-an-hour two somewhat dishevelled but cheery forms appeared over the gate.

'Hullo! hullo!' called Bob. I'm certain he was relieved that his responsibility for our precious lives was over. 'Well, sorry we bumped a bit. The wind caught us; but it wasn't so bad, was it?'

If we had perchance a slight hankering after praise of our valour we should have remembered 'Blessed are they who expect little.'

'It was the very loveliest experience I've ever known,' said Betty. 'And, look here, I do think *Facilis Descensus* would be such a splendid name for your next balloon,' she added maliciously.

We offered them bath-buns, and the 'fourth' said facetiously that he would 'barter his soul for a bath.' Truthfully, I have never seen two people look warmer.

Bob had ordered that the motor was to follow us if possible; but as we were at least fourteen miles from the given point we gave up hope of its arrival. It was four miles to the nearest station, and either a question of walking or sitting on the débris of the balloon, which now reposed in an enormous farm-cart, looking like a neat washing-basket and two canvas bundles. We chose the latter alternative, and, to the huge amusement of the crowd, we were hoisted in and started off at a slow, bone-shaking jog. Oh, that drive! To those in need of vibratory treatment, whose teeth are their own—not otherwise—let me strongly recommend this mode of progression.

The worthy driver looked upon us with the interest he would have bestowed on Martians or animals escaped from the Zoo, and drove his sturdy tandem with his back to them, and an utter disregard of others on the road, while he kept up a running flow of partly unintelligible conversation. 'I see'd yer a-comin' down,' he observed. '"Come on," I says; "I'll give yer a drive to town."' I'm sure he was priding himself on having hastened our descent by this munificent offer. A halt was voted for unanimously at the first public-house, where, still seated aloft, we quenched our thirst to the accompaniment of more cheers.

'Like to pull up again at the next pub?' asked our Jehu.

The rest of the way to the station was a sort of triumphal procession; and when one youth eagerly presented his bethumbed pocket-book and implored our signatures, Betty and I felt we were indeed tasting the joys of celebrity.

Very weary, full of rarefied oxygen, but still bubbling over with our adventures and the knowledge of 'something attempted, something done,' we settled ourselves in the comfortable railway carriage bound for Liverpool Street.

'I'm getting an aeroplane,' I overheard the 'fourth' say to Betty, above the roar of the train. 'Will you fly with me?'

'I'd love to,' replied Mistress Betty demurely.

## DEFENCE, NOT DEFIANCE!

As I stood on the cliffs of Dover,
Watching the waters dance,
Watching the ships go over
From me to the shores of France,
I found I was only dreaming,
I learned that the prospect there
Was only a sort of seeming
Of things as they really were.

I saw in a sudden vision
That men were the tools of God;
That what had seemed their decision
Was done at their Maker's nod;
That the steamers were iron shuttles
Which carried an endless thread,
Working backward and forth
'Twixt the south and the north,
Or wherever the Master said.

I saw that these shuttle-steamers
Were sped by a Hand above,
And the Hand, our Blessèd Redeemer's,
Was weaving a cable of love;
That the power over tempest and water,
The push on the piston-rod,
And the drive of the steam,
Howe'er it might seem,
Came straight from the fingers of God.

And yet as I gazed I was troubled,
I still saw the waters dance,
The love-strands were still being doubled
'Twixt me and the shores of France;
But what of the roar and the rattle,
The threatening of war's alarms,
That came from the ships of battle
Which lay in the harbour's arms?

Surely these were the weapons of evil,
And never the weapons of GOD;
*Their* steam the foul belch of the devil,
*His* push at the piston-rod,
Sharp shears in the service of Satan,
With limitless license to rove
In a measureless quest,
Plying east, plying west,
To cut all the cables of love.

But no! once again I was dreaming,
Once more had my judgment failed;
Of the substance I'd seen but the seeming,
Once again was the vision unveiled.
These Dreadnoughts were servants of science,
Not thieves, but High Heaven's police,
Their motto: 'Defence, not Defiance!'
No wolves, but the watch-dogs of peace.

G. S. LAYARD.

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# THE LAST HOLE.

By ISABEL MACDONALD, M.R.B.N.A., A.R.S.I., M.I.H.

'I'M growing old.' Sometimes this most disagreeable consciousness comes at twenty-five with the appearance of the first unwelcome gray hair or the detection of just the suspicion of a wrinkle; sometimes it comes at seventy with a twinge of rheumatism, or the discovery that the stair is one of the larger undertakings of life. Ever and anon the unpleasant consciousness recurs with an increasing and irritating insistency. Yet, after all, in mere additional years there is nothing to fear. It is being cut off from active life and the lessening power to enjoy and participate with others in the affairs of the world that we secretly dread. These make old age, to some of us, seem the very abandonment of hope. Yet, if they are faced with energy and good health, they become but phantoms that recede as quickly as the years advance, and there can be no denying the fact that the greatest engineering, political, and professional successes have been achieved by those actually past middle life.

Some time ago I was seated at a window in a Fifeshire golfing town engaged in trying to fortify my brain to meet the conundrums of the Royal Sanitary Institute's examiners in hygiene. A heavy Scotch mist hung over a stern, gray sea, and the whole atmosphere made one feel one's self but a dull item in a stale and uninteresting world. My attention was caught for a moment by a gentleman coming from the links with his golf-clubs on his shoulder. Evidently he had passed the allotted span, but he had all the appearance of a still keen and prosperous business man on holiday. His brisk buoyancy at once attracted my attention. Surely here was one who had found the happiness that all the world's a-seeking. Just as he passed my window he turned a triumphant, happy, old face to his companion, and I caught the words, 'I'm so glad I won that last hole!' At the time all my energies were absorbed in the effort to master the dry details of public health work. 'The last hole' seemed such an absurdly trivial thing to arouse such excessive self-congratulation and satisfaction. Yet now, when the incident is long past, reflection seems to single my old golfer out as an object lesson worthy long chapters on hygiene. The whole purpose of the volumes of literature on that subject which are poured into our libraries every day is to teach us how to ward off disease and how to preserve a youthful vigour, efficiency, and happiness. Here was the very incarnation of that object—seventy busy years behind him and still a young man in heart! How did he manage it? He had found for himself, somehow, the whole secret that the science of hygiene is struggling to evolve.

Let us gather up some of the food for thought that my old object lesson yields. The very first glance showed that the bright colour on the smooth cheek was the result neither of any modern methods of facial massage nor of cosmetics. At best these are but a snare and a delusion; the results do not hoodwink others any more than they deceive one's self; and, after all, what matters mere cutaneous old age if the body still retains a youthful vigour and the mind its old, keen alertness? What we want is the freshness given by perfect health, of which the most ingenious treatment can but provide a poor imitation.

Let us seek more deeply for the secret of the victor of the golf-course. Somehow he reminds us of the words of Scotland's greatest poet:

> The heart ay's the part ay
> That makes us right or wrong.

There is great wisdom underlying the words from a physical, just as much as from any moral, point of view. The poet, of course, uses the word heart conventionally, but, for the purpose of the moment, we may take the statement literally. The whole health and comfort of the body are dependent upon the heart and blood supply, and, unless the latter—that ever-active carrier—is bringing to the brain


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the unadulterated nourishment it requires, even mental work cannot be of a very high quality. Our very temperament, habit, and mental attitude are, all of them, dependent upon the condition of the blood and its circulation. Hence the need for a greater knowledge of what will keep in repair and good order that wonderful living machine, the human body, which responds so truly to every condition to which we subject it for good or for ill.

We might with profit give some attention to the mental habit of the worthy of the golf-links. Notice that he took his relaxation in a keenly interested and whole-hearted way, yet he could stop even when his enjoyment was at its height. His purposeful step seemed to tell one that he would enter into his next occupation with the same zest, whether that might chance to be his correspondence, his newspaper, or maybe—his lunch. We have no indication of what might be his theories on diet. Very likely he scarcely knew that he had any; but we may take it that, just as he could leave his game at the right time, so also would he leave his dinner-table when he should.

Among the less energetic type there is still something of a tendency towards overeating. In the days of our grandfathers the hospitality of a host was gauged by the number of guests who were under the table at the end of the feast. Nowadays, if the red wine does not flow quite so freely as of yore, we have with us still those self-constituted martyrs who manfully test to the utmost limit of digestive tolerance the resources of their friends in procuring what are, sometimes with a very doubtful wisdom, spoken of as 'the good things of life.' It has been said that many of us dig our graves with our teeth, and there is undoubted truth in the statement. The hardening produced in the arteries by overeating is one of the commonest diseases of those who are getting old in years. Such an arterial condition affects comfort and happiness to a wonderful degree. The efficiency of the brain is interfered with; the heart, muscles, and all organs of the body suffer. Energy and adaptability for work, with all our pleasure in it, are more or less lost. Arterial hardening produced by overfeeding is a common cause of apoplexy and many other disturbances. Much might be done by moderate and sensible dieting to keep old age at bay, and many people condemn themselves to a course of slow poisoning through continued indiscretions in this respect.

To quote the spirit, if not the letter, of St Paul, the best advice that can be given with regard to the preservation of health is, 'Be moderate in all things.' Exercise, for instance, is all very well, but when it is long continued it produces materials more or less poisonous in their action on the body.

Another important observation which we make with regard to the mental attitude of the lad of seventy is that his mind dwells on the bright side of things and forgets all regrets and disappointments. He was '*so* glad that he won that last hole.' Apparently he had lost at least eight, and, it may have been, the whole of the previous seventeen. In his cheery optimism he is not unlike a certain dear old lady who had only two teeth left and was so thankful that they were opposite.

Smile, if you will, at the foibles of the kindly optimist, but there is not a doubt that he possesses one of the best means of postponing old age. Scarcely anything can hurry its approach more than a habit of brooding on the slights and misfortunes that are, more or less, the lot of every one of us in our journeying through life. A mental habit of bidding dull care begone has a wonderful effect in retaining a young head on a pair of old shoulders. Even at threescore years and ten there is nothing to be gained by living for a day that is dead while yet one remains of life. The dreary 'what might have been,' faced among the shadows of remorse and regret and allowed to absorb our mental activities, has a most degenerative effect on the brain. Let us meet life and its actualities with something of the unconcern of the worthy lady with, or rather without, the teeth, realising that a habit of meeting trouble half-way means meeting old age half-way as well.

Some of us have known a sweet girl of eighty who, sitting or walking, holds herself erect, whose eyes are ever bright and interested, who is fastidious as 'sweet seventeen' in regard to her dress, and who has an old-world beauty all her own, which the artist loves to delineate. She has a keen sense of humour still, and you are sure of enjoyment when you visit her. She never broods on the perplexities and disappointments of life; these are systematically banished from her horizon. Young in heart, she prefers the society of the young to that of the middle-aged and old. The bore, as well as any unsavoury or uncharitable topic, is promptly waved aside. Bright, young, and happy at eighty, she is, in her own way, an object lesson as fascinating as the buoyant old victor at his last hole.

This is all very well, you may argue, but is their optimism not, after all, merely a matter of individuality? A man or a woman, you say, has not the power to choose a temperament, phlegmatic or sanguine, as the case may be. The answer must be both yes and no. Most assuredly we all possess traits inherited from the habits of our particular ancestors—tendencies inclining us to indolence, self-indulgence, worrying, brooding, or, it may be, hatred. All these have their part in making us 'old at forty.' Doubtless, too, instincts of a beneficent kind are derived from the men of an olden time who to some extent are living again in us; but, nevertheless, we are all more or less the architects of our own character, and, in carving this, my two old object lessons shed a certain glimmer of light. If we follow in the track of their cheery

optimism, rather than in the current of nervous rivalry that characterises the age, we, like them, may find something of the secret of perpetual youth, and cause a coming generation to reap in the future a great harvest from our honest endeavour.

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# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER XXV.—HOW THE GREAT GAME WAS PLAYED.

THIS first visit to Ealing after the cataclysm was admixed sweet and bitter to him. But he said to himself that each time he came he would find it easier to get back to the old footing, not perhaps as yet realising to the full the deadliness of the self-inflicted blow from which he suffered and must suffer.

At the bank matters rolled on smoothly and without a hitch, thanks to his and John Sax's infinite care and minute and ceaseless watchfulness of every slightest detail. If carefulness and caution could carry them through, of a surety there would be left no loophole for disaster.

But it was a wearing fight, and many a time Charles Lauriston came up from it inwardly bruised and blackened, his whole truer nature wrung with anguished repulsion at the necessities of the case, and bitterly regretful that he had not let everything go and kept only his honour.

And yet thereupon at once would come the thought, 'And if you had, how would it be now with all those who have trusted your house?' and he would set his teeth and tighten his heart, and with a quiet face straighten himself under his burdens again.

His assiduity and keen concentration won him golden opinions in business circles. Personally he had always been much liked for his genial bearing and frank courtesy. The slight stiffening he now underwent was looked upon as the natural consequence of his loftier position and weightier cares and duties, and none found fault with it. John Sax attended him, as he had attended Sir George, and all the threads and fibres and far-reaching tendrils of the house's great operations were tended and controlled by them with the most perfect unanimity of purpose and understanding.

Nothing was ever left to chance, so far as it could possibly be foreseen, and the great and ever-increasing operations of the house rolled on, smooth and deep, like a mighty river beneath whose placid flow may lie unsounded depths of mud or gold, and tragedies of broken hopes, and dead men's bones.

The house worked through a vast army of instruments and sub-instruments, many of whom had no knowledge of whom they were in reality working for or whither their operations tended. They bought or sold according to their instructions, and very frequently against their own short-sighted ideas; but they were only pawns in the mighty game, and the heads that decided the moves were those of John Sax and Charles Lauriston in the private room at the bank.

It was a mighty game of skill and far-reaching forethought, from which the element of chance was eliminated so far as knowledge and prevision could oust it. But, since its calculations were necessarily based on human affairs, Chance must still have her finger in the pie.

Charles Lauriston threw himself into it all with whole-hearted zeal, with the work-hunger and tireless energy of the captive who discovers a loose stone in his prison wall, and forthwith savours the freedom that lies at the end of the tunnel yet to be made. He had implicit confidence in John Sax, the confidence John Sax instilled in all who knew him.

And Charles Lauriston found the mighty game enthralling. Even the great game of war, as he had experienced it, was a tame thing in comparison. But when he staked his life his honour was clean. And now! He was prisoner to dishonour, tunnelling to light and freedom with all the powers that were in him. His tools were of base metal indeed, and not to his liking, but he was in chains and had no choice; he must use them or give up the struggle. And that he never dreamed of doing, for he had utmost faith in John Sax, and John Sax had said that redemption was possible.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.—HOW THE SHADOW FELL ON LADY CHARLES.

AUNT CHARLOTTE and the Marquis de Montessonne were quietly married three months after Sir George's death, and took up their residence with Sir Charles at the great house in Grosvenor Place. It was the most natural and convenient arrangement possible. The house was large enough to accommodate half-a-dozen families. Monsieur and Madame de Montessonne looked hopefully forward to returning to France the moment Bonaparte should make that inevitable false step which would roll him in the dust. And it suited them well not to have to set up a temporary establishment of their own. Then, too, it assured to Sir Charles the comforts of home and such society as he might desire while Lady Lauriston remained in the country. He had his own rooms; monsieur and madame had theirs. They met at dinner, and sometimes spent the evenings together, but all were free to come or go as they chose.

The ten thousand pounds promised by Sir George towards the National War Fund had been promptly paid, not without an internal wince on Charles's part at the irony of the whole proceeding. But it had so undoubtedly set the pace which resulted in a six-figure subscription that Mr Pitt, as an earnest of his gratitude, sent Charles the offer of a peerage, a visible mark of honour which his innate honesty would not permit him to accept.

'Time enough for such things when the devil is laid and the world itself again,' he said to the hard-worked young Chancellor.

And Mr Pitt thought he referred to *his* special devil, Bonaparte, and liked him the better for it. But 'devil' is a wide and comprehensive term, and most men have their own special foes for the bringing out of their fighting-powers, and we know what Charles Lauriston's were, and what he meant.

After the bitter stress of the first few months Sir Charles grew more like his former self again, though less given to the light-hearted enjoyment of life, and of a graver mien, as became the head of the house of Lauriston. To the children he was, with differences which tended to the curtailment of their former full enjoyment of him, very much as he used to be. To his wife he was all that was loving and tender and considerate.

Each week, when they met again after the few days' absence, his eyes sought her face eagerly for additional signs of returning health; and hers sought his no less anxiously for signs of additional burdens.

But he made it a custom now, whatever the weather or the state of the roads, to take a circuit for the benefit of the ride and the shaking off *en route* of some of the anxieties of life, and he generally came in upon them with the glow of the road in his face and in fairly equable spirits.

One time he came in very late, and Lady Charles's anxiety had deepened into such gloomy forebodings that she hardly slept a wink that night, and was the worse for it. And when he did come he was soaked to the skin by a sudden thunderstorm which he would have escaped if he had arrived earlier; but he was in unusually good spirits, though his clothes were steaming on him, and he had a bullet-hole in his hat and two strange pistols in his pocket.

He told them all about it over the dinner-table, and was more like his own old self than they had known him since Sir George's death. He had come by the Edgeware Road and Harrow weald again, and just after leaving the main road had been suddenly confronted by a highwayman.

'Such a specimen!' he recounted with enjoyment. 'I saw at a glance that he was but an amateur, so I just went straight for him with my hunting-crop. I always thought it might come in handy on some such occasion. His pistol went off in his fright, and then I knocked it out of his hand and him off his horse, and stood over him. He was very much upset at such a turning of the tables. I plucked the bit of crape off his face, and it was not at all a bad face; and I let him get up, and made him tell me all about it as we stood under a tree for shelter. He was a young Irishman, in the horse-dealing line, he said; and, wanting to get home to Ireland, and being without money, he took to the road to get it. This was his very first attempt, and he acknowledged he had made a mess of it. "Sure'n I was meant for an honest man, yer anner!" he said. "An' 'twas only the ill-luck druv me to it. If yer anner'll let me go this time I swear I'll play the game no more. An' I'll pray that when yer anner's own tight time comes ye'll get off as aisy as yer anner'll let me off this."'

'And what did you do, daddie?' asked Mavie, all eyes and ears.

'I made him give me his other pistol, and told him to go, and be thankful; and I don't know when I saw a more grateful face. And when he'd got on his horse, and had told his thanks as an Englishman couldn't tell them if he tried for fifty years, and was turning to go, I called him back and gave him ten guineas to help him on his way.'

'I'm so glad!' said Mavie all a-sparkle. 'What did he say?'

'He looked at me for a minute as if he were not sure I meant it. Then he put his hands over his face and blubbered like a schoolboy.'

'Girl!' corrected Charles promptly.

'And I rode away and left him.'

'That was brickish,' commented Charlie with gusto.

'I hope he won't set on any one else,' said his mother.

'He won't,' said Sir Charles with conviction. 'He'll get across home, and I don't believe he'll be any the worse for it—maybe the better. And he might have gone to the gallows!' he added musingly.

'I'd sooner think of him galloping away to Ireland,' said Mavie. And upon that they were all of one mind, except Jerry MacClootie, who strenuously held, when informed of the matter, that the master ought to have blown the scoundrel's brains out with his own 'pishtols.'

But this little matter had results, as the smallest matters in life have; and the first of these was that the master caught a feverish chill from his soaking, and slept ill that night.

During his wife's illness, and ever since, he had occupied the room adjoining hers, with the door between them open, so that in case of need he could be at her side in a moment.

The morning after his encounter with the highwayman there was that in her eyes that had never been there before. She did her best to hide it, but he caught a glimpse of it, and rallied her again on her last night's fears for him.

'What has been may be,' she said quietly. 'I shall always have a little fear for you now, Charles.'

'Oh, but you need not, my dear,' he said quickly. 'The gentlemen of the road want only a man's money, not his life. My Irish friend's pistol went off quite by accident. If ever I am confronted by

superior force I promise you to knuckle under at once, and run no risks.'

But she shook her head. 'You would ride straight at them as you did at this man, and the end might not be so happy. I know you too well. If there is danger to be faced, you will face it.'

'It would be against the grain not to, but for your sakes I will promise to lie down like a lamb if the danger is obvious.'

'I pray God to deliver you,' she said quietly but with more feeling than the circumstances seemed to call for.

He remembered it long afterwards.

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### CHAPTER XXVII.—HOW THEY FOUGHT AT WESTMINSTER, AND MAVIE PRICKED HER FINGERS.

THE three boys were back at work, not at Mr Wrather's, but at Westminster School in Dean's Yard—Charlie, as a matter of course; Etienne, because his grandfather, being now a man of means once more, was determined that he should lack nothing in the way of preparation for the position he would some time be called upon to occupy; and John Sax, because the Lauristons never forgot, and Sir Charles had undertaken the matter himself.

Mavie, to her great disgust, was entered as daily bond-slave to the polite accomplishments at the establishment of the Misses Blenkinsop, in the old red-brick house facing on to Ealing Green, not far from Mr Perceval's.

The boys, especially Etienne, found the change from the comparative backwater of the Reverend Mr Wrather's to the turbulent ocean of Westminster no small ordeal.

Fagging in those days was no child's-play. The boys of the lower school were up at six in summer and seven in winter, drawing water from the pump in Dean's Yard, lighting their tyrants' fires, preparing their breakfasts, brushing their boots and clothes, cleaning their dishes and cooking utensils, and were kept from any stiffening of the joints through the day fagging at fives or cricket, and running errands in bounds and out.

At all such menial duties Etienne's aristocratic soul was in a state of furious and unceasing revolt.

'But, *mon dieu*, I am not a servant!' was the constant burden of his short-cut expostulation.

'Oh, you ain't—ain't you? I'll soon show you, my son. Take that—and that—and that! And don't you mong-jew me or I'll knock your silly head right off, you beastly little Parlyvoo. Call that a polish? Now!' dancing on the row of boots which Etienne's unfamiliarity with the business had tendered as cleaned. 'You do 'em all over again, and shine 'em so that you can see your ugly little mug in 'em, or you'll go on doing 'em till you can!'

To a De Montessonne, even after lean years of exile in Queen Street, treatment such as this was torture absolutely inexpressible. But there was no escape. It was the custom of the school, and had to be lived through as philosophically as might be.

Charlie and John Sax scuffled through their dirty work with such equanimity as they could muster from the thought that their own time would come, and managed to extract such meagre enjoyment from life as was permissible to a lower-school boy in those days.

But Etienne lived in an atmosphere of constant disgrace and perpetual lickings, and, with the exception of Charlie and John Sax, it is safe to say that he heartily hated and despised every single boy in the school. His own special tyrant was Lord Iver, who later on, as Earl of Ruislip, became a mighty warrior and one of the finest cavalry leaders of his day. Even as a boy his ideas of discipline were of the strictest—that is, when he himself was the disciplinarian—and his desire for spick-and-spanness stuck to him through life. Etienne never forgot or forgave him, though the treatment he received differed in no respect from that meted out to the rest. It was the same among his fellows of the lower school. Points of contact there were in plenty, but no assimilation. He regarded them as brutal young ruffians. They looked on him as only half a boy, and a Frenchman at that. Down at Ealing one Saturday, as they stood on the terrace overlooking the paddock, he wildly petitioned his grandfather to remove him from the place, which he succinctly described as 'frightful hell.' But the marquis knew the kind of men turned out by such 'hells,' and estimated them more highly than the Jesuit-manufactured article of his own country.

'It will do you a world of good, my boy,' said the old gentleman, as he took a very elegant pinch of snuff from a new box, in the lid of which was a miniature of King Louis XVI. ringed with rose diamonds; and he looked over the snuff and the box at Etienne as if he were a new and not too pleasing specimen of an inferior race—'a world of good!'

'But you do not understand, then, monsieur,' asserted the surprised Etienne, who had looked at least for sympathy. 'I black boots! I clean grates and gridirons! I brush dirty clothes! I cook messes—I, Etienne de Montessonne!'

'I am sorry—for him for whom you are supposed to do these things,' said the marquis quietly. 'He must suffer horribly.'

'He!' cried—almost screamed—the surprised Etienne. 'It is I who suffer! He beats me!'

'I shall send him a guinea, with my compliments, and beg him to continue. You must learn to suffer in silence, my boy. All these things that trouble you so I have done, and, *mon dieu!* he for whom I did them suffered too.'

'Did he lick you?' asked Etienne, interested out of himself for the moment.

'The world had already licked me. It is better to bear the yoke in one's youth. So one may become a man. Otherwise one is like to be but a coxcomb.'

'All the same,' grumbled the small boy, with a scowl on his peaky face, 'it is not too pleasant.'

'How do these others get on?' with a jerk of Louis XVI. towards Charlie Lauriston and John Sax, the latter of whom had just come ungracefully over the head of a wild black colt amid the derisive laughter of Charles and Mavie.

'They hate it too.'

'But they never say so, and they are wise. Now, no more! Set your teeth, my boy, and bear it, and it will make a man of you.—Stick to him, John Sax! Grip with your knees! A guinea if you ride him round the field!'

'And me!' 'And me!' 'And me!' from Charles and Mavie and Etienne eagerly.

'Yes, a guinea to each one who rides him round the field. But—you, mademoiselle? You can't ride him barebacked?'

'Can't, I then? Just you wait and see, monsieur!—Come on, John Sax. Either get him along or get down and let us have our turns.'

'I don't know what he's going to do,' said John Sax, precariously up aloft, while the black colt planted his forefeet like rocks, and dug down his head, and showed the wicked whites of his youthful eyes, and refused to budge an inch.

'I'll start him for you;' and Charles brought his switch down on the black one's quarters, and dodged out of the way of his heels as John Sax landed on the grass in front again.

'My turn!' cried Mavie. 'John Sax, you're the funniest funny I ever did see when you come waterfalling over his head like that. That's three times you've done it already.'

'He's so slippy,' said John Sax, disgusted at his own performance.

'Give me a hand, John Sax;' and he cupped his hands for the little toe, and she scrambled up, flung her right leg over the other panting black side, dug in her heels, and hanging on to the halter like grim death, rode the black one round the field in style, while the marquis and the boys applauded vigorously, and John Sax felt very small indeed.

Charlie and Etienne won their guineas also, and pocketed them appreciatively.

'I'm going to try again,' said John Sax, laying hold of the halter as Charlie jumped down.

'You'll only tumble off again, John Sax,' shrilled Mavie, dancing at the prospect.

'If you can stick on I ought to be able to;' and he flung himself at the slippery black back and wriggled over into his seat.—'Don't you whack him, Charlie. Leave him to me.'

But the black one knew the unaccustomed rider at the touch, and started his tricks at once. He bucked and danced, down head, up heels, while little Jack up aloft swung impotently like a half-full sack, and presently came to grass in the usual graceful curve, and Mavie stopped her dance of delight to bend double with shrieks of laughter.

'Oh, John Sax, you'll be the death of me! Why *can't* you stick on? Oh, *don't* try again! It's not a bit of use, you know.'

But John Sax was already scrambling up again; and the marquis, watching him quietly over a suspended pinch, nodded his head to himself, and said, 'That's the kind of boy their fagging schools turn out. They never know when they're beaten.'

And that time little Jack hung on, and the black one could not get him off with all his tricks and hardest trying, and when he came to the marquis to claim his guinea the marquis gave him two.

If their days at school had their elements of bitterness, those blessed days when they 'went home' were full of compensation, and took on keener edge of delight from the duller times between. And the very best days of all were those they spent at the red house on Castle Bear Hill at Ealing.

Charlie came off best at school without a doubt. There was something so taking about his cheerful face and frank, hearty ways that he made friends everywhere and at once. Even his special tyrant was on as good terms with him as an upper-school boy might reasonably be with a lower, and he was so quick at learning that even his masters eyed him with approval.

John Sax—Jack Sax—Jassax—Jackass—it was inevitable, but not unalterable, and many a bloody battle little Jack fought before he succeeded in establishing himself as Jassack, and the clear understanding that any lapse into the less polite pseudonym meant instant warfare. But they liked him none the less for it, and out of his battles many a warm friendship grew and lived.

But custom failed to inure Etienne to the drudgery and—as he esteemed it—the degradation of fagging. He never ceased to kick vigorously against the pricks of usage, and, when it came to a struggle, against the shins of his many tormentors; and both these indulgences were condemned as un-English and necessitating continuous chastisement.

Jack and Charlie did all they could for him. They reasoned with him, fought for him on occasion when the provocation seemed to them to justify it, threatened him, and licked him more than once on their own account in the endeavour to drive sense into his head. But it was all labour in vain, and at last they had to leave him to his cheerless lot.

'What *can* you do for a fellow who can't use his fists and will use his feet?' asked Jack of Mavie one day down at Ealing.

'Punch his head,' said Mavie cordially.

'We've done that over and over again, and it don't do any good. *I* don't know what's to be done with him.'

'I should leave him alone, and let the others knock it out of him.'

'I s'pose we'll have to. But it's miserable seeing

him always catching it; though, to be sure, he generally deserves it.'

So they gave him up in despair, and Etienne had ill times of it.

In his classes he took fairly good positions, and in French he was of course always top, whereby he won much contumely from his fellows. Indeed, his unavoidable proficiency in his own tongue was a standing reproach and a quite sufficient reason for a punching when no other obtruded itself past bearing-point.

Little Jack was never a brilliant scholar. He never took much of a position in any of his classes except in French, and that, of course, came of his many years' close intercourse with Monsieur de Montessonne and Etienne, and he could not help it.

But he slogged at his tasks as he slogged at the fellows he fought, and was as surprised to find them turn into friends when he had downed them as he was in the case of the more human foes whose onslaughts were so much more to his liking.

But what John Sax learned he learned once for all. There was no 'in at one ear and out at the other' with him. And, still better, he learned how to use his brain, and so got his sturdy feet on to the great high-road of knowledge and understanding.

And Mavie, meanwhile, was fighting her own little battles on the very much smaller and much more polite plane of the Misses Blenkinsop's academy in the square, red house near Mr Perceval's on Ealing Green.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE BODY'S GROWTH.

## SOME INTERESTING PHASES.

IN one of his ironical moments Hazlitt has written, 'If you do not know the muscles by the help of which you walk, how is it you do not fall down at every step you take?' The paragraph in which this sentence occurs was written by Hazlitt to emphasise the importance of intuition as contrasted with reason in the general conduct of life. But there can be little doubt that a scoffing sentence of a similar sort might be written to indicate the attitude of mind that most people adopt towards what is supposed to be peculiarly scientific information. It is indeed remarkable how very reluctantly scientific knowledge is adopted as a factor in their mental development by those whose education does not terminate abruptly when they leave school. The changes that have been introduced into our methods of education, as a consequence of more enlightened ideas regarding the art of teaching, have not been altogether free from mistake; and even the present generation stands under the reproach of Herbert Spencer, who declared that 'men who would blush if caught saying Iphige'nia instead of Iphigeni'a, or would resent as an insult any imputation of ignorance respecting the fabled labours of a fabled demigod, show not the slightest shame in confessing that they do not know where the Eustachian tubes are, what are the actions of the spinal cord, what is the normal rate of pulsation, or how the lungs are inflated.' But probably the diffidence with which a layman approaches a subject of a scientific nature is a result of that strange and formidable vocabulary that necessarily grows around any specialisation of knowledge; and had these notes been entitled 'An Outline of Postembryonic Ontogeny' I question if any editor of a general magazine would have deigned to consider even the first of my sentences.

I have chosen the simple title above, not as a subterfuge to lure the editor, but as an indication of the manner in which I propose to relate a few of the changes that take place in the human body in the course of its growth towards maturity. Certain of these changes are of great interest to the general reader, and it is my aim here to give a short account of them in ordinary language.

Many readers of this article will be able to recall to mind that masterpiece of ancient statuary, the Group of the Laocoön, where a father with his two sons is crushed to death in the folds of two gigantic serpents. To judge from the difference in height between the father and his sons, the figures of the latter are meant to depict mere boys. Yet there is nothing boyish about the figures. They are only diminutive men, and one receives the impression that the master who gave this wonderful group of statuary to the world was in the habit of thinking of children as men in miniature. But even those who realise that a man or a woman is not merely an enlarged child seldom appreciate fully the extent to which the growth of the body is a process of metamorphosis. In respect of at least one organ, the mature individual has lost something of the physical endowment with which he entered the world. When a child is born its little chest contains a bulky organ of which grown men and women can show but the merest trace. It is the thymus gland; it lies just over the heart, and is a double-lobed body of a pinkish colour. In a baby this gland is generally large enough to extend from the heart up to the neck. When the baby has completed its second year the gland begins to diminish in size, and continues to shrink gradually but slowly. During childhood the thymus remains a gland of some size, but it meets with misfortune about the age of thirteen or fourteen. At that age it begins a rapid career of degeneration; and, although it does not disappear entirely, it is represented in an adult by an insignificant remnant.

The thymus gland is an instance of *absolute*

diminution in the bulk of an organ with the passing of the years. But during the body's evolution towards maturity instances occur of *relative* diminution in size, and of that phenomenon the liver is perhaps the most interesting example. The liver of a full-grown person generally weighs about three pounds, and as a rule an adult weighs about forty times the weight of his liver. But the liver of a newly born baby is *relatively* a bulkier organ. So large is the liver of an infant compared with its tiny body that one may safely say its whole body-weight is seldom more than twenty times that of its liver. This disproportion is still more remarkable when we bear in mind that a baby is normally fatter than a man. A baby is, in fact, a very corpulent person; and if we remained as obese throughout our lives as most of us were when we set out on our careers we should indeed have fat men about us, if not 'such as sleep o' nights.' The plumpness of a baby is not without meaning. It recalls the far-away epoch in the history of our race when the vicissitudes of early life were even greater than they are to-day, and only that sort of baby that came into the world with a good reserve of fat would be proof against the troubles that beset the first years of life. Where babies are born into a community that rejoices in a profuse supply of patent foods an abundance of fat is not of such paramount importance; but from an æsthetic point of view the chubby baby will continue to command our admiration.

In any case, it is certain that our ideas regarding the correct proportions of the human body will always place upon our babies the duty of hastening to increase the length of their legs. It is known to the privileged who have beheld a newly born child *en déshabillé* that the little legs are very short in proportion to the length of the trunk; but probably the very observant are the only ones who know that a baby's legs measure but one quarter of its length, whereas a man that has grown to maturity owes one-half of his height to the length of his legs. But, even in the interval that elapses between birth and the first attempts to walk, a baby will reduce this disproportion to a very considerable extent. Indeed, a rapid growth of the lower limbs is a feature of early life; and a child of three is already half as tall as it is ever likely to be.

During the years of childhood boys and girls increase their height at the rate of two inches each year; but this rate of increase is subject to variations according to the season of the year and to many other conditions. The greatest variation of this rate of increase occurs at fixed and definite periods for each sex. In the case of girls the eleventh year is generally a year of sprouting, and a little more than two inches is usually added to the height. This annual rate of increase may be continued until the fourteenth year, and from that year to the seventeenth the annual increase is comparatively little. It is very seldom that a girl adds anything to her height after the seventeenth year. With boys the sprouting period is generally postponed until the fourteenth year, and it lasts with them until the seventeenth year. During these three years two and a half inches are often added to the height each year, but after the seventeenth year the annual increase is seldom more than a quarter of an inch. The twentieth year or the twenty-first is, as a rule, the last of the years in which youths may add to their height. Although the 'dates' of these changes are remarkably universal, these measurements, and also the ages that have just been mentioned, are of course subject to slight variations in different individuals; and this remark will apply to any 'dates' that may be mentioned in the following paragraphs.

In the remarkable growth of a child's lower limbs the thigh is the segment that grows most rapidly, but in the case of the upper limbs it is the forearm that is most active in growth. From an æsthetic point of view this needs must be so; for the hand of a newly born baby is generally a little longer than its forearm. But then babies' feet and hands are always disproportionately large. If a man's feet were as long as the upper part of his arm we should count him a man of very large feet. Yet careful measurement reveals the fact that the feet of most newly born babies are just about as long as their upper arms. If a mature man wishes to realise the changes that have taken place in his proportions since babyhood, he may contemplate his shapely figure, and safely say that his legs are five times as long as they were to start with, but his hands are only three times the length of his baby-hands.

All increase in the bony framework is brought about by a process that is somewhat involved. The process is one in which bone gradually takes the place of gristle, and this conversion of gristle into bone goes on very generally throughout the skeleton. But an exception exists in the case of the bones that form the skull and most of the bones of the face. The skull-bones and many of the face-bones are not formed from gristle but from fibrous membranes. So it comes about that when a baby is born its cranium is not formed entirely of bone. There are six distinct islands of membrane on the head of a newly born child, and it is only in the second year of life that bone replaces these areas of membrane. The largest boneless area can be felt on the top of any tiny head that is less than a year or eighteen months old; and frequently a line can be felt running straight down the forehead where the two portions of bone have not yet fused into one; a line that is sometimes palpable throughout the whole of life.

There are few structures in which the adult differs from the infant more than in the skull. It is obvious to everybody that the skull of a baby is exceedingly large in proportion to the size of its face. But the differences between the immature skull and the skull of a fully grown man are far too numerous and too intricate to deal with here in detail.

It is, however, worth while to mention one or two characteristic differences between the skull of an adult and that of a child. One sometimes speaks of the forehead and the brow as though the words were synonymous. General usage knows no difference between the forehead and the brow. But probably the English word brow was originally applied only to the prominent ridge over the eyes. The Miltonic Satan, who 'with contemptuous brow' addresses the Angel Gabriel, makes us think, not of a wrinkled forehead, but of the elevated eyebrows that produce a look of contempt. At least, to the anatomist, there is a difference between that part of the skull which lies just over the eyes and the rest of the forehead. In many well-developed men it can be observed that the part of the forehead immediately over the eyes is characterised by a distinct slope for about half an inch. This obliquity is caused by the formation of air-cavities in the bone. These cavities are less developed in women than in men, and the absence of this slope gives the foreheads of women a 'nobler' aspect than those of men. But we are not born with these cavities in our skulls. A child does not show them until it has entered its second year, and during childhood they develop but slowly. About the fifteenth year they increase more rapidly, and they continue to enlarge for many years, so that in advanced life they are sometimes of considerable size. Air-cavities are formed also in a bony prolongation of that hard lump which everybody may feel behind the ear. This bony prolongation is taking shape about the fifth year of life, and the air-cavities make their appearance in it during the eventful fifteenth year.

Alterations in the skull naturally suggest questions regarding the growth of the brain. The period of life in which the brain adds most to its weight is between birth and seven years of age. From seven to fifteen the brain still adds to its weight, but at a slower rate than during the previous period. From this period of life the brain increases its weight but slowly. Still, in most cases the brain does not attain its maximum weight until the age of forty. After forty the brain loses about one ounce of its weight in the course of every ten years; but this loss of weight is not directly associated with any loss of intellectual strength.

The careful reader must have observed how frequently it has been necessary to mention the period of life about the fifteenth year in connection with changes in the body. These profound changes are heralding the approach of that period when parentage becomes a possibility. It is as though the body, hitherto concerned in knitting itself more firmly together, were beginning to realise that such a thing as parentage exists, and that it is an affair of some importance, requiring considerable preparation. Only those who are accustomed to think of the human body from a biological point of view can fully realise the amount of preparation it makes for the gallant time of courtship. The first inclination to go a-wooing generally asserts itself, more or less modestly, about the age of sixteen. When referring to the effect which this event has upon the growth of the body, the German biologist Haeckel writes in these terms: 'It is one of the chief mechanical causes of the highest development of life, and throughout the whole of nature the greatest effects proceed from this very small cause.' This period in the life of the developing organism is characterised by changes of great interest; but, with the reproving countenance of the editor ever present to one's mind, one dare not occupy more space than will be required to explain the 'breaking' of a boy's voice about his fourteenth year. The voice, as everybody knows, is produced by vibrations of the vocal cords. The cords extend from before, backwards, inside the larynx. The larynx or voice-box is composed of several pieces of gristle connected by small muscles. The two largest pieces of gristle can be seen in adult men projecting from the throat as Adam's apple. It would prolong this article unduly were I to enter in detail into all the changes that take place in the growing larynx while the voice is developing from the high-pitched squeak of the infant to the sweet tones of a woman's voice, or the deep, loud voice of a man. I am at present concerned only with the change from the 'childish treble' to the 'big, manly voice;' and it will suffice if I remind the reader that the pitch of the voice depends upon the length of the vocal cords (the longer the cords are, the lower is the pitch), and that the length of the cords depends upon the distance between the back and front of the larynx. It can, then, be easily understood that the pitch of the voice ultimately depends on the growth of the pieces of gristle forming the larynx. Now, the growth of these pieces of gristle is not uniform throughout life. Between the seventh and the fourteenth year the larynx grows but very little. About the fourteenth year the pieces of gristle suddenly throw off their torpor and begin to grow with astonishing rapidity. So rapid is the growth of a boy's larynx at this period that the unfortunate youth is taken quite unaware. Suddenly he finds himself endowed with vocal cords of a length to which he is quite unaccustomed. The nerves and muscles that move the pieces of gristle have not yet come to realise what is expected of them under the new conditions, and for a while the youth is not quite certain, at any given moment, whether the sound he is about to bring forth from his larynx will be high or low pitched. Meantime the larynx continues its growth, and by the time it has become a prominent feature of his anatomy he has learned the trick of this new instrument and begins to speak with a deep and confident voice.

It is interesting to consider why this great and sudden increase in the growth of the larynx should affect one sex only. To find an answer to this question we must look back to the rude beginnings

of human life, to the lawless wilderness where our half-human ancestors passed their lives. We must picture to ourselves the fierce and ruthless encounters with aggressive enemies that were frequent experiences of the primitive lover and primitive father. In such encounters it would be he who possessed a deep, strong voice to express his jealousy and rage who would best succeed in driving off the intruder and protecting his offspring. Thus his offspring would live to perpetuate the deep voice, and by continued inheritance fix it as a male characteristic.

There is, perhaps, no change taking place in the body during its development more reminiscent of our racial history than the phenomenon of 'teething;' but here one may give only the briefest sketch of this process. When a baby is born there are, of course, no teeth in the mouth; but they are lying beneath the gums, embedded in the jaw. Some six or seven months later they will begin to appear in the mouth. The first to appear are the central teeth of the lower jaw. A few months elapse before the central teeth of the upper jaw appear. Then there is a rest of a few months, and more teeth appear in the lower jaw, including the first molar-teeth. This process of alternate eruption of teeth and resting goes on for eighteen months, so that a child of two has a complete set of milk-teeth—ten above and ten below. This set of teeth serves the child for four years. At six or seven years of age a new tooth gradually makes its appearance behind the set of milk-teeth. This new tooth is the first of the permanent set. The milk-teeth now begin to drop out one by one as the months and years pass on, and when one sees a little boy or girl with a toothless space in the front of the mouth one may guess that the child is about six years old. The permanent teeth are constantly making their appearance in the mouth at intervals during the period between the sixth year and the twelfth year. By the thirteenth year the permanent set of teeth is practically complete; for amongst civilised races the wisdom-teeth hardly serve as teeth, however useful they may be to the negro. The wisdom-teeth may appear any time after the seventeenth year. Their advent may be postponed until the thirtieth or fortieth year, and sometimes they do not appear at all.

It must be clearly understood that I have been endeavouring to give merely an indication of the changes that take place in the body during its development. In the course of writing this article I have seen many opportunities for moralising on physical and mental education; but, remembering the space at my disposal and the scope of the matter in hand, I have refrained from any such references. The purpose of my article is served if I have helped my readers to realise that a child becomes a man or a woman by metamorphosis as well as by increase of bulk.

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# THE MAJOR'S CLOCK.

## CHAPTER III.

'I WENT through all the disastrous, yet glorious, campaign of 1814; ay, and on the same good horse that saved my life at the Elster. I had risen to be the senior captain of the regiment, but on the restoration of the Bourbons I was placed *en retraite* with the brevet rank of major and a pension of sixty francs a month. I had no money. I was even obliged to sell my horse to a comrade, but I only did this on condition that, if ever I could afford to do so, I was to have him back. However, the case that Moyart had given me contained a splendid pearl necklace; for that at any rate I knew I should get a good amount. Whether his widow would give me back my clock was very problematical, and I did not reckon upon it; so it was not surprising that it was with a very heavy heart I wished my comrades adieu and set off for Paris. Never had the outlook appeared darker than when I got down from the diligence in the Place des Victoires and made my way to my mother's humble abode in the Rue de Rennes. But for her, I would, as many of my comrades had done, have gone off to seek my fortune in America.

'"No; madame your mother is out, sir," said the concierge effusively when I arrived. "I am sorry indeed to lose her; madame gave no trouble. She is looking for a grand house, but she will be back soon."

'I thought the worthy woman was off her head, or had had white wine; but she afterwards informed me that some rich relative of my mother had died, and that the notaries had been coming and going for the last three days; and I went upstairs to await my mother's arrival, hardly knowing whether I was on my head or my feet, and sat down like one in a dream. At one stroke all the black clouds had vanished, and I saw all the world *en couleur de rose*. Strange as it may seem, after my mother, it was my horse I thought of first. Yes, *pauvre bête*, great ugly half cart-horse as he was, I would have him back, and he should be in clover for the rest of his days. Whether I got my clock back, apart from sentiment, did not so much matter to me now, but I certainly meant to try. Suddenly I heard a light footstep on the stairs, and in a moment my mother's arms were round my neck.

'"Yes, François, it's all true," she cried after our first embraces. "I wrote to you three days ago. I sent a special messenger with the letter, but I foolishly gave him a louis, and he must

have got drunk on the road. But never mind; it is all right now."

'And she went on to tell me how she had inherited seven hundred and fifty thousand francs from a cousin who, after being nearly ruined by the Revolution, went out to the East Indies and made his fortune there.

'"Well, at any rate," I said cheerfully, "we shall now be able to keep something I have got here. Now shut your eyes and go to the glass."

'Taking the pearls from their bullet-dented case, I placed them round her neck.

'"No, no," she cried with a laugh when she saw them. "These are not for one of my age; they must be for your fiancée."

'The next morning my kind-hearted mother insisted that I should go at once to see Madame Moyart.

'"I too am a widow," she said. "It must be your first duty to go and break the news of her husband's death, and give her all his papers and valuables."

'"And get my clock," I thought, but I said nothing.

'On arriving at the house I found that it was to let, but the concierge informed me that Madame Moyart had died three months ago, and that all her money and the valuable contents of the house had gone to her brother, a Mons. Lebrune, who lived in the Chaussée d'Antin, then a fashionable quarter. This Mons. Lebrune had, on account of his shrewdness and honesty, been appointed by the Emperor to a high government post in the Hôtel de la Monnaie (the Mint), and, what's more, he had managed to retain it under the Bourbons. I was told he would be in very shortly, and was asked upstairs, where I found myself in the presence of a handsome, middle-aged lady and her still handsomer daughter. In fact, for beauty I never saw the equal of the latter; but what puzzled me was that, though a perfect stranger to both, I seemed to have met them before. I told the mother I had come on business connected with Mons. Moyart, but all the time my eyes kept wandering to the lovely girl who sat demurely bending over some embroidery beside her; this attitude, alas! giving me little chance of seeing the bright, vivacious eyes hidden away behind their long lashes. As Mons. Lebrune did not come in, our conversation gradually strayed to other subjects.

'"Though my husband," said Madame Lebrune, "owes much to the Emperor, I am very glad the latter is now where he can do no more mischief, where he can no longer make mothers' hearts ache, as he has made mine;" and she went on to tell me how she had lost both her sons within a year—one in Russia, and one in Germany.

'She still held my card in her hand.

'"Your name, unlike ours, is not a common one," she said. "In my dear son's last letter from Dresden"—and here her voice trembled a little—"he spoke often of a Captain Dorisart, and he said he hoped to introduce him to me on his return."

'Lebrune, as she had said, was such a common name that I had not thought of it before, but then it all flashed upon me. Her son was in the Genie; he was employed in reconstructing the Augustus *brücke* that the Allies had destroyed after their defeat at Lutzen. I had never met him before that time, but afterwards we were constantly together.

'"Of course, madame, I remember poor Louis Lebrune. A handsomer, cleverer, or more unassuming fellow I have seldom, if ever, met."

'"Only think of that, Henriette!" she cried to her daughter, springing up. So great was her emotion that I thought she was going to embrace me.—"I will show you his miniature; I will get his last letter.—Come, Henriette;" and followed by the latter, she hurriedly left the room.

'I had met some charming girls in my time, but never one like this. Her beauty I had seen with my own eyes. Given that she had the same disposition as her brother—which I had no reason to doubt—then indeed she was one in a thousand. I stood wondering at the luck that had brought me in contact with her, when the door behind me opened, and a rather short, debonair man with grayish hair and keen, dark eyes came into the room. I ought to have told him at once that I was a friend of his son; but he was not one who wore his heart on his sleeve, and his manner was rather brusque, that of one who was used to command; and when I mentioned Moyart's name he at once asked me into his study, where, on the mantelpiece right before me, I saw my clock. I gave him the papers, &c., belonging to Moyart, and told him how I had tried to save his life, and all the circumstances connected with the clock, and how Moyart had promised that he would return it to me.

'"Have you any papers to prove that he intended to give you the clock?"

'"No," I replied.

'"Well, then, the clock is mine, and before I give it up I will see you hung first!"

'"I have no papers to prove that he gave me a case of pearls"——

'"Pearls!" he exclaimed. "If you have any pearls of his, they also belong to me."

'"Do they?" I replied rather warmly. "Mayron, my *marshal de logis*, and some of my troopers were present when he gave me the case and heard his words. The pearls are mine, and I am going to keep them."

'We should probably, in spite of my efforts to keep down my anger, have come to high words had not his wife burst into the room with the letters and miniature in her hand.

'"Charles," she cried, "Major Dorisart is the Captain Dorisart poor Louis wrote so warmly to us about in his last letters.—I must not tell you," she continued, turning to me with a smile, "what he said about you, because if I did, it would make you vain. And see, here is the poor lad's miniature."

'Her husband at first was too astonished to speak. The grief at the loss of his only remaining son was still strong within him. The angry look left his eyes.

'"Major, I apologise a thousand times," he said in a gentle voice, taking my hand in his. "There's the clock; take it."

'"No, no," I replied, recovering my composure. "Leave it where it is at present. My good mother has come into a fortune, and she is looking for a house, and when she is settled, then we will see about it."

'Just then the bell rang for *dejéuner*. They pressed me to stay, which of course I was only too glad to do.

'Henriette at first was shy and coy, saying very little; but as the meal went on she joined freely in the conversation, her voice and mannerisms reminding me irresistibly of her brother. I quite won her parents' hearts by telling them this. No compliment in their eyes, nor in fact, from her blushes, in their daughter's, could have been higher.

'"You will come again soon?" they said as I was leaving.

'"Oh yes," I replied; "and I will bring the pearls."

'I left the house in the seventh heaven; I seemed to tread on air. My good mother, when I reached home, for the first few minutes could not make it out. The curious look in her eyes sent me into fits of laughter.

'"Is Madame Moyart going to leave you all her money?" she asked quite seriously.

'"Madame Moyart?" I replied. "*Ma foi!* no; I have not seen her. Why, poor thing! she has been dead for months. No; it's something better than money I mean to try to get;" and then I told her all.

'"Ah, girls are not always what they seem, my dear François," she said. "Men are no judges."

'This and a lot more of good advice she gave me; but when she had seen Mdlle. Lebrune she admitted I was right, and within a month those pearls were round the fair neck of Henriette, and within three we were married. A more charming and beautiful wife, as you have seen with your own eyes, no fellow has ever had; but I put all my good fortune down to the clock. If I had never had it I should never have met Moyart; and if I had never met Moyart I should never have had occasion to call upon Mons. Lebrune. So now, my friend,' he added in conclusion, 'you can understand why I look upon that lovely clock as a "mascot," and why nothing on earth would make me part with it.'

THE END.

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# TOURING IN THE TAUNUS.

AROUND us yesterday the roar of London; to-day the peace of these woods pierced in every direction by broad paths, and mapped with colour-indications and directions by the Taunus Club. This road is lined with fruit-trees from the branch railway to the hotel, perched high among the pine-woods of the Taunus, whence we have a noble prospect which gladdens eye and heart and mind from dawn to sunset, and after dark we catch the glimmer of the lights in Frankfort-on-the-Main, fifteen miles away. The Staufen rises fifteen hundred feet behind, tree-clad to the top, with Eppstein below on the other side, in what has been called the Switzerland of Nassau. Many famous health-resorts are enclosed in the folds of these gently undulating hills. Königstein, that pearl of the Taunus, we can see, overlooked by its ruined castle; Cronberg, with Falkenstein near it—all are truly garden-towns without professing to be such. Frederickshof, at Cronberg, is a favourite resort of the Emperor, and belongs to his sister, the Princess of Hesse. Above rises the Great Feldberg, two thousand eight hundred and eighty-five feet, the highest point of the Taunus, with the observatory of the Taunus Club, and the Aldkönig just a little lower. Excursions to Frankfort, Homburg, Heidelberg, Wiesbaden, and Mainz are found easily possible. Everywhere is an air of solid comfort and prosperity, nothing mean, sordid, or squalid; constant beer-drinking, yet no signs of intoxication; and no beggars were seen until we had returned.

The Taunus is that mountainous and finely wooded region of south-west Germany between the rivers Rhine, Main, and Lahn. This region has associations with Goethe and Mendelssohn, with the Rothschilds, Bismarck, the Empress Frederick, and the present Emperor. Pilgrims from all the world now flock to the health-resorts of the Taunus. This was not the case when Major Head published his *Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau* in 1834. In that book he complained that of the hundreds of thousands of English, 'with their mouths, eyes, and purses wide open,' who followed each other in mournful procession up and down the Rhine, though Nassau was absolutely in their path, not more than twenty families had visited Langenschwalbad or Schlangenbad during the previous twenty years. Of all the travellers who have written on Germany, Bayard Taylor, in his *Views Afoot, or Europe Seen with Knapsack and Staff*, is one of the most pleasant and companionable. For the sum of one hundred pounds, paid intermittently, which he earned by filtering the material in this book through the columns of a New York newspaper, he had a year and a half of study and travel, and arrived in London with a franc or two in his

pocket. He confessed that the Germans enjoyed life under all circumstances, and were a much happier people than the Americans. Another American, Washington Irving, spent three weeks in Mainz, in the Hôtel de Darmstadt, and dated his introduction of *Tales of a Traveller* therefrom. In passing between Frankfort, Darmstadt, and Heidelberg, he said he 'never enjoyed travelling more than through these lovely centres. . . . I feel a kind of intoxication of thought as I draw in the pure air of the mountains and the clear, transparent atmosphere; the steady, serene golden sunshine seems to enter into my very soul.'

Bayard Taylor describes Mendelssohn, whom he met in Frankfort in 1844, where he spent the winter, as simply and negligently dressed in dark cloth, with a cravat tied loosely about his neck. His beard had evidently not been touched for two or three days, and his black hair was long and frowsed by the wind. His eyes were large, dark, and kindling, directed forward and lifted in the abstraction of some absorbing thought; and as he passed Bayard Taylor heard him singing to himself in a voice deep but not loud. Later, when he saw him in private, he was struck by the high, intellectual beauty of his countenance, his white, unwrinkled forehead, the eyes large, very dark, and lambent with a light 'that seemed to come through them like the phosphorescent gleam on the ocean at midnight.' This expression he had only seen in the eyes of men of the highest genius.

Mendelssohn was attracted by and drew inspiration from this region, which he heard of in a curious way. A travelling Englishman named Melton, called by the German narrator 'a music fool,' picked up a German named Peter, who played splendidly on the guitar and sang German songs well, especially those of Mendelssohn. They made the tour of Europe together; but when they were at the Hague, Peter fell in love with a Dutch girl and would go no farther. He secured an engagement at an hotel where Mendelssohn was residing, and interested that musical genius by his enthusiasm for Eppstein in the Taunus, where he was born. The musician begged of Peter to conduct him thither, and thither they came more like companions than as master and servant. At Eppstein, Mendelssohn drew wonderful music from a dilapidated church-organ, and, inspired by the setting sun on the woods seen from the Sun Inn, tried to set to music some verses just received. The verses the master found stilted and unnatural; Peter also disapproved, and handed him the words by Eichendorff of 'The Hunter's Farewell to the Forest,' cut from a Frankfort newspaper. Next day master and servant climbed the wooded Staufen, 'the tall watchman of the Lorsbach valley,' and lunched at the top. It was a glorious and inspiring day, with the sun trembling through the beeches and grass, making 'sunny butterflies.' Peter stood in awe and reverence, as if some sacred service were going on before his eyes, when he saw the flow of inspiration welling up in the soul of the master. Suddenly Mendelssohn leapt to his feet, exclaiming, 'I have got it!' They had a happy lunch together, and the bread-and-butter and cold meat were washed down by Rhine wine. They halted at the Crown Inn, Hofheim, on their way to Frankfort, and ordered dinner and a conveyance. Both were kept waiting, to the annoyance of the host, until the score of 'The Hunter's Farewell' had been written and signed. The manuscript was handed to Peter as a memorial of the day, along with a gold piece. That and another manuscript of the master were afterwards filched from Peter by Melton, the 'music fool,' for forty guineas. This was in 1839, but Mendelssohn paid some later visits to this region.

Eckermann, the Boswell of Goethe, recalls how he came to Frankfort in 1830, and found the air pleasant and healthy, and the water of a sweetish taste; and he praised the excellent beef-steaks and white bread. It was here that he admired the wonderful memory and agility of a head-waiter, and tried to fathom his secret in attending to myriads of guests without a single mistake. In Frankfort our party were fortunate in having the services of Dr Hülsen, lecturer on art and architecture, as guide over the old and new city. Dr Hülsen was quite young when the German Emperor asked him to accept an important post in connection with the excavations at Miletus, his report upon which is in the press. Some things that impress the visitor to this thriving and bustling commercial city are the noble railway station, the broad and handsome Kaiser Strasse, the Zeil, the handsome boulevards on the outskirts of the town, the *Anlage* marking the old fortifications (of which there is a survival of a gateway in the Eschenheimer Turn), the Opera House, and the Palm Gardens, the finest in Europe, with the monuments to Gutenberg, Goethe, Schiller, and Bismarck. At the Judengasse, No. 26 is the early home of the Rothschilds; and No. 23 Grosser Hirschgraben is the birthplace of Goethe. Other objects of interest are the Römer, with its memories of the Electors and Emperors, and its fifty-two oil-paintings of them in the Kaisersaal, beginning with Charlemagne; the Romanesque Church of St Leonard, on a site of an old castle of Charlemagne; the Cathedral, which has been burned and restored; and the old bridge over the Main, with the gilt cock on the cross, a memorial of a hostage to the devil, and a modern statue of Charlemagne close by. The Staedel Institute, Sachsenhausen, has many gems of art, including Van Eyck's 'Virgin and Child' and Lenbach's William I. In the Hotel Swan, Frankfort, at the corner of Theatre Platz and Steinweg, on 10th May 1871, the Frankfort treaty of peace was signed. In Old Frankfort we were shown over a typical house, 'The Golden Balance,' which had a roof-garden and fountain. Around the Cathedral all newly erected houses must conform to the ancient type. This has been carried out with happy results. The local poet Stolze,

who could not imagine any one wishing to be born outside this town, is commemorated by a bust over one of the city fountains. R. L. Stevenson, aged twenty-two, was in the Hotel Landsberg, and felt his money melting like 'butter in a furnace.' Accordingly he removed to private lodgings, and 'powerfully mean ones, too,' he told his father and mother, at Rosengasse 13. It was there he had the excitement of a fire at Sachsenhausen, and saw a man dandling a baby and supping spoonfuls of a slimy mixture like dead porridge.

In the Cathedral the bold and masterly historical paintings by Professor Edward Steinle are pointed out. This Roman Catholic artist had as a pupil young Frederick Leighton in 1845. From Steinle Leighton received the most indelible influence of his life. 'In a record of whatever concerns me as an artist, his name should be at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end,' was his tribute. There is a strikingly bold and effective monument to Bismarck in Kaiser Platz. While Prussian ambassador at the Diet in 1852–58 he lived at No. 19 Gallows Lane, where he made great strides 'in the art of saying nothing in a great many words.' After close attention to business he lost no opportunity of taking recreation in the neighbourhood. In one of his family letters he says: 'Yesterday I took a long and solitary walk in the hills deep into the moonlight night. I had worked from eight until five, then dined, and revelled in the fresh evening air and hilly breezes of the Taunus after I had left this dusty hole about ten miles behind me, by means of a half-hour's railway trip to Soden.' He loved the seaside at Ostend and Blankenberg, and could hardly understand why he did not always live by it, and why he allowed himself to pass 'two days in this straight-lined heap of stones [Brussels], to see bull-fights, Waterloo, and pompous processions.' The environs of Mainz he thought really superb, and at Wiesbaden contemplated the site of former follies with a mixture of 'sadness and old-world experience.' It is curious to find him swimming in the Rhine at Rüdesheim, below where now stands the stupendous national monument to Germany's unification and the close of the Franco-German war, which has his figure amongst a host of others on a panel below. In the moonlight, with nothing but his nose and eyes out of the water, he floated as far as the Mäusethurm at Bingen. 'It gives one,' he wrote, 'a peculiar dreamy sensation to float thus on a quiet, warm night in the water, gently carried down by the current, looking above on the heavens studded with the moon and stars, and on each side the banks and wooded hilltops, and the battlements of the old castles bathed in the moonlight, whilst nothing falls on one's ear but the gentle splashing of one's own movements.'

G. H. Lewes, in his interesting biography of Goethe, relates how, when the poet was recovering from his passion for Gretchen, he made walking excursions in the Taunus, visiting Homburg, Cronberg, Königstein, Wiesbaden, Schwalbach, and Biebrich, and remarks that thus he filled his mind with lovely images. At an inn in Bingen there is a legend painted up that all may read of his residence there. Regarding German poetry and music, the Countess von Arnim, author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden*, who has thrown many interesting and striking sidelights upon the character and life of the people, writes: 'Everything really heavenly in our nation, everything purely inspired, manifestly immortal, has gone not into our poetry but into our music. That has absorbed our whole share of divine fire, and left our poets nothing but the cool and conscious exercise of their intellects.'

The Goethe house, No. 23 Grosser Hirschgraben, was purchased by the Deutsches Hochstift in 1863, and has been restored to the condition it was in when the poet was born. There one can see the old kitchen utensils, furniture, books, musical instruments, and even the grandmother's puppet-show presented to the youthful Goethe. The visitor is conducted over the rooms on the ground floor, including the dining-room and kitchen. On the staircase are the Roman views mentioned in Goethe's autobiography as belonging to his father. On the first floor the three rooms toward the street were occupied by Lieutenant Torenc in 1759. The Karl August room was occupied by the Duke Charles Augustus of Weimar for some days in 1759, when visiting Goethe's parents. On the second floor, in the middle front room, is the picture gallery of the elder Goethe, arranged as in 1755. The room in which the poet was born is shown here. The middle front room on the third floor was Goethe's study. In the poet's boyhood the house commanded pleasant views of neighbours' gardens stretching to the walls of the city, and the boy never tired of watching the setting sun. A favourite walk was across the old bridge over the Main to Sachsenhausen. In the Römer he stared at the portraits of the Emperors, and was awed as he entered the chamber where they were chosen. His youthful escapades and love affairs may be followed in his autobiography.

On 28th August, Goethe's birthday, a wreath of laurel and flowers gathered from Shakespeare's garden at Stratford-on-Avon by the treasurer and guardians of his birthplace was sent to Goethe's birthplace, bearing this inscription: 'The house of Shakespeare to the house of Goethe,' and the quotation from *Henry IV.*, 'A son who is the theme of honour's tongue.'

Town-planning is now a science in Germany. Imported from France and adopted by the different states in the seventeenth century, it has wrought wonders. The most ambitious town-planning scheme is that in progress at the east end of Frankfort-on-the-Main for harbour works and industrial settlements. Here streets, railways, tramways, and embankments are being formed. The cost of the land to the municipality has been one million two hundred thousand pounds; the constructive works will cost two million pounds, and

with other items will amount to three and a half millions sterling. This is the largest town-planning scheme that is being carried out as one project in Germany. The harbour at the west end having become insufficient for the traffic, the scheme was begun at the east end on the Main, with two miles of new frontage. When the whole scheme is completed the area of the town will be increased by 50 per cent., and four out of five acres in the new district will belong to the town itself.

A well-spent day may be devoted to each of the highest points of the Taunus within our vision, the Altkönig and the Great Feldberg. The Taunus Club, with its four thousand members and forty-two branches, has a club-house, an observatory, and a meteorological station on the Feldberg, and its records are published daily in the Frankfort newspapers. A profitable and easily accomplished excursion may be made to Homburg, and thence to the great Roman camp of Saalburg, which has been restored by the German Emperor. For Saalburg we enter the electric tram at Homburg, and pass through Dornholzhausen. A bronze statue of Antoninus Pius stands at the entrance, and the general view at first is less that of ancient than of quite modern buildings. The museum is full of most interesting Roman remains—pottery, glass, horseshoes, shoes for mules and oxen, spurs, tools such as we see today (hammers, saws, axes, nails), and leather articles, of which two hundred were taken from the wells. The Romans seem to have had control of the Taunus for two centuries, and some two thousand five hundred coins from 30 B.C. to 268 A.D. have been dug up. Saalburg is one of the forts on the Pfahlgraben (*limes*) or earthen wall, which sometimes has a ditch, extending from near Neuwied on the Rhine to the Danube. The purpose of the ditch and rampart may have been to ward off attacks from the tribes of north and east Germany, and it has been pointed out that the mineral springs of Wiesbaden, Homburg, and Nauheim are all south of the earthen wall, and were known to and used by the Romans.

There was a never-to-be-forgotten walk, aided by train at Lorsbach, through the woods to Wiesbaden, with lunch on the Platte above the town, commanding a noble view of the central Rhine basin, with the smoke visible of Frankfort and Mainz. We pass the most costly memorial chapel in the world, a Greek church containing the sarcophagus of the Duchess of Nassau, the whole in marble and gold, which cost her husband, the Duke of Luxemburg, seven hundred and thirty thousand pounds. There is much to see in this gay, bright, and beautiful town, from the Kursaal to the Kochbrunnen, with its hot mineral water boiling to the surface. Heidelberg affords another pleasant day, with its ruined castle and palace of Elizabeth of the Palatinate, the University with the curious students' prisons, the Ritter Hotel with renaissance front, the evident signs of student-duels in the faces of students met in the street, and noble views of the Neckar. Mainz recalls two things: the invention of printing (as the birthplace of Gutenberg), and the liberation of trade from the exactions of the feudal aristocracy through a citizen of the town, Arnold von Walboten, who suggested the confederation of cities which led to the foundation of the Rhenish League (1247). There is a rich collection in the museum of Roman remains, found here and at Kastell, including piles from the old Roman bridge across the Rhine. In the Cathedral there is a red sandstone monument to St Boniface, apostle of Germany and first archbishop of Mainz. He was an Englishman named Winfried, from Crediton in Devonshire, and is reported to have converted more than one hundred thousand of the heathen to Christianity. The castle of Cronberg was shut to the visitor; not so the Lutheran St John's Church (1440), rebuilt by the Empress Frederick, which has a memorial to her on the tower. Two pictures in the church, one of heaven and hell, are of the crudest kind; the pew of the Empress is exceedingly plain. Cronberg and Königstein are haunted by an artist colony, and frequented as health-resorts. Quite a number of British folks now find their way thither. The groves of sweet chestnut, acacia avenues, and hill-walks are a great attraction.

Our return was by the Rhine, with a night at Bingen and Cologne, and five days at Bruges. There we were to hear of Blériot's great exploit in flying across the Channel, for which we had been in a measure prepared by the sight of aeroplanes, biplanes, and balloons, including the famous *Preussen* in the Frankfort aeronautical exhibition.

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# HALLEY'S COMET.

To the Editor of *Chambers's Journal*.

GALLOWFLAT HOUSE,
RUTHERGLEN, N.B.

DEAR SIR,—I have read the interesting and instructive article on Halley's comet by Dr Roberts in your *Journal* for November 1909. I have been entertained and instructed on many subjects by *Chambers's Journal* since I first perused No. 1 (of the new series) on Saturday January 6, 1844, and no article since that date has given me greater pleasure.

From these remarks Dr Roberts may conclude I am no longer a youth, and I trust he will excuse my suggesting that there may be other causes at work than those given in the third problem for the apparent anomaly of the return years of the comet. I refer to historians' errors, clerical and printers' errors, mixing up the Julian and Gregorian calendars.

In addition, historians have no A.D. 0 year like astronomers; hence all their B.C. years are one year more than they should be, and, in one way and another, at the junction of B.C. and A.D. they have errors ranging from one to twelve years according to their requirements, as in the case of Herod the Great, whom they bury twelve years before he died!

In the third problem Dr Roberts says: 'Thus there are seventy-six years between the 1682 return and the 1758 return, seventy-seven years between the 1758 return and the 1835 return, seventy-five years between the 1835 return and the 1910 forthcoming appearance! Why should the comet sometimes take seventy-five years to go round its orbit, and at other times seventy-seven, and even seventy-eight years?' Then follows Dr Roberts's explanation; but this will never convert 11 B.C. into 10 A.D., the year of the appearance of the comet, according to my table further on.

Let us look at some examples of past history in other directions. The date of the birth of General Washington is given in one place as 11th February 1731, and in another place as 22nd February 1732. On the Knox Monument in Glasgow is recorded an important event as having taken place on 24th August 1559. For the last hundred years historians call the year 1560, and it has been proposed to make the correction on the monument, yet when the original Act of the Parliament of Scotland is examined, the date is found to be 15th December 1567, or a difference of eight years.

Eight years play an important part in the mysteries of chronology. Thus we have in 'James VI. and the Gowrie Mystery' the incident of 5th August 1600, and then the jump to 1608. Another historian—a dean in the Church—tells us frankly he has lost eight years, thus: 'This still leaves a space of eight whole years which cannot be accounted for, between Varus B.C. 4 and Volusius A.D. 4.' The cause of all this trouble rests with historians, who assume that A.U.C. 754 is the same year as A.D. 1, when the correct year is 761—an error of seven years, and the discarded A.D. 0 makes the eight years. This admits of easy proof. The Jewish Calendar on January 1, 1910, is the year 5670, or a difference of 3760; hence A.D. 0 is 3760, and A.D. 1 is 3761. The Jews reckoned their era 3000 ahead of Rome; hence on January 1 A.D. 1910 the A.U.C. year is 2670, and A.D. 1 is 761; A.D. 0, 760; B.C. 1, 759.

With these remarks on historians' errors, I now come to the point of this letter. It is known that Aristotle describes a comet which appeared in B.C. 371 (astronomers' 370), and assuming that it was Halley's Comet and would return every seventy-six years, I made the following table of years for its appearance, namely: B.C. 370, 294, 218, 142, 66; A.D. 10, 86, 162, 238, 314, 390, 466, 542, 618, 694, 770, 846, 922, 998, 1074, 1150, 1226, 1302, 1378, 1454, 1530, 1606, 1682, 1758, 1834, 1910, 1986; and I think it is not very far out.

It may interest some of your readers to note the following particulars I had calculated for A.D. 10 before I saw Dr Roberts's article, thus: A.D. 10 Julian = A.M. Julian 4018, 4010 Gregorian, 1st January, Wednesday, Historians' erroneous year A.D. 17, A.U.C. 770, Jews 3770. Full moon and passover, Thursday April 17 (14 Nisan), Easter Sunday (if it had been in use) April 20. Sunday letter E. Golden number 11. Solar eclipse, January 4, June 30, November 24, December 24; Lunar eclipse, June 15, December 10; and Halley's Comet.—Yours truly, JAMES FINDLAY.

[The Editor submitted this letter to Dr Roberts, writer of the article on 'Halley's Comet,' who wrote in reply from Lovedale on 4th December 1909: 'There is much that is most interesting in Mr Findlay's letter, and I would suggest that you publish it, not only because it is rare to have communications from so old and constant a reader, but because of its intrinsic interest. Still, in two points Mr Findlay is at fault. We do not fix the return of Halley's Comet from dates, but we fix dates from the return of Halley's Comet. We know within a fraction of a year now where the comet should appear, so accurately known are its movements and the attraction of other bodies upon it. Then again the irregularities in its period—ranging from seventy-five to seventy-eight years—are due not to erroneous chronology but to the attractions of planets that draw near to it in its orbit.']

## THE TIMBER HAULING.

The leafless woodland stretches mile on mile
Against the sky;
And by each valley path and lowly stile
The blue mists lie.

Against the woodland felled oaks line the soil
Where once they grew;
And round about them men are grouped in toil—
Great horses too.

There is the clank of chains, the constant stroke
Of lopping axe;
The urging on, the straining at the yoke
Without relax.

And then the dragging, mighty length a-trail
Of each great tree,
Towards the mill which loud demands its tale
Of food to be.

The brave old oaks! Thus ravished from the ways
Which saw their pride;
Bestript of every bough which in old days
Outflung so wide.

So low they lie. But by each lonely bier
Young saplings rise;
And Spring is bringing in another year
With laughing skies.

F. W. SAUNDERSON.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE patriotism of the Briton is a quantity not to be calculated with precision. Certainly he is much more of the keen patriot than he generally appears to the people of other nations; if he had not been, Britain itself would hardly have stood where it does. But this man is not at all of an emotional type; and we have also to remember that, despite all that was said in the course of the elections at the beginning of the year, he is for the most part a prosperous man, has been so for a long time past, and this prosperity is not a thing that inflames patriotism. It is in the streets of the cities of the little, struggling nations that the men most frequently gather spontaneously, and constantly sing their national songs. Again, we must remind ourselves, for the credit of our Briton, that too many foolish demands are made upon him for demonstrations of his love of country. Day by day he is asked to exhibit his pride of race in respect to some cause which, though not unworthy, is yet not of such consequence as to justify the demand. A few men of Britain who either make their living out of some kind of sport or attach themselves to it because they would otherwise be idle, agree to play a match of some kind against a party of men belonging to another country, and forthwith the newspapers are full of details of all the circumstances and the progress of the great struggle, and this man of whom we have being speaking is exhorted to hope and hope again for victory for his country! Upon occasion he is asked to pay something towards the expenses of these men as incurred in achieving this great victory, and he does so. If he should fail to display the proper amount of interest in the proceedings, those who are wildly enthusiastic in this great cause suggest that he has not the proper feelings of a man who is a son of a great country, that he is not a patriot. No sooner is this great event decided than another is arranged in the name of Britain, and we have it all over again in its littleness and inconsequence, and the people who have sense and thought, and see something almost of desecration in all this, are nauseated. So they speak less of their patriotism. Only in two special circumstances does this reserved Briton, the man of real feeling and thought, generally display openly and with high fervour the love that he has for his country and the great glory that he has in her; and it may be that it is only when these circumstances arise that he himself knows what his feelings are in the matter. One of the situations is when he is abroad among the people of a foreign land, because it is only then that he does fully realise what a wonderful land and a worthy people he belongs to; and the other situation is when his country is threatened with danger by another. Then, indeed, the light of patriotism does burn brilliantly enough. But there is a body of excellent men, a society imbued with the best principles and desires, who do not think that this is enough; but, feeling that England is so great, they would like her sons at home to stir themselves from their phlegmatic mood at least once in a year, and do something, as it were, to celebrate her. We are led to these thoughts now, in the first place, because a certain danger which has been threatened, or has seemed to be threatened, to us by a Continental Power has awakened to a very considerable extent the feeling of patriotism in the minds of the multitude, and in the near future, as the awakening is continued and made more complete, the display will be the greater, and will be of such a strength, as it now nearly is, that it will be placed before party, as it should be. And the second reason is that a certain date in the calendar comes round again to us in this month of April.

* * *

If you stopped in the street the first hundred men of intelligent appearance whom you met, and asked them for what did the 23rd of April stand, it is highly probable that you would receive no reply that was in the least satisfactory or suggestive of patriotic quality from more than six;



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and of these six it is likely, again, that four would be men of some literary knowledge, who would inform you that it was on that day that the greatest of our poets breathed his last, that Shakespeare died; while the better informed of the four would probably add that the day was most especially remarkable above all others because it was believed that Shakespeare not only died on that day of the year, but that he was born on it also, and that thus it seemed it might almost have been selected by divine Providence as a day that was to be regarded as of high national interest. These would be creditable remembrances, and we would not dispute with the man; but it is not at all certain that the poet was really born on the 23rd of April, though he certainly died on it. The fact is that we do not know exactly on what day he was born, but it was probably some time in late April, and he was baptised on the 26th. The 23rd as his birthday is a merely traditional selection, and the deathday may have induced it for the sake of striking coincidence. However, it matters little; we have one good reason, anyhow, for keeping the 23rd of April. These two other men of the six we spoke of may have another. Yes, perhaps 2 per cent. is a fair and just estimate of the number of people, English people, who will remember that it is St George's Day, the day of the patron saint of England, the one in all the three hundred and sixty-five that is specially marked as being the day for England. It may not be an estimate that is flattering to the people, but there it is. If you complain to these people of their ignorance and indifference, they may say sullenly that it does not very much matter, that they may think a great deal and do a great deal when it is necessary without bothering themselves overmuch about St George, concerning whom they really know nothing except what they are taught on the backs of sovereigns, where his historic conflict with the dragon is depicted. In the days of 'Merrie England' St George may be said to have done well enough; but afterwards his remembrance was much neglected until recent years, when a society with the greatest enthusiasm and the highest motives undertook the task of trying to stir up interest in his day in the name of English patriotism. In some, but not in a very considerable, measure they have succeeded. Some time since we were in conversation with one who is much concerned with this movement, and he urged that their efforts had so stimulated the fancy for the wearing of a rose on the 23rd, and the growers had so well fallen in with the idea, that whereas the national flower had only previously been worn or exhibited by accident, as it were, on the particular day, it had happened since that five trains were employed on the morning of it in bringing up to London the roses that had been grown in the Thames valley alone, and that train-loads came also from several other parts, despite all of which there was hardly one of the flowers to be bought anywhere at noon. This society, anyhow, does its celebration well, and encourages such celebrations elsewhere to the best of its ability and resources. It holds a festival dinner at one of the big hotels, where the dining-hall is a bower of roses red and white, and there is prominently displayed a bust of the great poet, with some of his most patriotic sentences written upon it. Every morsel of every dish is English, and no more English songs have ever been sung than those that are sung on this occasion. Then one of the very finest oxen to be found in the shires has yielded up to the banquet a great baron of beef, which is brought in with fine ceremony. First of all, the guests hear the sounds of drums in the distance, and the sounds come nearer and nearer until at last a herald attired in old English costume enters the hall and announces that the beef is ready. Garlanded with roses, and with the flag held in front, it is carried shoulder-high round the hall, the drummers accompanying it to the tune of the 'Roast Beef of Old England.'

* * *

All this is most excellent, and the patriotism of the guests is evident; but yet one cannot help thinking that a little something is wanting. The 'special occasion' does not seem to be sufficiently there. And now in the most recent times there has grown up a new movement for the selection of another great national day from the calendar, an Empire Day, for which the 24th of May, the late Queen Victoria's birthday, has been well chosen. This is not an opposition movement, but it would seem to those who think upon the circumstances that it must to some extent have the effect of one. Those who are propagating the idea of the Empire Day, foremost among whom is the Earl of Meath, who has strong and valuable ideas on the encouragement of the patriotic instincts and their display, which he explained to us on one occasion, have been doing so on a very thorough system. They have to a large extent captured the colonies; and as for the homeland, they are endeavouring to instil the idea into the minds of the children, who will grow up with it. They realise properly that an idea like this must be implanted in the very youthful mind if it is to do well, for you cannot so easily teach the old Englishman new ways of this kind. So we can hardly consider the future prospects of St George's Day to be very good; and the plain fact of the matter is, if it be not sin to say it, that this St George is not altogether satisfactory as a patron saint. These are materialistic times, when even in matters of this sort we are little sentimental but much inclined to strip the gilt off things and look beneath. So people may sometimes feel the question, if they do not ask it, 'Who was this St George, and what did he do for England?' It is unfortunate, then, that the supporters of the saint cannot put forward any good case on his behalf. He certainly had not anything like so much to do with the making of England as the King Harry with whose name he has been so often associated, who, according to Shakespeare, made kind refer-

ence to him, and whose bowmen at Agincourt shouted out his name as they shot their arrows. Yet very many books of reference will need to be consulted before anywhere you will find any explanatory mention of St George. The simple facts of his history are that he was born at Lydda about A.D. 270, of noble parents, it is said. He became a trusted captain in the Imperial Army of Rome under Diocletian and Galerius Dacianus, being martyred by the latter at Nicomedia in A.D. 303. According to this tradition, he thus attained to the earthly years of Christ; and it is added, moreover, that he died uttering a prayer for his murderers. It is a mere legend, although accepted by some who have made examination of the matter, that he visited England on a mission from Diocletian, and that upon this occasion he met Helena, the wife of Constantius Chlorus, he who subsequently became Emperor of the West. Helena, who, according to one legend, was of British birth, was the mother of Constantine the Great, who was proclaimed his father's successor at York just before his father's death there in A.D. 306. It is considered possible that in his earlier days this Constantine was a comrade in arms of St George; but, anyhow, after his conversion to Christianity Constantine dedicated no fewer than a hundred and six churches to him. It does, therefore, appear that it was he, the first Christian Emperor, who introduced the cult of his favourite saint into his native land. Constantine declared him to be 'Champion of Christendom.' This, at any rate, was the full extent of St George's association with England. Perhaps one should not be too critical of patron saints, or expect much past service of them; but then, as we said, these are materialistic times when every man, be he saint or sinner, is judged according to his worth.

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It is being shown from day to day how very little do we know of the details of the schemes and proceedings of Germany in regard to this naval business which is causing so much anxiety. The people now realise that even if Germany's intentions are not directly hostile to this country, there is practically just the same danger as if they were in the rapid rate at which she is placing big battleships on the sea. Nor with Britain awakened is Germany now making the same ingenuous pleas as she did a little while since that in all that she is doing she is thinking nothing at all of Britain and her navy, but only of her own business and her own trade, and the need for self-protection against any possible enemy of hers. An eminent German professor, Dr von Schulze-Gaevernitz, lately put forward what was supposed to be the most moderate and peaceful German view of the situation, and he said that the German economists argued that sooner or later we must accept the inevitable, and admit that our naval supremacy in the nineteenth century is destined to give way to a naval balance of power divided among four or five nations. Then, he believed, there would be a greater chance of maintaining the peace of the world. Viewed in this light, the German fleet appeared to him to be the only healthy basis for an honourable understanding between the two nations, and he hoped that neither Germany nor Britain would trust its national existence to the goodwill of a strange Power, and declared that the peace that was vital to both must be secured by powerful armaments. The interest of both parties, he said, should point to peace, but it would have to be the peace of armed equals. The idea of neither of these nations 'trusting its national existence to the goodwill of a strange Power,' but the implication that England, which has never done so, should now trust hers to German goodwill, as would be done in any new understanding of this kind, is—interesting. However, in a little while we shall no doubt come to know much more of the precise nature of Germany's intentions and of the manner in which she is endeavouring to realise them than we do now. The present lack of knowledge of the British people concerning the men who are at the back of all this business in Germany, and what they are doing, is most amazing when considered in comparison with the knowledge that the Germans have of all our own naval affairs. The average Teuton whom you may meet casually in the street is in a position to tell you many noteworthy facts concerning our Admiralty and its system, having taken such an interest in it for a long time past, and he has a considerable familiarity with our Beresfords, Fishers, and the other men who have been most prominent in our naval affairs in recent years. But there is certainly not one Briton in a hundred who has the slightest idea about the German naval personnel. Our people have the elementary notion that it is all the Kaiser and his dreams of sea-power, and some of them have heard of Von Bülow. But they know nothing of the men of work and action, the men who are not figureheads engaged in scheming and talking, but who are making things and getting ready. How many have heard of a person of the name of Von Tirpitz? It is not improbable that even a large proportion of members of Parliament have not, so in their ignorance there is at all events some excuse for other people. Yet you cannot talk to any intelligent and well-informed German who is the least inclined to be communicative on the subject of his country's naval progress without having reference made to Admiral von Tirpitz unceasingly. For the fact is that this admiral, Secretary of State for the Imperial Navy, who is now sixty-one years of age, is the real creator of this German navy, and he is in all respects a most wonderful man, self-made, of indomitable energy and determination, and with one lifelong ambition to raise the German fleet to the level of any other or to make it superior to any. It is true that he, like the others, disclaims any idea of aggression, and there have certainly been times when he has stubbornly opposed what he regarded as extreme naval ambitions; but nevertheless he is the man

who has made and is making the fleet, the man who counts for as much as any, and it is interesting to consider him for a moment.

* * *

He was the son of a Prussian lawyer, and at sixteen years of age he became a cadet in what then went by the name of the Prussian navy, consisting of a few small boats which, had they belonged to Greece, might have been an ornament to her waters, but of little practical service to her. In nine years he rose to the position of lieutenant-commander, and it was at this early stage, when in a very minor and subordinate office in which traditionally he was to bow and scrape to all his superiors, and do as he was told without asking any questions or suggesting that he could think for himself, that he first showed his amazing talents, his wonderful initiative, his capacity for imposing his views on his seniors, and his astonishing contempt for the principle of seniority by age. He showed that he had original and strong views upon the future of the navy, and that he meant to do something towards carrying them out; and it happened that many of the best men in the service were attracted to him and gave him their support. By 1891 he was chief of staff at Kiel, the fleet's headquarters, and here he had real scope for the first time. The first thing he did was to set about the establishment of that torpedo service which has now for long been regarded as the chief feature of Germany's naval strength. When he went to Kiel the torpedo-boats there were not worth considering; but he soon made this section of the navy a magnificent force, finding men for his new boats, and training them in a special way, so that all were experts at their work. Then, after a violent campaign against the administrative system, he went out in 1896 to the Far East as rear-admiral commanding the cruiser division; and some eighteen months later he was appointed to the State Secretaryship of the Admiralty at Berlin, where many great changes had already taken place as the result of his attacks upon the old system. Despite the critics and the rivals who were surrounding him, he accomplished more; and then, when he had the house in order, he looked round and saw the great expanse of German commerce overseas, perceived the necessity for a big navy, and at once began to preach it. In 1899 there happened the famous *Bundesrat* incident, when a German mail-boat was seized by a British man-of-war, and enormous force was given to his arguments. In the following year the great Naval Law, his creation, was passed; two years afterwards the first ships that were sanctioned according to it were set afloat, and in 1907 his further persistent efforts resulted in the determination to build German Dreadnoughts. At each of these stages in his progress, an appreciative and grateful sovereign, who had not been entirely in sympathy with him in the early days when he made his bold attacks on the administrative system, gave him new honours, and to-day in Germany they call him 'Der Meister'—the master of the navy. This is the man who more than any other is the cause of our present anxiety, but about whom we have heard so little, so very little.

# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.—HOW LADY CHARLES HEARD THINGS IN THE DARK, AND WAS AFRAID.

AND now—as though Providence was not altogether unmindful of a brave man in extremity, even though he was a misguided one, and forbore to add to his burden—it seemed to Charles Lauriston that his wife's health was really on the mend. Very frail, indeed, she looked still, and as though any sudden breath of calamity might blow her quite away; but there was about her a new light of life, a rekindling of the waning fires, a recharging of the vital forces, which, for the time being at all events, made for life and strength.

There had, in fact, sprung up within her, not simply the desire to live, but a sudden fierce craving for life, a great soul-knitting determination that she would not die. Lauriston saw the effects in her apparently steady accession of strength, and rejoiced in it greatly. His deepest thought never came within measurable distance of the cause.

He set it down to the strong, clear air of Ealing and the skill of her doctors, and thereafter regarded all these with favour and never ceased to eulogise them. But, in simple truth, it all came out of his encounter with the young Irishman, and the wetting and the chill which followed. For a touch of fever slipped the brakes of his brain and tongue that night, and in his sleep he let drop words which fell on the pain-wakeful ears in the adjoining room like sharp blows. But a few disjointed words, simple words and terrible. At first she thought they came only out of his adventure with the highwayman. They pointed that way. And then John Sax's name came in. And, though she could make nothing of it all, she heard enough to chill her heart with sudden senseless fears of she knew not what, except that it was something terrible.

The best-loved voice in the world lacking the control of will-power and reason carries something of terror to the listening ear. For the voice is one of the outlets of the soul, and in such a case it is as though the soul of the loved one had departed and given up its body to a stranger, and the strange soul speaking through the known body startles and affrights. In the night-time too, even small terrors take unto themselves large shapes and magnify themselves manifold.

'What is it, Charles?' she had cried, in the sudden terror of hearing that strange voice in the dark. 'Are you ill, dear?' And the darkness lay so heavily silent that she heard her own heart beating.

She was beginning to believe that her ears had deceived her, and that it was only some wild dream of her own that had wakened her, when from the other room the strange voice came again in an urgent whisper that chilled her blood: 'A black road to travel! The gallows at every turning! A black road! Ay!' with a sigh like the last long-drawn breath of a dying man.

She lay shuddering at the uncanniness of the voice that was Charles's, and yet was not. Then she remembered the highwayman, and caught at comfort in the thought that he was reasoning again with that misguided youth.

'Utter ruin! utter ruin! One chance, you say, John Sax.' And at that her heart leaped into her throat and came near to choking her, and she lay trembling and in mighty fear. 'A burden too great for any man's bearing. He bore it. It killed him. If it was only myself! If they could go free! God help us, John Sax! Yes, yes, we will bear it together!' And then the dreadful darkness settled into silence, and he slept; but she lay thinking, and so presently, in natural course, to agonised praying for his deliverance from she knew not what.

In the morning she doubted herself, and still more when her husband came in to her with a face so calm and quiet that no stretch of imagination could associate it with her terrors of the night.

It was an evil dream of his or hers, she said to herself. The brain at times plays strange pranks while the body is sleeping. She would put it from her, and let it trouble her no more. Even to speak of it to Charles would be extremely distasteful and entirely useless. Nevertheless she found her eyes dwelling on his face with a new touch of loving anxiety in them, and he caught it, and set it down to her fears for his safety on the road.

And when their greeting ended with her quiet, 'I pray God to deliver you!' he set that down also to the nervousness incidental to her state of health and his encounter of the previous night, and she knew only that her heart was troubled for him.

But when he had galloped off to town, and the children had gone off to their schools, and she lay on her couch, face to face with herself and her thoughts, and none to come between, the conviction grew upon her, and gained force as it grew, that that which had come to her in the night was no evil dream, but simple grim reality. And as she lay brooding upon it, and accommodating to it her sense of the changes she had not failed to notice in her husband since his father's death, the further fear obtruded itself that here was something beyond her understanding, and not for her to know; something beyond and behind, a hidden burden which Charles was bearing with a quiet face for her sake and the children's.

She could not question him on the matter. If it was for her to know he would have told her. She would respect his desire, for what a man purposely withholds from those he loves is best not inquired into.

There had been no closed doors in their life hitherto. If Charles kept this one barred, it was for love of her and because he deemed it best.

But there was one thing to which she resolutely set her heart and mind. Her health had been a source of anxiety to him. It should be so no longer. Without ever losing the hope of recovery, indeed with a very earnest desire thereto for her husband's and the children's sakes—though, for herself, the social world offered little allurement—the not unattractive state of semi-invalidism had grown upon her almost unconsciously. Sleepless nights and spells of weakness had all too frequently disinclined her from any active participation in the doings about her.

But now her husband had need of her. He was bearing burdens. Anxiety for her had been one of them. It should be so no longer. There arose within her a fierce craving for life. If trouble loomed within the future, she would stand by her husband's side and strengthen him for the fight. And she would begin at once.

And when Charles Lauriston saw his wife at the week-end he rejoiced and blessed the pure air of Ealing and Dr Berkeley's prescriptions.

What it cost her at times to throw off the lassitude of weakness and to conceal her sharp attacks of pain none but herself knew. But her heart and her will were set steadily to the lightening of her husband's burden so far as it concerned herself, and in that, at all events, she succeeded.

*(To be continued.)*

## BLUECOAT SCHOOL MEMORIES.

PROGRESS takes toll of the traditions of our great public schools. Christ's Hospital had a place in every loyal Londoner's heart. The daily life of the City where that ancient foundation had played its part since the days of Edward VI. now knows the Bluecoat Boy no more. When he passed hence to Horsham a most picturesque page of educational history was completed. It was inevitable that in Sussex the school should lose its medieval atmosphere. Looking back across the years to the joys and embarrassments which varied the life of a taciturn Yorkshire boy for whom the foundation provided a shelter in its cloistered pile in the very heart of London, and close to St Paul's Cathedral, one cannot but think

of those early days with the liveliest gratitude. It was in some respects a life monastically austere. The stern discipline, the unwritten laws which precluded the shy new-comer from seeking outside his own 'ward' companions congenial to his tranquillity, the confinement after freedom where abounded sea-winds and the pure air of the wolds, exchanged for contact with loquacious and bantering Londoners—all these trials were there. The Bluecoat Boys who have the spacious buildings on the Sussex weald for their home cannot realise the quaint atmosphere of monkish formalism and repressive medievalisms in which their predecessors lived when the school stood in Newgate Street, London, a 'fine sight of charity.' Can it be said of the new Christ's Hospital, as was certainly true of the old Christ's Hospital, that it is without a parallel in the country?

The ward life in the old days, an old Blue may be forgiven for saying, was hardly imbued with comradeship or hearty good-feeling. The forty boys in each ward were under the dominion of a matron, a Grecian (or member of the top class), and two monitors, and the system resolved itself, in practice, into the placing of despotic power into one boy's hands, subject only to occasional petticoat interference. The masters were understood to possess no jurisdictional authority save in their classrooms, though no unfair advantage was ever taken of this fact. As far as the ward-life was concerned, the warden—the office is extinct—constituted the court of appeal. But if there were thorns and scourges to wound a new boy's pride, and the submission exacted was of needless humility, four years wrought a wondrous difference in his attitude towards the religious, royal, and ancient foundation. When old Blues, in the glory of modern dress, sauntered into the Hall Play, and good-naturedly demonstrated their prowess as footballers by performing an esoteric feat known as the 'first gutter kick,' we longed for the day when we too should be free; but the most graceless scamp among us recognised his indebtedness to the storied school of Charles Lamb, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, Henry Sumner Maine, and other giants of learning in the days before ours. Coleridge, before completing his fifteenth year, had translated the Greek hymns of Synesius into English anacreontic verse as a self-imposed labour of love, and his intellectual sensibility was shared by many other Blues whose gifts we idly envied, and of whose application we were often reminded.

The striking dress of the Christ's Hospital boy—the broad-skirted blue coat adorned with a small epaulette, the russia drab breeches, and the stockings of brilliant yellow—is known in all cities, for every part of the kingdom has at one time or another been represented at the school, and the children are not permitted to wear any attire but that provided by the Hospital, except in the case of Grecians, during vacations. Once it was found that 'divers Children kept in the Cittie . . . doe not some tyme weare their blew coates and some tymes not weare their yellow peticoats as they ought to doe,' and the penalty set forth was that the child should be 'utterly dismist from the paymt. and clothing of this hospitall *ipso facto*.' Any addition to dress in the way of finery is also forbidden, because it 'will be of ill Consequence especially to those children who have no friends.' Whether the dress is a heritage from the Grey Friars, whose work of charity Christ's Hospital nobly carries on, or, as Leigh Hunt believed, the ordinary attire of children of the humbler classes in Tudor days, has not been definitely settled. The coat would seem to have been originally russet; but in 1553 all the children were in blue, and there has been no change since then in that respect. The absence of caps is a feature on which every Blue congratulates himself. Very small caps, which were chiefly used as drinking-cups at the Pump, prevailed until fifty or sixty years ago; but they were rarely worn. The long outer cloak, monastic of aspect, suffered many changes until 1758, when it was decided that the 'Boys Clothes shall be made agreeable to a Coat produced to this Committee, with Buttonholes overcast, and the Coats be always buttoned by the Taylor with White Metal Buttons with the Head of King Edward the Sixth, Founder of this Hospital.' A tradition is recorded by Leigh Hunt that in the beginning the button was of silver and the great-coat of finest velvet. Yellow petticoats were once part of the Blues' equipment, and breeches were lacking until 1736, when it was ordered that they might be provided for 'sick and weakly children as the Doctor or Surgeon or either of them shall at any time think necessary.' The Bluecoat girl's dress has never approached the boy's in distinctiveness.

Before entering Christ's Hospital I had, with the zeal of a youthful antiquary, read all within reach concerning those great occasions when the work of the Hospital was vividly brought home to a thronged and fashionable audience. There were the Lenten suppers, when due respect was shown, with quaint ceremonial, to the Treasurer. Bishop Compton's sonorous prayers were recited, and the boys advanced in twos to bow before their chief guest and the Treasurer. There was the Spital sermon, representing a custom which, even in Stow's days, dated to time out of mind; and preceding the sermon there was the Lord Mayor's hospitality at the Mansion House—all ceremonies full of the sentiment of a storied past, but not so gratifying to my instinct of the picturesque as the visions of splendour with which my ardent fancy—stimulated by much and varied reading concerning these memorials of antique pomp—had filled my mind. The procession to the Mansion House and the acceptance of shillings and wine or lemonade tested the independence of boys whose dreams were all of conquest in the great world into which they would shortly go. The Spital sermon which followed received the closest attention, even if the Lord Mayor's pew, as sometimes happened, held those

whom newspaper fame had made our heroes. The preacher being always a distinguished man, we certainly fared better than the genial Pepys, who wrote under date of 2nd April 1662: 'Mr Moore came to me, and he and I walked to the Spittle an houre or two before my Lord Mayor and the blewecoat boys come, which at last they did, and a fine sight of charity it is indeed. We got places and staid to hear a sermon; but it, being a Presbyterian one, was so long that after above an houre of it we went away.' Seven years later he went again, and found the sermon dull, but the ceremonious departure from the church struck him as 'mighty pleasing.'

The passing of the Lenten suppers is not to be regretted. They were of sham antiquity and little picturesqueness; further, they were certainly disliked by those compelled to take their humble meal under the eyes of inquisitive visitors.

In the olden days Christ's Hospital not only received poor children into its benevolent habitation, not only nurtured them physically, mentally, and morally, but also conceived it to be part of its duty to give them a start in life, sending the promising boys to the university, and seeing that the others were apprenticed. Thanks to the industry of the devoted Vicar of Christ Church, Newgate Street, the Reverend E. H. Pearce, historian and former assistant-master of Christ's Hospital, there may here be related an instructive story of how that great nursing-mother held out a helping hand again and again to one of her wayward sons. A boy named Lee, who had gone to Trinity College, Oxford, in 1692, and a brother Blue, were reported to be wearing apparel shamefully gay and fine for their station. Lee received from the committee a more appropriate suit of clothes, and it was hoped that his boyish peccadillo would prove an isolated indication of unduly high spirits. But horror was heaped on horror. Lee asked his tutor for leave to visit his sick mother, and was next heard of when 'in custody in Wood Streete Compter' for debt, 'not yet truely sensible of his past follyes.' After a time he promised to amend his past life, and the indulgent Governors decided to give him a fresh start, this time at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. 'And on Sunday,' so the Treasurer reported a day or two after he had taken the boy to Oxford, 'the said Lee pict up some of the young students about 3 o'clock in the afternoone, and went with them to an Alehouse; and when he came home to his lodgings, which was about ten at night, was very drunk, soe that the colledge nor himselfe did not think fit to continue him at the university, having committed such an egregious fault at his first entrance.' The Governors had no thought of sending their troublesome charge adrift, and at length decided '(it being the desire of the said Lee) that he shall be disposed off to the sea imployment, and be bound to Mr Stone a mate of a ship for 5 yeares.'

The story crystallises the spirit in which the affairs of the Bluecoat School have ever been administered.

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# THE HAUNTED BUNGALOW.

By M. F. Hutchinson.

MAJOR CARTON'S kitmutgar waited with the patience of the East for his sahib's wife, waited on the veranda which ran round three sides of the colonel sahib's bungalow. The two ladies had been dining together. The man carried a small oil-lantern; he could hear the gay voice of his mistress as she bade her hostess a very prolonged good-night, but he was not supposed to understand English spoken in conversational fashion, only orders when they were very clearly and emphatically phrased. He had been told to be at Harding sahib's bungalow at half-past ten, bringing with him a lantern to guide hesitating feet across a dark compound a little distance along a road until his mem-sahib was at home again. He had accompanied her to the house, and stood behind her chair while she dined.

The rooms opened on to the veranda; in one, two English ladies talked; in another, an ayah moved noiselessly about setting everything in order for the night. In this room only a tiny lamp burned dimly, but the woman stepped here and there unhesitatingly. Close by the doorway, on the outside of which hung a purdah, she had deposited a bundle containing a thick mat and wadded quilt; since the master was away she would sleep across the threshold of her mem-sahib's room. The sound of voices reached her very clearly from the drawing-room; as she arranged the room that evening she sighed and shivered persistently. Perhaps it was because the nights were bitterly cold, and in her own quarters she would have crouched over the glow of a charcoal fire.

It was time to go, but at the very moment of departure Mrs Carton asked her hostess a question: 'Tell me, are you ever frightened in this place?' She cast nervous glances round the long, low room full of shadows. 'I ought not to have said that,' the visitor added impulsively; 'it's only because I am such a coward, you know.'

Mrs Harding laughed. 'Your ayah has been telling you tales.'

Mrs Carton gave a little gasp of relief. 'There, you know the story after all, and think nothing of it. A thousand times I've longed to ask if you ever heard queer sounds or saw anything here. Charlie declared you had not a notion this was called "The Haunted Bungalow;" he said your husband had told him so.'

'Of course I know the story. Far be it from me to teach you to think anything except that Major Carton is the wisest man in India, after my husband. As it happens, I do know the story, every word of it. What is more, I sleep in the very room she crept out from on her hopeless errand, poor dear.'

'Tell me the real story,' urged Mrs Carton. 'Charlie declares he does not know it. He tells fibs shamelessly.'

'Is it good for the nerves to be told a ghost-story at night? There 's no real ghost about it, though—not that I should be afraid of any one as splendidly brave as she was; but I have never seen a thing or heard uncanny noises except those made by rats and other crawling beastesses. When you hear the true story you will never be afraid of this bungalow again. Come, I believe I understand why you refused my urgent invitation to stay here while we are alone. Years ago, just before the outbreak of the Mutiny, Mrs Martyn, the wife of the colonel of a regiment stationed here, was alone with the servants; the regiment had been out in cholera-camp, but was to march in next day with a clean bill of health. Her ayah slept in her room. She woke in the night, to hear voices whispering, sat up noiselessly in the dark to catch every word, heard enough to know that an awful scheme was on foot, then lay down again, no doubt wondering if she could have dreamed the horror. Those out in camp, quite unprepared for any evil, were to be set on by Sepoys on that road we now call the Drive. You know the great heap of rocks that seems so out of place, and which all new-comers think so picturesque? Well, it was there the massacre took place. The ayah who afterwards told the story declared her mistress heard her bargaining with these devils to spare her life. Mrs Martyn must have felt blank and utter despair. What could she do?

'One can only imagine everything that passed through her mind; but it is a fact that while it was still dark she crept out of bed and wrapped herself in the ayah's chuddah, which the woman sleeping on her mat had left folded at her feet. Thus disguised, the Englishwoman stole out into the compound, hoping to get out to warn those marching in. Ah, one can picture it all! In these days our soldiers live in a state of preparedness, but not then—not then! In the compound she was set upon and stabbed to death; they thought, you see, that it was the ayah who had betrayed them. Will you tell me if any one could be afraid of the spirit of such a brave woman? She was going to do what she could, and at the risk of her own life. It is only the natives who are afraid of the bungalow, and declare, among themselves, that it is haunted. But if you asked my ayah, good, faithful soul, at this moment, she would declare there was no truth in the story as I tell it; yet *the* ayah was her own grandmother. She would assure you the colonel's mem-sahib died of cholera. An advance-party of the regiment coming in to make ready for the others was literally cut to pieces, and two English officers died with them. That's the story. Is it one to make us afraid, and for husbands—well-meaning husbands—to conceal?'

'That poor woman!' exclaimed Mrs Carton. 'Well, I am glad I don't live here. If I did I should think of her too much. I wish husbands were truthful people. Ours have assured us their absence is caused only by a fear that the cantonment water-supply is not of the best, that it was necessary to inspect the source and to meet that engineer man, whose name I can't remember. I am certain water has nothing to do with their absence. They are desperately afraid those men in Keranchi jail who were caught here will be let off too easily, and they have simply gone armed with all kinds of dreadful facts proving sedition and everything else, added to bomb-making, because it was not wise to write them. There! And they talk to us about the cantonment water-supply! They were always interviewing natives after dark in the adjutant's office. My ayah says the bazaars are full of talk—bad talk, and—— I think I'll go,' she added quaintly, 'while I have anything approaching a nerve left with which to cross the compound.'

'Don't indulge in bad dreams, my dear,' urged Mrs Harding. 'Remember how strong Englishmen in India are to-day; just think of that and be proud. Besides, remember also how we vowed to obey. If it pleases our lordly husbands to deceive, should we object?' She laughed gaily; people always said Mrs Harding was the cheeriest woman in the station. 'Shall we send for your night-things, and will you stay here? Don't imagine you'll be lucky enough to see a ghost, because you won't.'

'No, no; let me go,' said Mrs Carton hastily. 'Charlie will be back to-morrow, and doubtless I shall be telling him everything—all my cowardice and silly fears. Somehow, I always do; and he vows to tell me everything, and never does. I'm certain, too, he thinks all the time how splendidly wise he is, and it's fearfully annoying.' Then she laughed and declared she would get her cloak.

Mrs Harding clapped her hands. Instantly and noiselessly, without even the click of bangles or anklets, her own ayah appeared with the cloak and hood. The guest shuddered and grimaced. 'If only they would make a little noise when one's nerves are all on edge!'

She looked a pretty, dainty little creature, one to be taken care of, lifted over rough places. Was it wise to let her go? Doubtfully the hostess went with her to the veranda, where there waited the submissive figure of the kitmutgar. The lantern burned dimly; he had waited long. Mrs Carton would not hear of another being brought; it would serve splendidly for the little distance she had to go.

'Then I shall wait,' declared Mrs Harding, 'until I hear you call "Good-night."'

'It shall be "All's well!"' answered the other gaily—'"all's well!"' So, cheerily she stepped into the

dark compound. Mrs Harding wished she had insisted on keeping her friend. It was not many minutes before two words reached her, not 'All's well!' but 'Good-night.' Echo seemed to catch and prolong the sounds so familiar to India from English voices—used, too, even by the natives themselves. What a forgetful little person Mrs Carton was not to have remembered the words were to be 'All's well!' Perhaps, when reaching the bungalow, from which the master so dearly loved was absent, she had felt she could not say them. Still, to-morrow everything would be well indeed.

Mrs Harding knew the danger of allowing thoughts their way at night, so she went briskly into her own room. There the ayah brushed her beautiful hair, the only attraction she possessed, as she often told herself; the dark, lithe fingers seemed to linger on it caressingly. Were there, in any other country of the world, such devoted servants as those of India? This woman simply insisted on sleeping like a faithful dog near her mistress. Well, the sooner to sleep the quicker would come the happy hour of the return.

. . . . . .

What was it—a dream—that long and steady pressure on her hand? Eleanor Harding woke; it was still dark, so the coming of the ayah with her chota hazri had not roused her. Besides, Chua would never touch her hand like that. There were voices; she heard them distinctly. Again came the pressure on her hand. Why, it was a dream; she was going through the story she had told to Mrs Carton! Voices!—whispering voices! Suddenly realisation came to her; she was not asleep but wide awake, listening to the tones of her own ayah speaking with some one, if not in the room, on the threshold. The voices were very low, and yet she knew what they were saying:

'The sahib of her who sleeps here will return in the morning. We know the hour; we know all; nothing is hid from us, for we have eyes and ears everywhere. Yes, they ride back, the proud sahibs, and the three with them! Now, who shall throw blame or say evil words if one of the three falls, and comrades hasten from their saddles to help? The other two ride on. Never again will they send men of our kin to jail for writing and speaking true words to those of their own race. Now, why weep? It shall be a worthy lot to comfort the mem-sahib who will listen in vain for the strong step of him she calls Beloved. If not this hour, surely it will be the next! Then he will be carried home, the other sahib also, to his place. Loud can be raised the voices in mourning! Peace! All will be as I have said. Shall papers be sent, with words upon them not good for our race, by Harding sahib, to make woe and distress? These papers are here in my hand. They buy in their own country boxes with locks that they think good. Peace! When they search for his papers, lo, there will be none! The evil and the trouble will die with him. Peace now. I go!'

The Englishwoman lay stiff and straight on her pillows. Oh, the bitter horror of it all, the horror of helplessness! There was a movement in the room, a glimmer of light. The ayah Chua crept across to the bed, came to see if her mistress slept. With a supreme effort the Englishwoman forced her lips into the smile of one who dreams happily. The cautious feet stole away again. Eleanor Harding opened her eyes and peered round the familiar room, the very room in which another woman years before had been roused to hear the details of evil plans whispered. With a touch of comfort she remembered that long, lingering pressure on her hand: were the forces of the invisible world to be ranged on her side in an effort to save? She had felt that tender touch, not imagined or dreamed it. How came it that she had heard distinctly those whispered words? She must fight against the cloud of horror threatening to engulf her senses, to make clear thought impossible. If she gave way to terror nothing could be done. She must lie very, very still and work out a plan. Two Englishmen in the year 1909 riding home to a peaceful station, men who had unhesitatingly and ceaselessly advocated the strong, firm hand in India, would be murdered on a quiet road a little more than a couple of miles away! She seemed to see clearly before her the pile of rocks, the nullah on the farther side. There the murderers would hide, and shoot with deadly precision. Shoot! A quiver of pain racked her limbs. Shoot! They would throw their horrible bombs! Ah, the agony of lying still! Could she have ever dreamed that her comfortable charpoy would become a place of torture? She must not think of herself. She went over the story she had told to Isabel Carton.

Mrs Martyn, roused by voices, had waited a short time until she felt sure her ayah slept, had then risen, tried to disguise herself, crept out on to the veranda to take a few steps through the compound, only to be struck down by cruel knives, the knives of those who thought it was the ayah on her way to betray them. These men had promised to spare the life of the Englishwoman. She had done what she could, and failed. There was a lesson to learn from the pathetic story, the hard lesson of lying perfectly still through the dark hours of loneliness. In some way or other she must reach those rocks on the Drive, the upper road, before the men riding home from Keranchi, tell them of the horrible ambush, and persuade them to make a wide detour by the lower, rougher road. Yes, this must be done. But she knew her husband; she knew Major Carton. What would they say and do? Would they consent to ride round another way? Would they not insist on riding up to those rocks and—— Her presence might force them to turn their backs on danger. She could even see the expression on her husband's face as he listened to her story and agreed to do what she urged. It would be agony to him; his would-be murderers would instantly guess she had brought a warning, and how they would

triumph in secret over the two who rode away! Another thought came to her. Over and over again the recent murders in India had been declared to be the work of one man, the planning of one brain; men on trial had owned as much. Hitherto it had been impossible even to guess at the identity of the arch-fiend; but Colonel Harding had one night confided to his wife, when she reproached him for working so persistently over masses of papers, that he believed that fortunate circumstance had put him on the track of the right man.

She shivered again. Those words spoken to her in English, talked over in the adjutant's office, guarded by a sentry, had they been overheard?

Was there the smallest danger in ordering her horse very early in the morning and bidding the syce accompany her on the upper road, the Drive? Often she had ridden thither, and had as often passed the silent, dreary pile of rocks. Was there danger? She knew the voice of her own ayah, but not that of the other whisperer in the dark. Was it one of their own servants? At least it was some one known to the dogs, because there had not been one disturbing bark. If the syce were also in the league against his master? Smouldering fires might burst into flame through the apparently simple order. What if she were forcibly prevented from taking her morning ride? If not that, could she keep calm and cool if she were told it would be impossible for Huzoor, the horse she loved so dearly, to carry his mistress that morning, since he was 'sick, very sick indeed'? What should she do, how plan wisely enough there in the dark, with horror and terror for company? Then again she remembered that pressure on her hand; she had been helped then: might she not be helped again? Had God in His mercy sent her a messenger who had passed through the torture she was experiencing? What if death lay at the end of the road she must tread? Let her see her husband once more face to face, just once more, and though she was young and strong, with no wish to die, she would be quiet and submissive. The thought of him and his agony for her brought scalding tears to her eyes; she remembered promises made by English husbands to devoted wives of swift death by a merciful revolver held by the hands they loved best rather than that they should fall into the hands of deadly foes.

What should she do—what could she do?

At length plans took shape. She would rise early, a little earlier than usual, and would not order her horse at all, but walk across to Mrs Carton's bungalow, and—— No, no, not tell her—most certainly not; but Mrs Carton had two riding-horses; she would borrow one and suggest that they ride together, pretending to turn their faces from Kerachi. And then—and then—— Well, with another woman she might do it, but not with Mrs Carton. The only thing would be to persuade the little lady not to ride that morning, but to save herself for her husband's coming, and promise to exercise her favourite for her, pretend gaily to try his paces. Would this idea serve? Ah, how foolish she was, how badly she planned! She would go to the adjutant, tell him her story, and beg him, instead of going to the firing-range, to order an early route-march along the Upper Drive Road. Let them take possession of the rocks as a point of observation. Mrs Harding was not a soldier's wife for nothing. But what if they talked soothingly to her of nightmare and other evils which pass away with the night? What if Major English (acting second in command) and Captain Addison, the adjutant, refused to listen? What then — what then? If one of them offered to go himself, even with an escort, to prove there was nothing to fear, other lives might be sacrificed—sacrificed in vain. Perplexity and horror! horror and perplexity! Ah that she might dare to strike a match, rise from her bed, move about, pretend to search for a book, do something instead of lying there waiting for the dawn that seemed so long in coming!

One course made itself perfectly clear: she must do nothing unusual, but meet the day just as she had met other days, act as if those whispering voices in the dark had never disturbed her rest. Ah! it was not those sounds that roused her, but the persistent and repeated pressure on her hand. Each moment, dragging by, made her feel how hopelessly inadequate was any plan she made. She must just trust that as she had been called back from sleep, so she would be helped, when the moment for action came, to do the wisest thing, not only for the safety of her dear husband but for India too.

At length, with the suddenness of the East, the day broke. Mrs Harding heard her ayah move and stir. Ah, thank God! something she touched rattled and fell noisily to the floor. It gave her the excuse for stirring she needed; so she moved sleepily, and then called in a voice of reproach, 'Chua, what tamasha is this? Day is not here yet.'

'It is early yet, mem-sahib,' came the submissive voice. 'Rest again.'

'Rest again! That I cannot, for you have roused me. My chota hazri, quick! But I do not need Huzoor; tell the syce that. Truly, it is vexing that you have waked me so early.'

Ah! there was comfort in watching the woman go out of the room, pressing fingers to aching eyes, even to push aside the mosquito-curtains and feel for slippers placed on a table out of reach of enterprising rats and ants. In her dressing-case was a box of rouge, used carefully when the hot weather made her look haggard and yellow; a touch of it now, and there would be no ghastly pallor for the ayah to notice when she brought tea and toast. Mrs Harding slipped back to her charpoy, the place of her long torture. It seemed interminable ages before the tea and toast appeared. It was strange to hear all the familiar sounds, the water poured into the tub in her bathroom, everything as usual. Still exercising supreme courage, she forced herself to dress carefully and slowly, even when Chua pre-

pared to do her hair to be patient and particular. And yet she could have screamed at each touch of the brown fingers.

At length, in her sun-hat, with its white pugaree, she passed out on to the veranda, and called the dogs, her own dear dogs, who came scuttering gaily to meet her. It was very difficult to keep the tears from her eyes. Once out of the compound, Mrs Harding had the greatest difficulty in keeping her rigid self-control; she wanted to run quickly to get within reach of the sound of comforting voices, the touch of strong and confident hands. The bungalows, each in its own compound, with smoke rising from the various fires in the servants' huts, looked so familiar, so secure; would it be difficult to obtain belief for her story? That difficulty, she felt, it would be impossible to bear; she had forced herself to keep calm and quiet through the dreary night, but if she had now to fight against incredulity she knew it would break her down completely, make her feeble, powerless, hysterical. Ah, she must keep her wits about her! Would it be better to trust to herself, borrow one of Mrs Carton's horses, appear gay and unconcerned, and make her way alone by the lower road until she reached the little party riding in from Keranchi?

Distracted with conflicting thoughts, she closed her eyes, heedless of the dear dogs leaping round her, thought of the invisible hosts, 'the hosts of the Lord,' and prayed for help. She was out on the road, wondering which way to turn, what to do, but walking steadily forward, her big white umbrella used as a stick; she felt as if she needed all its help. She lifted her eyes, to see horsemen cantering gaily towards her; the dogs, in a joyous rush, had left her side. Could it be her husband on his big black charger, with Major Carton on his horse with the white star on the forehead—the horse they called Luck? Behind cantered the four who made up the escort. The earth swayed; everything about her was falling, falling, just when the man she loved was so near. She must fight for courage, not foolishly behave there in such a fashion as to excite the attention of dangerous, watching eyes when there was so much need for caution.

Courage came with a rush when a strong voice called to her, 'Eleanor, how often have I told you not to get up so early? If you could see your face!'

She pressed her fingers firmly to trembling lips. Major Carton saluted, said something—she could never remember his words or her reply—and turned in at his own gates.

Colonel Harding sprang from his horse, kept the reins in one hand, and slipped the other into his wife's arm. 'Eleanor, you look like a ghost, and you have been haunting me; that is why I am here so early. Regular nightmare! I dropped asleep after dinner, and saw you lying in bed, stiff and straight, with wide-open eyes, listening to voices in your room. I saw other figures, but not distinctly. It made me deuced uncomfortable, but I put it down to indigestion. We turned in early, for that brute of a dream came back as soon as I fell asleep. I woke up, then dreamed it again. I couldn't stand it any longer, roused Carton, and told him I must get back here. He suggested, good chap as he is, that we should start then and there, so here we are! Tell me I'm a fool!'

She did nothing of the kind. 'Dear'—she struggled pitifully to speak steadily—'it's all true, every word. Take me somewhere, not to our bungalow, where I can tell you everything. I can't talk there.'

Colonel Harding's grip on her arm tightened. 'We'll go to the adjutant's office. Sweetheart, no wonder you look a ghost!'

In a plain little room, with the serviceable table and chairs, he heard the story of a woman's pluck. He listened silently, but the look in his eyes was enough for the woman's heart. Then he made plans swiftly and well that strengthened the nets he was spreading. In less than an hour's time he stood in his dressing-room unlocking the great despatch-box in which, on account of its two excellent locks, he considered papers safe. Had Eleanor dreamed as well as he? For there lay the papers just as he had left them.

But when Mrs Harding called her ayah there came no voice in answer. At length a young woman came running and salaamed at the lady's feet: 'A strange and swift illness had seized upon Chua, who had served long and well, and, lo! in a little moment she was dead.'

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### ELECTROPLATING AT HOME.

CONSIDERABLE interest has been aroused in the discovery by Mr Augustus Rosenberg, a rising scientist, of a new method of cleaning and polishing metals. It is diametrically different from the majority of metallic cleaning-mediums, since—whereas the latter are essentially abrasives and corrosives—the new substance, to which the generic name 'galvanit' has been applied, is a deposit. In reality, when cleaning with this substance the person completes a metal-plating operation. For instance, articles of domestic utility, the silver-plating of which has deteriorated and worn off, can be restored to their pristine condition within a few seconds with no further apparatus than a small piece of rag upon which has been placed a little of the wet galvanit silver powder. All that one has to do is to rub the article vigorously with this, and in so doing an electro-chemical action

is produced which deposits a layer of real silver upon the surface of the article. It is the same with other metals, which can be similarly treated with cadmium, tin, nickel, and so on. It will be seen that the cumbersome electroplating bath and its intricate process can be extensively dispensed with. The galvanit substances are prepared in powders, each grain of which may be likened to a complete electroplating battery. The powders are perfectly harmless, being impregnated with no injurious or poisonous substances whatever. The powder metallic particles associate with the metal of which the article which is being cleaned is composed, and as a result it becomes tinned, nickelled, or silvered as the case may be. Moreover, the deposit assumes a brilliant lustre quite equal to that produced by burnishing in the ordinary electroplating process. All that it is necessary to do is first to clean the article thoroughly by washing, and remove all rust and other foreign deposited matter by scraping. It must then be well dried and polished. The greater the polish before galvaniting, the more brilliant will be the resultant effect. When sufficient deposit has been made, a point easily determinable from the appearance, the article is simply well rinsed in hot water to arrest the chemical action, and polished with dry leather in the usual manner. The plating is permanent, and there is the further advantage that each successive cleansing of the article with this substance increases the thickness of the deposit. A striking demonstration of the marvellous possibilities of this new invention was recently given before the members of the Society of Arts, to whom the process was described. Professor Sir J. J. Thomson, who was in the chair, produced one of the famous magic Japanese mirrors. The process by which these objects are coated on the back is a mystery to Western civilisation, and it has hitherto been difficult, if not impossible, to clean them so as to produce the original lustre. The mirror produced by Sir J. J. Thomson was greatly tarnished, yet in the course of the discussion the inventor resilvered half the mirror-back by his process, and when it was submitted to the action of the electric arc light the characters on the back of the mirror were plainly reflected. Sir J. J. Thomson explained that scientifically the restoration was complete. In face of this exacting test there is no doubt but that galvaniting will have an extensive vogue; though it must be explained that it will never entirely supersede the ordinary electroplating system, but will spring into popularity in the household for cleaning articles of frequent use, which can ill be spared for renovation by the ordinary means.

### A NEW FLOOR-COVERING MATERIAL.

The ideal floor-covering material is without a doubt mosaic wood, or, as it is more generally termed, parquet. It presents a smooth, level, homogeneous surface, which is easily cleaned, and which in its polished condition presents a strikingly handsome appearance, with the figuring of the blocks running in varying directions. Unfortunately, however, it has the disadvantage of being expensive, and when laid cannot be removed. A recent ingenious invention has, however, brought the parquet floor within the reach of all, especially of those resident in flats and houses upon short tenancies, for it can be removed when one leaves the premises and relaid in the new home. The cost is slightly higher than that of the first quality linoleum, but it has the compensating advantage of being everlasting in wear. It is composed of thin pieces of figured oak or American walnut about an eighth of an inch in thickness, attached to a cloth back. The pattern is built up of small squares, rectangles, or diagonals as desired, laid transversely and alternately to one another, so that warping, splitting, or bulging is absolutely impossible, and when laid it rests quite flat upon the surface of the floor. The provision of the cloth back not only constitutes a foundation for the parquetry, but also acts as an insulator. The surface is planed and waxed, and all that the purchaser has to do upon receiving the material is to lay it, which if he is a handy man is an easy matter. If desired, the parquet can be temporarily attached to the floor by rustless pins, or permanently attached by means of glue. To remove it, the pins are extracted, and the parquetry withdrawn in flat sections. The material has been subjected to prolonged private trials, the success of which has been so convincing as to warrant its introduction to the public. Certainly it constitutes an ideal hygienic, damp-proof, draught-proof, silent floor-covering, and offers no refuge for dust and dirt. As a surround to carpets it is preferable to felt or linoleum, and in appearance is much more artistic. The material is prepared in a variety of designs, and certainly constitutes the nearest approach to the much-admired parquet wood block flooring that has yet been evolved. In fact, when laid it cannot be distinguished therefrom. The oak being well seasoned and waxed, it is absolutely non-absorbent; and no matter how many times it may be removed and relaid, it will retain its original appearance.

### THE CULT OF THE SWEET-PEA.

During the past few years the sweet-pea has enjoyed increasing popularity, and there are few gardens to-day in which this exquisite blossom is not seen. This development is in a great measure due to the efforts of Mr Henry Eckford, who has accomplished for this flower what Luther Burbank has achieved for fruit. A decade ago the sweet-pea was a common-looking bloom possessing no special attractions either in regard to colour or shape. To-day it cannot be rivalled in beauty nor excelled in the brilliancy and variety of its colourings and forms. Mr Eckford's lifelong experiments in this field constitute a fascinating romance in the

story of horticulture; but it must be admitted that the successes, at least to-day, are few and far between. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ring the changes on nature and to secure fixity of type once a new development is achieved. Still, each year produces what may be termed its triumphs, and those for the forthcoming season, four in all, are among the finest that have yet been obtained. The waved representatives are particularly beautiful, and those who make a point of devoting especial attention to this cult and of keeping abreast with the times will appreciate many points of charm in 'Picotee.' It is a giant flower of dazzling, pure white, with a delicate edge of carmine. The stems are long and strong, and each invariably carries four blossoms, well placed, and of splendid substance. 'Mary Vipan' is another recruit to this class, being beautifully waved and of fine substance and size. The petals at the base are almost white, giving way gradually to a deep-bright rose at the outer edges, imparting to the blossom an effective brightness. The other novelties are 'Vicomte de Janzé,' a bold, well-shaped flower of deep-bright rose-colour, and 'Mrs E. Gilman,' which has a creamy ground suffused with bright-rose and almost pure cream wings. In consonance with the production of new varieties of this flower, the methods of culture are being carried out upon more rational lines. Instead of growing them thickly in long, unsightly rows, true garden-lovers are devising ingenious ways and means of securing the utmost blossom-effect. The latest method of growing ensures this being fully obtained. The peas are sown wide apart in isolated clumps. The supports comprise upright stakes set at the four points of the compass, outside the bed, and joined together at the top by cross-pieces so as to form a cross. Large-meshed galvanised sheep-wire is then placed round the stakes, forming a skeleton column. The peas throw out their tendrils and creep up through the meshes of the wire. In the height of the season a most striking effect is obtained, the wire being covered with a solid mass of blooms. In this manner each plant has ample room in which to thrive, and receives its maximum demands in regard to air and sun, while the roots likewise are not crowded and stunted.

### A NEW COPYING-PAPER.

Nothing has been so pronounced in modern business methods as the adoption of time and labour saving appliances. This is especially the case in regard to correspondence and clerical work. The old-time press, copying-book, and the messy brush and water have been completely driven out. This has been due in a great measure to the liberal utilisation of carbon copying for all transactions in which a fac-simile copy has been required. Even in this direction great improvement has been effected of late. The carbon paper, though effective, is greasy, dirty, and imperfect in its results. Now there has been produced a medium which is as clean as the writing-sheet itself to handle. There is not a trace of carbon in the paper, yet the copies are much cleaner and more distinct than those hitherto obtainable. Moreover, the paper is applicable to the typewriter, pen, stylus, or pencil with equal facility, so that the range of utility is appreciably extended; and in writing with a pen it is possible to secure as many as ten perfect copies simultaneously, the tenth copy being as clear as the uppermost sheet written in ink. This system has been perfected to a remarkable degree, and it has been devised to meet the requirements of commerce and private transactions. One great objection hitherto has been the difficulty of the private correspondent in securing a fac-simile copy of a letter concerning, say, an important transaction, and in many instances this omission has led to dispute. This is all altered now. A handy device has been perfected whereby the writer can use his own note-paper, and yet in writing his letter secure a copy thereof in a book, or if desired upon a separate sheet of paper for filing. Such facilities as these are of distinct advantage to the man with a small business. The volume when full can be unobtrusively stored on the book-shelf. In using this device the perforated edge, too, which to some has many drawbacks, is obviated, and correspondence can be conducted with ink. Copying with a pen in the same manner as is possible with the typewriter is something new, especially in connection with single sheets of detached notepaper; it is more economical and efficient, and its applications are limitless. Then, again, the fac-simile is permanent and cannot be defaced. The copying-paper can be handled with impunity, but will not soil the fingers, and it is stronger, cheaper, and more durable than the ordinary carbon paper. To mention here all that may be done with this new copying-paper is impossible; but we have described it sufficiently to demonstrate its utility.

### OPEN-AIR RECOVERY SCHOOLS.

An interesting experiment has been carried out by the Sheffield Education Committee in order to raise the standard of efficiency in the ordinary schools. In our large cities the backward child is a most perplexing problem. A certain proportion, though physically fit, are mentally dull, and for this reason their treatment is difficult. The remainder are only backward because, the struggle for existence being so keen, the body is rendered physically incapable of withstanding the strain of the ordinary curriculum. It has long been argued that if their depressed vitality could be restored, and the many ills attributable to malnutrition naturally cured or avoided, then intellectually they would be on the same plane as their more fortunate fellows. To test this theory in a practical manner, the Sheffield authorities last year decided to establish an open-air school for fifty debilitated children. A disused school and playground pleasantly situated mid rural surroundings was selected, and here the children received their

daily instruction in the open air. Two nurses were appointed, their duties being to assist the officials in the weighing of the children at periodic intervals, to examine as to cleanliness, to visit the homes of the children, and to impress upon the parents the necessity for sending their children to bed early, so that they might receive a sufficient amount of rest and sleep every night, and the importance of fresh air and plenty of it. Only children between the years of nine and thirteen were selected, and the class comprised some suffering from malnutrition due to poverty, anæmia, oral sepsis, debility after operation for tonsils and adenoids, and others developing symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis. The children met at a certain point at a quarter to nine in the morning, and were conveyed in vehicles to the school. Here intellectual work was reduced to the minimum, a period of three and three-quarters hours daily. The rest of the day was given over to practical instruction in gardening, housekeeping, nature study, and personal hygiene, under the supervision of two teachers. Personal cleanliness was emphasised, and the children soon devoted attention to their hands, teeth, hair, and so forth. Two warm shower-baths were taken weekly. Three good meals were given daily—breakfast immediately upon arrival (consisting of porridge and milk), dinner at one o'clock (followed by two hours of rest in the open air on deck-chairs and covered by a blanket), and tea at five. The parents contributed to the cost of the meals according to the limits of their purse, this expenditure ranging from sixpence to half-a-crown weekly. The school was open for five days in the week, and the children were sent home at a quarter to six in the evening. The experiment was placed in the hands of Dr Ralph Williams, the school medical officer, and it was found that the average weight of the children after six months improved 10 per cent., and at the end of the period was about 5 per cent. greater than the average increase at the ordinary schools in the same period. Moreover, the pupils were brighter, smarter, and tidier, and all signs of depression and mental backwardness had disappeared. The success of the experiment should be a sufficient inducement to the educational authorities of other towns and cities to follow on the same lines. This is a question which the Germans have taken firmly in hand, for it is one that vitally affects the welfare of the country, and the establishing of these schools will materially help in arresting the physical deterioration of which so much is now heard.

### SOLDERING AND GALVANISING ALUMINIUM.

Although innumerable efforts have been made to devise a simple commercial process of soldering aluminium, but slight success has been attained. It is for this reason that great interest is attached to the latest development in this direction, which is exceedingly simple and highly efficient. The examples of such work have compelled attention, and the joint is so strong that it may be subjected to bending without showing any signs of deformation. The same inventors also discovered a means whereby aluminium can be galvanised and plated. The great difficulty which has frustrated work in this field is the superficial oxide coating which the chemical assumes, generated by the oxygen in the air, and which, as in the soldering process, prevents the deposit in the galvanising operation from securing a hold upon the aluminium itself. This action has now been overcome, and thin colouring coatings or thick protective coatings may be applied to the aluminium as easily as to silver and other metallic articles. The process is also stated to be equally applicable to any aluminium alloys.

### DRAUGHT-EXCLUDER FOR DOORS.

Who has not experienced the discomfort arising from a draught of air whistling beneath the door, and resorted to endless artifices to combat the nuisance? The latest idea in this direction has many points of recommendation, for it appears to solve the problem very neatly. Over the mould at the bottom of the door is placed a hinged device of brass. This is made the full width of the door, and the upper plate is fixed to its surface just above the mould. The mould itself is covered with a plate hinged to the section secured to the door. This second part is also hinged in the middle. At the outer edge is hinged another flange, which hangs vertically over the mould, and this is in contact with a triangular sheet of brass bent over the step of the door. When the door is closed this lower swinging section rests upon the inner inclined part of the step, so that there is no gap. When the door is opened the swinging plate slides up the triangular foot-plate to the apex, and then down the opposite side; and when it closes the reverse action takes place. A draught cannot possibly force its way under the door, and similarly neither rain nor dust can force an entry. The device is certainly efficient, capable of being fitted to any door in a few minutes, and free from any liability to derangement. It can also be attached to windows with equal success, and will in this case give an absolutely watertight fitting.

### MOTOR FISHING-BOATS.

In order to encourage the development of the motor fishing-boat, an exhibition of marine oil-engines specially suitable to the rough-and-tumble of the fishing industry is to be held at Great Yarmouth in the first fortnight of November next. The time and place have been selected as being the most convenient to bring the possibilities of motor-driven fishing-vessels before the owners of the Scottish sailing-boats. The latter have been seriously affected by the steam-drifter, and these in turn have increased in such numbers that competition has been brought to a keen point, leaving a very small margin of profit, and a reversion is being made to the wind-propelled craft. It has been proved, however, that when the sailing-boats are

fitted with auxiliary motive-power in the form of an oil-engine their efficiency is vastly improved, as the working of many such craft around the north of Scotland and the Orkneys abundantly testifies. The difference in first cost of an oil-driven boat and a steam-drifter is about seven hundred pounds in favour of the former, the speed obtained being about the same. The more widespread adoption of the oil-engine should prove of great value to the fishing industry, as it has the recommendation of dispensing with highly skilled labour. The oil-engine is being gradually adopted; but it is felt that the forthcoming exhibition will emphasise its claims far more forcibly, and lead to a wholesale conversion to mechanical power.

### PYROPHORIC GAS-LIGHTER.

Another effort towards solving the problem of gas-lighting without a flame has been made by Dr Auer, who has discovered an alloy which is composed in part of the rare earths used in the manufacture of incandescent mantles, and which gives a large spark when rubbed with a file. Several designs of apparatus have been made to put the idea into a form that would make it commercially useful. Some of these designs are easily thrown out of gear, some require to be manipulated with both hands, and others are clumsy; but we have seen one in the form of a rod about ten inches long, with a trigger and spring which can be manipulated with one hand, and which gives very excellent results. The spark given by the friction of the small file rubbing over the pellet of pyrophoric alloy is much longer and apparently more solid than the sparks usually obtained from the electric torches in use; and one point which we cannot explain is that, although the spark emitted by the pyrophoric lighter will readily ignite the gas, it has no effect whatever upon the skin or upon the thinnest of tissue-paper. It is claimed that the sparking element will survive five thousand ignitions.

### THE MAGNETIC OBSERVATORY AT ESKDALEMUIR.

Mr G. W. Walker, superintendent of the new magnetic observatory at Eskdalemuir, has explained that the primary work at the observatory is the investigation of terrestrial magnetism. The magnetic records at Kew extended over half a century. Recently, however, electric railways and tramways have multiplied in the vicinity, and some of the lines come within a mile and a half of Kew Observatory. An electric current affects a magnet, and in the case of electric tramways the effect could be traced ten miles away. The result at Kew was that the instruments were disturbed by these electric currents, one of them to such an extent that it gave a record of the behaviour of the electric trains and trams rather than of true terrestrial magnetic effects. Thus it was resolved to erect a new observatory. The Government agreed to erect the new buildings on a suitable site, the essential conditions being complete isolation from the effects of electric railways, and a reasonable prospect that no such railways were likely to be laid in the vicinity in the future. Eskdalemuir, a parish of east Dumfriesshire, high above sea-level, was selected after careful investigation, and there is every reason to hope that the essential conditions have been secured. The new observatory is a branch of the National Physical Laboratory. While the investigation of terrestrial magnetism is the primary object at Eskdalemuir, it was considered that provision should be made for cognate subjects, chief among them being the problem of atmospheric electricity. Further, while the possibility of connection between terrestrial magnetism and weather and earthquakes is still a matter of discussion, it was felt to be wise to provide for the observation of effects, and thus Eskdalemuir will be what is known as a First Order Station for meteorology and seismology.

### TWO SELKIRK INVENTORS.

Two stone-masons belonging to Selkirk have been remarkable for inventive genius in widely different directions. The late P. S. Lang, brother of Mr Andrew Lang, and a native of Selkirk, received in 1867 from Robert Pow, stone-mason, the drawing of a velocipede, the design of which was not far removed from the present safety-bicycle. This, Pow asserted, was a drawing of a machine he had ridden some fifty years previously, which, Lang says, carries us back to about 1820. Lang and others in Selkirk were aware of the invention, but not of the date, and an old man's memory is not to be trusted as to this. It seems likely, however, that he was earlier in the field than Gavin Dalzell, of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, who made and rode a velocipede in 1845; or Kirkpatrick Macmillan, a Dumfriesshire blacksmith, who made and rode a machine even earlier than Dalzell. Pow, who had worked at Abbotsford while Scott was living, had various eccentricities, and carried a red handkerchief, papers, sketches, and drawings in the crown of his hat. Born in 1786, he was eighty-nine when he died. James Scott, another Selkirk stone-mason and inventor, without training, scientific tools, or mathematical instruments, has made astronomical clocks and other instruments which are the wonder of all who have seen them. They were shown at the Edinburgh Exhibition of 1908. In 1887, at the age of forty-two, Scott began, in intervals of leisure, to make his first astronomical clock, which is eight feet high and five in breadth, is driven by a single weight, keeps correct time, and supplies the motive-power for the various systems of which it is the centre. Below is a series of concentric dials, which, revolving independently, are timed to indicate the revolutions of Mercury, Venus, and the earth and moon round the sun, and the moon's revolutions round the earth, showing the correct position of any of these bodies at any hour of the day. Other machines designed and made by him have been a Jupiter clock, a solar clock, and a cheap barometer. His

tools were files, a hammer, pincers, and a strong pocket-knife—all now well worn down.

### AUSTRALIAN JADE AND RUTILE.

A correspondent writes from Adelaide, Australia: 'Although there are still large quantities of greenstone or jade in New Zealand, at Greenstone Creek, in the South Island, all the land is taken up, and it is not easy to get any fresh claim save at a high price. Recently, however, greenstone has been found in abundance near William's Town, in South Australia, about thirty miles from Adelaide. The stone is rather softer to work than that of New Zealand, and is of a lighter green, and likely to be more popular in the Emerald Isle. The men on the station have been known to carve out egg-cups of it, and also napkin-rings. It would make beautiful goblets, and is expected to be quite as popular as the harder and darker variety found in New Zealand. The same district is noted for very good mica, for which no regular market has yet been found, although it is bright and of good quality. The idea of grinding this up and using it like plumbago for ball-bearings of machinery has been suggested. In the same district is found rutile, a dioxide of titanium used to harden steel, both in crystallised form in the streams and in block. The Germans have been buying it for this purpose; but it is very heavy, and cannot at present be treated at Adelaide. It might be well for the Australian Government to secure some of these rutile-mines, so as always to have on hand a good supply of that metal, which is so useful in hardening steel plates of armoured ships. All sorts of finds are reported from Kangaroo Island, such as rare shells, gems, and also rutile. If retired British officers could come out here they would still be able to keep good horses, and, having a safe income, could support themselves while prospecting, and also be able to get some sport, and always have the possibility of finding something really valuable.'

### A SEARCH FOR NEW PLANTS.

Professor Meyer, of the United States Bureau of Agriculture, recently started on botanical research throughout Southern Russia and Asia for the purpose of discovering new plants and grains which may profitably be transplanted to America. He has already discovered a species of rice which can be grown in the United States in the same way as wheat is raised in this country. Ten years ago a peculiar kind of wheat was discovered in Southern Russia which would thrive with a rainfall of only twelve to fifteen inches in the course of the year. This was introduced into some semi-rainless districts of the United States with such success that last year no less a quantity than two million bushels of this grain was exported to the very country from which, ten years before, the seeds were obtained. Professor Meyer has been instrumental in introducing several varieties of Central Asian grapes and peaches into the States; and recently the Government experimental farms in California have been propagating a giant radish, brought back by the professor from his China and Japan expedition. Barley and oats free from hulls, found by the professor in Northern Mongolia, are now being extensively cultivated in the States, and the Japanese bamboo is also being successfully raised. Professor Meyer, in his present tour, is particularly desirous of finding a variety of the Siberian fir which will adapt itself to the higher and colder regions of America. Another object of his search will be to discover, if possible, parasites which, when introduced upon a fruit or grain farm, will attack and kill the insect-pests that often play havoc with United States agriculture. Professor Meyer goes first to the Crimea, and then across the Black Sea to Batoum, and over the Caucasus to the Caspian Sea, through Turkestan, Siberia, Tibet, Mongolia, and China.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### TO BRIGHTER DAYS.

O HAPPY year, what wilt thou bring
When winter days have ceased to be?
Will flowers awaken with the spring,
And will the birds sing o'er the lea?

A snowy wreath was on thy brow
When thou didst usher in thy year;
Cold was thy icy breath, but now
The snowdrops in the land appear.

Soon wilt thou take us by the hand
And lead us by a flowery way;
Soon wilt thou deck a smiling land
With beauteous robes and sunny day.

And in the hedgerows we will hear
The nesting-birds sweet music make;
And once again on listening ear
The song of summer shall awake.

O happy year! O coming morn!
Haste ye, O haste thy laggard feet!
And, till thy gladsome spring is born
Fill thou our breasts with promise sweet.

GILBERT RAE.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE PATH OF ST PETER.

By K. and HESKETH PRICHARD.

PART I.

YOU will perhaps have heard of a certain Captain Maher, and of how he gathered a troop in England and Ireland, by commission of the Count of Egmont, to serve in his immediate following. Maher found no lack of volunteers, for all had heard of the rich cities set in the fens, and looked to quilt their doublets thick with the down plucked from the well-feathered nests of the burghers. Of these he chose but the flower, a hardy crew, who later became known throughout Europe as the Gray Riders of Orange.

Peter Maher was my cousin on the mother's side; and while he was in Ireland upon this business, about the year 1552, it chanced that, my father dying as they were about to sail, I was taken aboard, and when we reached the Netherlands, was delivered, much against my will, into the keeping of my uncle, abbot of the Franciscan monastery in the city of Louvain. There I abode until I grew to be nineteen years of age, when, having no stomach for the cloister, I broke away and took service under my cousin Maher. Thus it fell out that I, Martin Carew, sometime intended for the priesthood, became a Gray Rider.

Upon the abdication of Charles V., his son Philip —lord also of other vast dominions—became king of Spain and sovereign of the Netherlands, an untoward combination from which we were yet to see many and great troubles spring. But those dark days were still unthought of, when in the summer of 1557 war broke out between France and Spain, and we rode south with the contingent from the Low Countries to join the Spanish army in Picardy. The Duke of Savoy, who was in command of the forces of Philip II., had after some feints invested the city of St Quentin.

Our post lay with the cavalry under our master, the great Count Egmont, every man of us lusting to see service under so matchless a leader.

St Quentin stood upon a rising ground above the waters of the Somme. Broad suburbs, with their rich orchards and gardens, now shady and full of leaf, covered the slopes, at the foot of which a lake, deep in places and breaking at its edges into pools and treacherous morasses, protected the city on three sides. St Quentin was held to be the key of France, and should it fall the road to Paris must lie open before us. Therefore, at the news of our advance, Admiral Coligny, rushing ahead of his troops, flung himself into the town, which was but ill-supplied with men and provisions. Meanwhile Montmorency, Constable of France, with a large army, had reached La Fére, where he lay awaiting advices from Coligny as to the means by which the much-needed reinforcements might be sent to his aid.

But the place was so closely invested, and watched with such a sleepless jealousy of attention by our troops and their newly arrived English allies, that any access seemed well-nigh impossible. Nevertheless, Coligny, aware of the deadly peril in which he stood, exhausted all the resources of his skill and long experience in the effort to outwit our vigilance; whereas we, on our side, were equally resolved that no succour should reach him. In truth, the contest was for a nobler prize than the wealthy border city. The kingdom of France itself lay in the balances.

We passed a week of long, hot days and short nights in scouring the country far and wide, thereby gaining a convenient knowledge of the adjacent parts, sometimes bringing in supplies for the camp, and sometimes, as luck would have it, intercepting the communications between the two French generals, the which no doubt occasioned not a few disappointments to those shut up within the city.

One morning in the beginning of August, Maher, with myself and a small company of our men, set forth on such an errand. During the heat of noon we rested in a wood, where the tangle of undergrowth promised safe hiding and a little spring trickled down from the hill above. The horses had been tethered, and the men were cooling their dry


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throats with the fresh water, when the sound of hoofs approaching fell on our ears. At a word from Maher we were all back in the bushes, lying as close as snipe in a wind. A moment later a horseman appeared in the opening between the trees. He glanced suspiciously about him, then pushed up the bed of the stream to where a rill dripped from the overhanging rocks, and made shift to drink without dismounting, placing his open mouth beneath the drip of the water.

'He must be made sure of. I'll bet a hundred ducats he carries a message; he knows the country too well!' growled Maher.

Then the challenge rang out short and clear. The man started violently, turning his small, wiry horse in a half-circle, and spurred toward the open, crouching low in his saddle.

'Fire!'

Dimly through the smoke of the muskets I saw the horse rear sharply. The man's bowed body pitched out of the saddle in a heap, and then rolled over, quivering, to stretch itself at full length and lie for ever still. In a breath a dozen hands were searching him, and presently they drew from the breast of his doublet a square package firmly secured by a thin silken cord.

'Despatches!' cried Maher.

Then, bidding the men keep close and conceal the dead body, he withdrew into the depths of the wood, beckoning me to follow him.

I watched him as he carefully unwound the bindings about the packet and then proceeded to examine it, a puzzled frown gathering on his brow.

It has seldom fallen to my lot to behold a more soldierly figure than Maher's—somewhat tall and deep-chested, the burly neck burnt to a dark red by the sun, his face half-covered with a short russet beard, and lit by eyes of an extraordinary deep blue, with a spark in them like the glint of a star.

At length he looked up with a curse and a laugh. 'That old fox Coligny has learned a trick or two! What make you of this?' said he.

He handed me the packet. It contained nothing but an oblong piece of wood with notches cut at regular intervals down the longer sides, the surface being smooth and entirely blank.

'It is a sign of some kind,' I suggested weakly.

'Ay; it does not take a half-bred priest to come at so much of his meaning. A sign, no doubt; a sign, but of what, man—of what?' he replied with impatient humour.

I shook my head.

'Come, Martin, the monkish craft they taught you at Louvain during these last five years will surely help us at this pinch to read a French riddle.'

At the word 'Louvain,' and the sight of a small hole at the left-hand corner of the wooden message, a remembrance burst upon me that made me cry out with some eagerness, 'Your dagger, captain; it has a sharper point than mine!'

Maher hastily disengaged the knife from his belt, and I, handling it delicately, drew lines along the face of the wood and marked letters between them, for I began to think that my practice in certain secret matters at the monastery might now stand us in good stead.

Then, 'The cord! Where is the cord that was bound upon it?' I exclaimed.

But in his wrath Maher had flung it from him.

'I' faith, lad, I but now tossed it away into some thicket. But what of that? Go on, go on! 'Twas a silken tag, no more.'

'I cannot go on without it.'

'What! Then it shall be found. I think I cast it here.'

With some searching it was discovered, and I seized it, trembling; for this might be a moment when I could prove to my cousin that the learning he ever despised was, after all, no useless weight in a soldier's wallet. Yes, the cord bore upon it here and there scarce visible spots or touches of a dark colour; then, with a growing hope, I fitted it to the hole in the wood, and, pulling, drew it through to the end where a knot had been devised by some other hand than mine, then I laced it back and forth by the notches across the surface where my lines were drawn.

'By the twelve blessed apostles, that seems not so much amiss! Hasten, lad!' said Maher.

After adjusting my cord with care by the notches, I found that I could con the cipher with ease, the spots being disposed to fall beneath certain letters of the alphabet as I had written them. Thus was the riddle laid open to my eyes.

I read it aloud with no small pride. It was in the French jargon, and ran somewhat as follows:

'St Peter's Path found. After sunset the Bear in the Wood. Delay not.'

Maher sprang to his feet. 'Coligny has got wind of some secret way whereby Montmorency may throw reinforcements and supplies into the city. We must spoil his plans, cost what it may!'

'My monkish breeding has taught me somewhat,' I said in my boyish vanity.

'Ay, more than any honest man wots of,' returned Maher dryly, but with a laugh in his eye. 'Now, Sir Monk, canst tell me where lies the path St Peter trod?'

'Across the sea,' I answered with a happy inspiration.

Maher slapped his thigh. 'A path through the marshes! See you not?'

'But the Bear in the Wood?'

'You do not remember? Then, Martin, your monk's head lacks a soldier's eye. We passed it a day ago in the woods above the defile on the road to La Fére.'

'I remember! It is by the inn, carved in relief on a blasted pine-trunk.'

He nodded. 'A trusty messenger will be there after sunset with the plan of the path and directions for Montmorency. We must meet him, you and I.'

My heart leapt up with joy. I had not hoped he would choose me.

'The men will return to the camp and carry the news to the Count. We start at once, for we know not what delays may chance to befall us as we draw nearer to the French lines. See to the dead man. Has he scarf or colours?'

In a few moments I was attired in such of the messenger's clothing as was necessary to lend me something of his appearance. We started at a round pace in the direction of the tryst. A storm of rain blew up out of the west and lashed our faces as we rode; but the dusk gathered the earlier, and with our gray horses and long cloaks we reached the foothills unseen and passed up a gorge we knew of to the back of the Bear Inn.

The innkeeper came out to meet us—a fat, pallid man, who trembled at the sound of my guttural French; but I reassured him by an aside to Maher, from which he gathered that I was one of the German troopers serving with the French army.

'Whom have you within?' I asked roughly.

'None, master; not a man. The people below'—pointing down to the valley—'care not to linger late in these days.'

'That is well,' I replied. 'Light us a fire that we may dry ourselves, and bring us the best you can provide, quickly.'

The man hurried away to carry out my orders, Maher being perforce silent, lest his speech should betray him; while I rubbed down the great Flemish horses and fed them with a due regard to the fact that our lives might hang upon their speed within a couple of hours.

'Tell the host to show any one who may arrive into this room at once. There will be but one messenger; leave me to deal with him. But hark, linger about that fellow lest he have suspicions of us and seek to warn the messenger,' said Maher.

For an hour or so I loitered about the yard. The storm had passed away, leaving the sky clear. The rising moon began to show out over the dark trees, deepening the shadows that lay round the lonely house. Suddenly a slight sound put me on the alert. The soft beat of hoofs upon the fallen pine-needles soon became distinct. I had but a moment to warn Maher, who leant from the window and ordered me to wait in the adjoining room in case of need. Then withdrawing, he closed the shutters noiselessly.

After a short hesitation at the border of the surrounding wood, a tall man on a lean horse rode out into the moonlight. I judged him at once to be Coligny's envoy, for man and horse were splashed with the slime of the marshes. I stood back in the shadows of one of the stables, while he called for the innkeeper, who came running out, his frightened face framed in a mat of black hair.

'Are they within?' he asked, using almost my own words.

'A gentleman, my lord, who awaits'——

'Have you any other guests?' demanded the stranger, cutting short the host's explanations.

'None, my lord.'

'Then who is this?' He swung round on me fiercely, his hand loosening his sword in its scabbard.

I saluted with a careless indifference I was far from feeling, and left the answer to the innkeeper.

'A German trooper, my lord, in attendance on the gentleman.'

With a rapid movement, the stranger bent and said a word or two in the man's ear, who replied in a shaking voice, 'As I live, my lord, I have sent every soul away as I was commanded.'

'By the Path of St Peter, sir! my master is alone in the house,' I broke in, fearing delay. For I had no doubt but that a duplicate cipher message similar to that seized by us had long ere this reached Montmorency, since our man had evidently been forced to make a long round in the hope of escaping the Spanish skirmishers. Thus the escort from the French camp might arrive at any moment.

At my words the stranger gave an involuntary movement as of surprise, but instantly suppressed it; then he descended stiffly from his saddle, and throwing me the reins, bade me see to the horse's wants, for he had yet far to travel.

As he followed the innkeeper into the house I led away the tired beast into the stable and gave it due attention, for I held that a good horse, being dumb, has a stronger claim upon us for care than any Christian man. But I had not much time to spare, and soon I was stealing along the passage to the farther room.

As I gained it in the pitch-dark I felt myself clasped in a pair of soft but powerful arms, and a hot breath whispered in my ear, 'For the love of our Lady, be silent!'

With a mighty sense of relief, I recognised the voice.

'Fool, is it you?' said I hotly, as I thrust the innkeeper out with a sound buffet or two, ordering him to keep watch by the stables and to warn me if any one approached, as he valued a whole skin. Then back again to where a gleam of light athwart the darkness guided me to a crack in the old wooden partition, through which I could see and hear all that passed in the room beyond.

The fire upon the wide hearth was their only light, and in its red circle against the dark background of the blackened walls and ceiling stood Maher and the stranger face to face with swords drawn—Maher with his back to the door; the stranger, his cloak flung off on the settle behind him, ready to advance, a gaunt but stately figure with blazing eyes set in a death-white face.

'So we are betrayed once more!' he was saying. 'France has a heavy debt to settle with you, Captain Maher.'

'She shall have her chance of paying it in full, Captain Brueuil,' replied Maher quietly in his execrable French; 'and I make no doubt her turn will come—her brave sons will avenge her cause upon my poor carcass some day.'

So the messenger was no other than the com-

mandant of St Quentin himself! How important, then, must be the despatches he would trust to no hand but his own! It was little wonder that he and the captain of the Gray Riders recognised each other; they had met hand to hand more than once already in the sorties which were almost daily attempted by the besieged.

Brueuil bowed and was silent for a moment. I could have sworn he was listening for sounds from without. When he raised his head his face wore a new expression.

'Captain Maher is too noted a soldier not to be acceptable in the train of any great leader. Montmorency is a man, and knows how to reward his generals in a befitting manner, such as your puny king never dreamt of.'

'I am no servant of King Philip's,' replied Maher. 'I serve Count Egmont, the first soldier in Europe.'

'Ay, but the reward lies in the hand of Philip,' sneered the other, 'who doubtless would bestow upon you as the meed of valour one of the pasties his soul loves!'

Maher laughed carelessly.

'Ride on with me. Montmorency will give a noble guerdon to him who brings in safety the message I carry,' went on Brueuil.

'Nay, you must even carry the message and gain the guerdon yourself, Captain Brueuil—if you can! If not, I may chance to win a pasty, who knows? Guard yourself, sir; this is no time for talking folly.'

He saw through Brueuil's device, whose only hope lay in parleying till the detachment from La Fére should arrive.

'We must see to do our work,' added Maher, as with his heavy spurred boot he kicked the brands to a flame.

At this moment, without warning and regardless of all the laws of honour, Brueuil sprang upon him, shouting, '*Trahi—— A moi, Français!*'

Active as a wild cat, Maher leaped aside to escape that deadly lunge. He was a consummate swordsman, but for once he had met his match. He fought with a desperate calmness, while the other, overwrought with excitement, showed all his nation's fiery valour.

''Sdeath, you are yourself a traitor, Captain Brueuil!' said Maher with bitter scorn.

'For France—all for France—even my honour!' was the reply, hissed between set teeth.

It was a royal struggle! Each grim combatant fought for dear life, and more than life—for the kingdom of France itself.

It made a man's blood run warm to see it. The picture is before me yet. The stern faces, the half-seen movements, the glittering blades, as the fire-light flickered upon them, now flaming, now falling.

Under such circumstances victory lay with the luckiest. In a few moments the blaze failed. But the desperate conflict went on in the dull crimson glow till nothing could be seen save the glint of steel in the dusky room.

Then came a stumble, the snap of a splintered sword, a fall, and a heavy groan. I rushed round, not knowing which had fallen, friend or foe.

I found Maher wiping his sword.

'Throw on some wood,' he ordered hoarsely, then bent over Brueuil.

The Frenchman raised himself on his elbow, the glare of conflict still in his eyes, and called aloud in a last hope, '*A moi, Français!*' There was a choking breath as his head fell back against Maher's arm. 'Alas, poor France!' he murmured.

'A loyal son of France, and a pretty swordsman!' said Maher, as he laid him gently down. 'Had they not been starving in St Quentin it might have gone hard with me.'

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE STORY OF THE GERMAN NORTH SEA COAST.

TO most Britons the North Sea is known chiefly through pleasant summer holidays spent on its shores—shores by which the rocks hold their own in the contest between land and sea north of the Humber. Yet to the south of this river there is another story to tell, even in England. The visitor to Norfolk or Suffolk will often be told of the lost city which lies buried underneath the waves off Southwold—the tale of the ancient walled city of Dunwich, with its fifty-two stately churches and religious houses, its bishop's palace, and its royal residence, all of which the waves devoured piecemeal, church by church and house by house, until, in the eighteenth century, it had become nothing but a village of four hundred and fifty inhabitants. Now, alas! there is not even a trace of it left.

All this is but a trifle compared to what the North Sea has done on the coast of Germany. Here, in past centuries, the terrible north-west wind swept straight down on a flat coast, protected only by dikes, with appalling results—dire catastrophes the like of which has never been known in England. There has been a lull in its attacks in recent times, so that the really great floods have not been repeated in this present generation; but, some day, what has happened before may perhaps happen again—a south-westerly gale may sweep up the Channel, carrying before it a pent-up mass of water, only to encounter another gale sweeping down from the north. Then, and particularly if it be the season of the spring-tides, down will go the dikes once more, and the tale of the last terrible flood of Christmas Day 1717 will be repeated.

In this inundation, in German Friesland alone,

two thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven men perished in the waves; one thousand and thirty houses sank under the sea; and two thousand two hundred and fifty horses, nine thousand five hundred and fourteen cattle, two thousand five hundred and eighty-nine sheep, and one thousand and forty-eight pigs were drowned. Pastor Hieronymus Brückner, of Wittmund, wrote in his parish register a lengthy account of this catastrophe, a transcript of which lies before the writer. 'On Saturday before Christmas Day,' wrote he, 'the south-west wind blew a gale, and in the evening about ten o'clock the north-west wind arose and blew fiercely, by which the water coming up the Channel from the Atlantic Ocean was heaped up, and destroyed the dikes about midnight, when the moon entered into its last quarter. So that the whole of Ost-Friesland was invaded by the sea, and the greater part of the district of Wittmund lay under water. . . . In the inn at six o'clock in the morning there was two or three feet of salt water.'

Wittmund lies about six miles inland, and about the same distance to the west of what is now the great German war-harbour of Wilhelmshaven, then only a hamlet called Heppens, situated in a marshy district, Rustringen by name, the whole of which had but three hundred inhabitants. What would happen to Wilhelmshaven nowadays if such a flood took place again? For it is more exposed than Wittmund, and lies on the very edge of one of the North Sea's greatest conquests from the land—the Jade-Busen, an immense inland bay containing one hundred and ninety-five square kilometres of lost land, in shape for all the world like a great bite taken out of the earth by the sea.

Pastor Brückner's narrative ends thus: 'And this, our worst and sixth Christmas Day flood, is the most terrible that has happened since the frightful one that took place near Emden in 1277. But (thank God!) we are more fortunate in our time. For [he was evidently very loyal] our most noble and ever-to-be-honoured Prince and Lord, the Lord George Albert, Prince of Ost-Friesland, Lord of Esens and Wittmund, has extended his most high, princely, and land-fatherlike patronage and charity in compassion over the whole of Ost-Friesland and Harringerland, and has come to our assistance in the most open-handed manner, both for the repairing the dikes, the renewal of the crops, and the comfort and succour of the sick and homeless.' God's blessing, also, had not been wanting, wound up the good pastor; for in the following year they had the fattest crops ever known. Wittmund parish itself, being far from the sea, suffered least of any; but in Wittmund district three hundred and seventy-three men, two hundred and fifty-one horses, eight hundred and fifty-five cattle, one hundred and eleven sheep, and two hundred and eight pigs were drowned. Eighty-six houses were also destroyed.

A little consideration of the past history of this coast shows that the sea has been quiescent for a century or so before, only to renew its attacks in greater fury than ever. Take the history of the Jade-Busen. Wilhelmshaven lies near the mouth of the river Jade, ten or twelve miles east of which, only separated by the peninsula of Langwarden, lies the mouth of the Weser. There is nothing to the north of Langwarden nowadays but *watten* or mud-flats; yet in the year 1066 the castle and village of Mellum carried the peninsula five miles farther out to the north. Castle and village alike vanished in the flood of that year.

For the next one hundred and fifty years the North Sea was busy elsewhere on the coast, but in 1218 it set to work in earnest to cut out the Jade-Busen. Rising, as usual, in the night of 17th November, it broke down the dikes and wiped out four parishes to the south-west of what is now Wilhelmshaven—Jadeleh, Wardeleh, Arngast, and Dangast. Part of the last still survives as a watering-place, the water being deep and clear at this spot.

After this there was a respite; and, save for a nibble here and there, the Jade was left alone for three centuries. But in 1511 the great *Marcellus-flut* of 16th January took place, and the rest of the Jade-Busen was formed, a vast tract of land being finally lost. Part of Rustringen itself was cut away, and thus the present-day home of the German navy was brought to the river's brink.

The remainder of the German North Sea coast has much the same history. Just opposite Emden, on the extreme west of German territory, lies the Dollart, another great bite of the sea. This was formed by the inundation of the 14th December 1277, which Pastor Brückner mentions; and no less than three hundred and eighty-five square kilometres of cultivated land was lost by it. Fifty parishes vanished, and, says the monkish writer of the chronicle of Wittewerum, 'in the west of Stavoren, as far as Laubach, thirty thousand souls were drowned, and from Laubach to the Ems twenty thousand.' Frightful as was this last catastrophe in the loss of human life involved, it extended over a great area. Yet it did not wipe out a whole province, as happened in 1634.

On the 11th October 1634 the island province of Nordstrand, on the west of the duchy of Schleswig-Holstein, was swept under the sea. The wealthy town of Rungholt and about thirty-five parishes were destroyed. Seven thousand six hundred men lost their lives. All that now remains of Rungholt is the 'Rungholter Sand,' between the islands of Pelworm and Nordstrand. The province of Nordstrand is now a vast waste of mud-flats, covered by the sea at high-water, and interspersed with numerous undiked and unprotected islets called Halligen:

> A land that is lonelier than ruin,
> A sea that is stranger than death.

Of all the strange sights which Northern Europe has to show, surely none is stranger or weirder than the Halligen. Generally a green hillock rising

straight out of the water, sometimes presenting the appearance of nothing but a single house standing in the midst of the waves, sometimes a collection of houses, and always the home of innumerable wild-fowl, the Halligen are the veritable realm of the wild ducks, decoys for which are numerous throughout the islands round them.

They are a strange but kindly people these German Danes, with a wealth of folklore and old superstitions of their own; but their islands are doomed, and some day will go the way of their ancient province itself.

The floods I have described were great floods. What of the lesser ones? They are too numerous to mention in detail. To sum them up, they amounted to fifty-four in the sixteenth century, fifty-one in the seventeenth, and fifty-three in the eighteenth—all causing great loss and damage. In the first half of the nineteenth century there was an increase, no less than thirty-two inundations having been recorded, the worst of which was the flood of 3rd and 4th February 1825, in which seven hundred and eighty-nine men and forty-five thousand head of cattle were drowned, and two thousand four hundred houses destroyed. No place along the whole hundred miles of German coast escaped unscathed, and no place was so badly damaged as Emden, where the losses were estimated at fourteen thousand thalers. Well may the proverb run, '*Frisia non cantat.*'

One remark which German writers on the subject frequently make is that the storms always were most terrible when they coincided with the time of the new or the full moon. Volcanic phenomena in the bed of the sea are also said sometimes to have accompanied them.

Wilhelmshaven, as a name, dates from the 17th June 1869, when the Emperor William I. opened the harbour. Before this date the great *fangdamm* or earth-dike round the town was many times broken down by the sea. With the teredo to honeycomb them, piles are not serviceable for any length of time, and nothing but blocks of stone can oppose an effectual resistance to the waves. And in the whole of the sandy 'pancake' (as the natives call it) of Ost-Friesland there is not enough stone to throw at the stray cur which barks at the wayfarer's heels. Even the roads in the towns have to be paved with bricks. All the dikes are built on the old methods. Who shall say that it is not now possible for another great catastrophe to overwhelm Wilhelmshaven or Emden? They are the only German towns which are—which ever have been—directly exposed to the ravages of the North Sea.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian,* &c.

## CHAPTER XXIX.—HOW THE NOOSE LAY ON THEIR NECKS AT TIMES.

WHEN the first frost touched the chestnuts and poplars in the Castle Bear woods to brighter flame, and the days were drawing in, and the chill of November was settling on the country-side, Lady Lauriston returned to Grosvenor Place.

Dr Berkeley, when he saw her, took great credit to himself, and made voluminous notes of her case and his treatment of it for future use. 'But,' said he, as he eyed her carefully, 'you mustn't overdo it. You are not really as strong as you think you are.'

And Lady Lauriston was quite aware of it.

'*Spirituelle,*' the marquis's word, described her exactly, for the pure white flame of the spirit within seemed to shine more brightly than ever through the frail tenement which it at once illuminated and animated; and to those outside her own most intimate circle she seemed almost more spirit than body. But it was a brave and charming spirit which strove its utmost, and very effectually, to conceal all sign of bodily weakness beneath a many-coloured cloak of valiant cheerfulness, undaunted vivacity, and a keen and unfailing interest in the doings of all about her. What it cost her at times she alone knew.

So the varied household at Grosvenor Place was, on the surface, an extremely cheerful one, in spite of—partly because of—the sombreness of its hidden background.

Marriage had mellowed Aunt Charlotte in the most wonderful way; for she had, after all, and when the possibility seemed past, attained to something of the ideals of her frosty youth. It was something to have become a Marquise of France, even though the marquisate was, for the time being, in abeyance, and the marquis's head was safe on his shoulders only so long as he remained outside his native land. She had with the utmost ease and elegance assumed the graces of manner and deportment becoming her new estate, and from the heights of her Olympus beamed like a complacent goddess upon her more ordinarily situated relatives and friends.

And monsieur! Oh, monsieur was perfectly satisfied and happy. The present was secured beyond reach of harm—at least he believed so—and the future hung before him like a golden veil, a golden veil behind which lay his broad lands and châteaux, his dignified appointments at Court, and all that made life worth the living; and any day the veil might lift and endue him once more with the solid realities of which for the moment he could only hopefully dream.

To Lady Lauriston his manner was particularly deferential and kindly, with something of what in a younger man might have seemed like reverential admiration. He was a man of many experiences. Perhaps he saw more deeply than most. Possibly he perceived that this unlooked-for accession of strength pertained more to the spirit than to the body, and admired the fine courage that animated her. If he ever sought a reason for her sudden redetermination for life, it is certain that his widest thought never came within measurable distance of the truth.

For the great banking business rolled steadily on its course under the firm guidance and unremitting attention of its new head and his faithful lieutenant. Their lives were devoted to it, bound up in it, in a way undreamt of by any but themselves. They were indeed as prisoners bound to the wheel. It was a terrible, a heart-breaking, a soul-searing road these two travelled, but in all good faith they deemed it the only road possible to them.

They had their times of gratitude and of something approaching jubilant hope, when their cautious plans were crowned with success; and they had their dark days, when their souls turned with loathing and revolt from the work they had to do to stave off disaster, simple-seeming acts behind each of which dangled the hangman's noose as clear to their sight as the desks at which they sat, twisting, with open eyes, the rope that might end them. The house had its trusty correspondents all over the Continent. There were huge subsidies, a continuous stream of gold, to be conveyed from Britain to her allies. What safer means of transport than those at the disposal of Lauristons? There were huge contracts for the feeding of the troops fighting losing battles for the world's welfare and for the replacing of the supplies of all kinds which were constantly falling into the enemy's hands. To whom should harassed contractors turn for financial assistance but to Lauristons? And in return there was news of moment to be picked up by those who hovered on the skirts of the armies. And how could such information be turned to better account than by sharing it with Lauristons? It paid a man handsomely to risk his life even in the obtaining and quick conveyance to the house of news such as that, and Lauristons turned it all to account, and no man ever regretted carrying his wares to that market.

These were the credit items in the grim account. *Per contra*, there were—in spite of all their care and foresight—sudden hazards and hairbreadth escapes from discovery and ruin which momentarily jangled their nerves and then strung them to their tightest. There were moments when their own lives and all that elaborate superstructure reared with such mighty labours and such grievous cares rocked literally on the flicker of an eyelid.

As, when John Sax was hurrying out of the Bank of England one day with an urgently needed hundred thousand pounds in notes in his breast-pocket, the proceeds of a quite unauthorised sale of Consols belonging to old Lord Viveash, he was met on the very steps of the Bank by that antique nobleman himself, with a jovial, 'Ah, John Sax, you are the very man I want!'

'I am entirely at your service, my lord. What can I do for your lordship?'

'That young cub of mine is in trouble again.'

'Ah, ha! How much?'

'Forty thousand, he says, so I expect it's about twice that. I thought I'd sell out those Three per Cents. I want some myself also. How soon can you get me the money?'

'If you will accompany me, my lord, you can have it by the time you sign the necessary documents. Lauristons never keeps its friends waiting. It's a bad time to sell, of course. Prices will come up again in time.'

'I know! I know! But you know, as well as I do, John Sax, that a matter of this kind can't wait for prices to come up again. What are they now?'

'Sixty-five and a half.'

'Phew! Well, needs must when the devil drives.'

So they got into a hackney-coach and jogged along to Lauristons; and while Sir Charles discoursed quietly with my lord, John Sax prepared his documents, and presently the lively old gentleman trotted away complacently with the hundred thousand pounds in his coat-pocket and high eulogy in his mind of the prompt and business-like methods of his trusty bankers. And his trusty bankers turned feverishly elsewhere for relief from their own immediate pressure, and spun another twist of the rope that might hang them.

There were many such narrow escapes. But 'you can get used to anything,' as Jerry MacClootie and Mavie said, and they grew inured to the risks; and but for the fundamental stain upon the game Charles Lauriston would have found the hazard of it not without a certain grim fascination.

At the end of the first year after Sir George's death they were not far from one hundred thousand pounds nearer salvation, and they pressed on with zest, as men of old fled before the Avenger towards the City of Refuge. But it was a ghastly business, you perceive, and not to be palliated or condoned by so much as the shadow of a hair. And yet, under their stern conviction of the terrible necessities of the case, these two lived that grim life, year in, year out, till the end came; and wore calm faces under it all, and said to themselves that they had no choice in the matter.

Old John Sax's face, indeed, had, by watchful schooling and custom, long since passed the point where any inner emotion whatsoever could produce upon it the veriest flicker of change. Always gravely intent upon the firm's concerns, nothing more was looked for in him.

But upon Charles Lauriston the matter pressed more hardly, since of him very much more was expected and had to be provided, cost what it might. In the home and in society he must still bear the assured cheerfulness of the successful man

of affairs. The magnitude of those affairs might, indeed, condone a touch of increased gravity in face and manner; but no more than a touch, for an overgrave face might point the world to an adverse trend in business matters, and that was to be avoided at any cost. And so, since the time his soul was racked with anxieties and torments past the bearing almost, that which had been natural to him had to become a mask, hard to wear as that of iron, and therein lay one of the thorns of his punishment.

But if outwardly the strain made for something of stiffening and hardening, inwardly his torture of self-humiliation made for nothing but softening. None ever heard from him harsh comment on men or things. If he had to condemn, it was done temperately and without venom, for within him was always the thought, 'What am I that I should judge any man?' When one of his clerks, under some sudden stress, was found embezzling the firm's money, Sir Charles called him into his private office, talked gravely and quietly with him, heard all his troubles, and in the end helped him to a fresh start in the New World. And John Sax understood and raised no objection, though he was doubtful in his own mind as to whether, for the sake of example, that was quite the proper way to treat a defaulter.

And in the home—to his wife and the children, and even to Aunt Charlotte—his manner was tenderer than ever, even though his face was grave and inclined to stiffen at times. For within him there was always the thought, 'If things go wrong, and I bring them all to shame, they shall at all events remember that I loved them dearly. And if I have to go, even by that road, they shall still think of me tenderly.'

Like the lovable sinner of old, his sin was ever before him; but his punishment was ever with him, and he bore it without flinching.

So the weeks and months spun steadily their lengthening tale—of increase and expansion for some, of ever more firmly riveting fetters for others; for some, devoured all too quickly the short time that was left to them, and for all drew on remorselessly towards the things that had to be.

The Peace of Amiens brought shoals to many nets and solid advantage to one Englishman at all events.

When M. de Talleyrand fled across-Channel from the madness of the later Revolution, he made, among others, the very desirable acquaintance of Charles Lauriston. When he returned to France and took office under the First Consul he was able at times to send the banker interesting items of news for their mutual benefit. Through him Sir Charles heard of the certainty of at all events a temporary cessation of hostilities, and he and John Sax set to work with might and main to turn it to profitable account. Every pound they could lay hands on, by hook or by crook, was quietly invested in such securities as they deemed likely to respond most sympathetically to the announcement of peace.

The results justified their highest hopes. Their private balance-sheet—which if it had come under any eyes but their own would have knotted the rope irrevocably round their necks—showed that on December 31, 1802, their liabilities to their private clients had been reduced to something under three-quarters of a million. They might possibly have done still better by holding on, but the risks they were knowingly taking in one direction were so enormous that it disposed them to excess of caution in others. They were like a general who had boldly cut loose from his base in order to outmanœuvre the enemy, and was determined to risk no check through lack of foresight and precaution.

When General Lauriston came over with the ratification all London went wild with joy, harnessed itself to his carriage, and dragged him through the City in triumph. And when all the necessary ceremonials were over, Lauriston took an opportunity of going up to Grosvenor Place to dine with his namesake, the great banker, as M. de Talleyrand had suggested to him to do.

It was a visit pregnant with results. At the moment we are concerned with only two.

General Lauriston, a fine, frank soldier who had seen enough of the seamy side of warfare to sicken most men, was so charmed with the household at Grosvenor Place that he instantly claimed relationship, and cemented their acceptance of him by unofficially spending much of his short stay there. Possibly the far-sighted M. de Talleyrand had suggested this also.

It is an undoubted fact that Lauriston never mentioned the matter in reporting his doings to the First Consul, who would most certainly not have approved. For none knew better than he how powerfully the resources of the great banking house had been used in the service of the various combinations against him, and more than once he had told his General that the only thing he had against him was his name.

It was over their cigars after dinner, on the occasion of the General's first visit, that Sir Charles asked him pointedly, 'How long will it last?'

And after a pause, punctuated by three slow puffs of smoke, the General said quietly, 'You have never met him, have you?'

'Never.'

'If you had you would know how next to impossible it is to answer that question. There never has been a man like him. Sometimes I wonder if it is not true, as many folks believe, that he is more than man.'

'Ah,' said M. de Montessonne with a quiet chuckle, 'the Devil!'

'He is just over thirty,' said the General oracularly, through his smoke.

'By which,' said Sir Charles presently, when

nothing more came, 'you mean that his career is only beginning.'

'Most men have hardly begun at thirty.'

'So that we may expect much more of what we've been having?'

'He is needing rest, and the country still more. At present he is very busy with the lawyers compiling a new code. It is said to be very remarkable. He is also busy making bishops and archbishops, and compiling a religion. He is also playing foster-father to the arts and sciences. But, *mon ami*, admirably as he does all these, that is not his *métier*. First and foremost, and all the way through, he is soldier. *Voilà!*'

'I understand,' said the banker, and decided on a cautious course. It was during the General's intimacy with his friends at Grosvenor Place, also, that the idea of the Marquis de Montessonne's return to France came up.

This was now made possible by the amnesty offered to all but a select few, whose interests were so absolutely opposed to Bonaparte's that reconcilement was out of the question.

It might have been difficult to say by whom the idea was first mooted. Turning the matter over in his mind afterwards, Charles Lauriston half-convinced himself that the first seed had been skilfully dropped by the General. But it was hard to say. Possibly the very long finger of M. de Talleyrand had something to do in that pie also. And not impossibly the still longer finger of a First Consul who dreamt imperially may have prompted M. de Talleyrand thereto. For the Court of an Emperor can stand heavier decoration than the levees of a Consul, and a leavening of the new order with a certain carefully selected representation of the old would undoubtedly make for both effect and stability.

Whoever started the idea, it no sooner came to the ears of Madame la Marquise than it filled her head to the exclusion of all else. When Charlotte Lauriston set her mind on a thing, she could, as we know, make everybody about her extremely uncomfortable until she got it. And Madame la Marquise was no whit behind her.

'Of course we go back, Etienne,' said she. 'Why, what else are we here for?' By which, of course, she meant, 'What on earth else did I marry you for?' and the marquis quite understood.

There would, of course, be the oath of allegiance to take, and the idea of that stuck somewhat in monsieur's throat.

'How long do you expect him to last, M. le Général?' he asked cautiously.

'He is young,' said the General. 'But war is full of chances.'

'France, at all events, seems to accept him,' said the marquis musingly.

'He is a born leader of men,' said the General.

'What has been may be. The people have tasted freedom and their own power.'

'They have learned that loose reins do not make for security. He is the only possible driver.'

'You think so?'

'No; I am sure. France needs a man. With all apologies, monsieur, your friends the Bourbons are but spoiled children. The country would rise as one man against them. You will find things very different.'

And the marquis pondered the matter and carefully weighed the possibilities, but knew perfectly well all the time, in his own mind, that madame would have to have her way if life was to hold any further peace for him. And finally he sent M. de Talleyrand, through General Lauriston, an offer—the oath of allegiance in exchange for such reinstatement as was possible.

And, to make an end of that matter, Talleyrand introduced the matter to his master, and delicately suggested that a member of the old nobility like M. de Montessonne, who had married an heiress of good family, with five million francs, and was too old to do any mischief, would be a decided acquisition to the new Court.

Bonaparte inquired the name of the heiress.

'Lauriston, daughter of the banker.'

At which the First Consul pouted unpleasantly, and then, after a moment's consideration, said, '*Soit!* They will be useful to us.'

And the matter was settled. But whether Bonaparte spoke of Monsieur and Madame de Montessonne, or of madame's five millions, M. de Talleyrand was not sure.

*(To be continued.)*

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# RUBBER-GROWING IN THE MALAY STATES.

By a PLANTER.

MALAYA, the land of perpetual summer, is the new home of the rubber-tree. Cultivated here under ideal climatic conditions, with a plentiful and evenly distributed rainfall throughout the year, a temperature varying from about seventy degrees minimum at night to ninety degrees maximum by day, and practically no change of season, growth is rapid and continuous. To say that one can see the trees grow is scarcely an exaggeration, as the young nursery-plants will increase in height at the rate of half an inch per day, well-grown specimens being about six feet high six months after planting the seed.

The first point for the planter to consider is, of course, the selection of land. The rubber-tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) is not, as was at one time supposed, a swamp-growth; well-drained land is

essential to the health of the tree. Given this condition, and sufficient depth, it will grow and flourish in almost any sort of soil that occurs in the peninsula.

Practically the whole of the country, with the exception of plantations already established, is virgin jungle. Patriarchal trees, some of immense girth, but mostly with comparatively slender trunks, rear themselves aloft one hundred feet before branching, in their struggle for light and air, their crowns forming a dense canopy far overhead; in the cool, damp twilight below grow large tree-ferns, rare and beautiful orchids, thorny canes, and creepers, huge snaky vines hanging in fantastic loops and convolutions from tree to tree.

From the rich, moist earth underfoot, fertilised for untold ages by decaying leaves and rotting wood, spring weird and gruesome fungi in clumps and patches. Mosquitoes swarm, and leeches search out the joints of one's armour in their lust for blood. Larger game, such as the tiger, sladang, pig, and deer, abound, but are seldom or never seen, as they all avoid contact with mankind.

Away from the Malay settlements the only tracks are the tortuous paths of the Sakai, the true aborigines, who, armed with bamboo blowpipe and poisoned dart, capture squirrels and other small game to supplement their diet of rice and fruit; retreating deeper and deeper into the jungle as larger areas are opened up.

Felling and clearing are usually done by Malays, on contract. They are very expert at this work, using a tiny wedge-shaped axe weighing scarcely a pound, mounted on a long, thin, flexible handle, which looks an absurdly inadequate tool with which to lay low the giants of the forest. The axe-head is, as it were, 'flicked' into the trunk, the spring of the handle being brought into play, knack more than muscular force being used in its manipulation. The light weight does not tire the arms, and a man can continue all day 'pecking' at trees in this way with surprising results.

All the trees being down, and the branches lopped, so that the whole of the felling lies as compactly as possible, they are left for about three months to get thoroughly dry, and as soon after this as a spell of four or five days without rain occurs the felled area is burned off in one terrific bonfire.

This is one of the most impressive sights imaginable, if the clearing is a large one of, say, five hundred acres—no uncommon size. A gang of men, furnished with torches, line up at intervals of about twenty yards across the far side of the clearing, facing the wind, and at a given signal advance all together against the wind over the clearing, firing the dried leaves and twigs as they go. Little spurts of flame and smoke mark their progress, which increase in volume, spread, and unite with appalling rapidity, until the whole area is a crackling, roaring furnace. The intense heat draws in furious blasts of air from all around, which go eddying and swirling into the heart of the inferno. Blazing leaves and sticks are carried high in the air by the uprush of heat, to be caught by the wind and scattered over miles of jungle. Great volumes of smoke, white, pearly-gray, brown, and inky-black in colour, rise and unite in undulating billowy masses, spreading into a murky pall, obscuring the sun, and finally mingling with the clouds and slowly dispersing. A shower of rain often follows, precipitated probably by the disturbance of the air and the presence of smoke particles. This operation is not unattended with danger, as should the line of men get out of touch with one another, it is quite possible that the laggards may be surrounded by the fire. Again, should the wind change suddenly when the centre of the clearing is reached, the coolies run a great risk of being suffocated by smoke and overtaken by the flames. Accidents, however, are singularly rare, and one has no difficulty in obtaining men for this work, the excitement, bustle, and spectacular nature of the whole proceeding appealing strongly to the sporting instincts of the Malay.

It is soon over. In about an hour all the leaves, brushwood, &c. have burned out, and a smoking abomination of desolation is left, a few inches deep in fine, powdery ash, covered with black and smouldering logs, with here and there the unfelled trunks of dead trees still blazing on high, which fall one by one with a mighty crash as they burn through, scattering showers of sparks and raising huge clouds of the fine ash.

After the conflagration, the smaller débris is collected into heaps and reburned, until the ground is sufficiently cleared to admit of being lined up for planting. Lining is usually done with a thin rope several hundred feet long, marked at intervals corresponding with the distance the trees are to be planted apart—fifteen, seventeen, or twenty feet, as the case may be. A marking-peg is stuck into the ground at each point, and all is now ready for holing and planting.

Nurseries have been prepared some six or eight months previous to the burning, beds about six feet wide, with shallow trenches between, having been made up, and the seeds (resembling large brown beans, mottled with gray and the size of small chestnuts) planted about six inches apart. The nursery plants should now be about six feet high, with a stem about as thick as one's thumb at the base, covered with thin bark for two-thirds of their height.

Numbers of coolies, armed with *changkols* (a sort of glorified hoe, with a large, heavy blade at right angles to the handle), are now turned on to the lined clearing to make ready the permanent homes of the rubber-trees. Holes about two feet wide and two feet deep (the larger the better) are now dug at each marking-peg, and filled in with earth, wood-ash, and burned débris scraped off the surface. This is left to settle down until the weather is favourable for planting.

A raid is now made on the nursery, the largest and best-developed plants being selected. These

are pulled up bodily, the leafy tops and green sap-wood chopped off, and the thin ends of the tap-roots cut away, reducing the plants to bare sticks, with about eight to twelve inches of root-wood at the base, which are now known as stumps. These stumps are tied up in bundles and conveyed to the clearing. A hole of sufficient depth is made with a stake in the centre of the filled-in earth at each mark, a stump dropped in, the earth rammed tightly in all round it, and the planting is complete.

All now depends upon the weather. Given favourable conditions, with plenty of rain, buds will appear in about a fortnight, which quickly develop into new shoots, and growth from this point is rapid and vigorous, failures being few.

There are other methods of planting when stumps are not available—namely, seed at stake, basket-plants, and transplanting; but stumping is the method most in favour.

Weeding, the planter's nightmare, must now be taken vigorously in hand. This is the most expensive item in the estate budget, and if neglected weeds will appear as if by magic. The worst form of these is *lalang*, a coarse, rank grass, growing to a height of six feet, with tough, wiry roots going very deeply into the soil, which is very difficult to eradicate, and soon smothers out the young rubber. Now ensues a long round of monotonous work. Weeding, weeding, and again weeding; roads to be cut, drains to be dug and kept in order, white ants and diseased trees to be watched for, labour disputes to be settled, accounts to be kept, the insatiable maw of the London board of directors to be fed with voluminous reports, and the thousand and one details of estate-work to be attended to.

In this way, varied with occasional bouts of malaria, the five years of waiting slowly pass.

Meanwhile the trees have added leaf to leaf and branch to branch, have blossomed, and produced their first crops of seed, and in place of the desolate wilderness of our own creation, we have endless vistas of interlacing greenery, the bare earth under the shade of the trees (now some thirty to forty feet high) carpeted with the fallen leaves.

Well-kept roads intersect the estate; picturesque bungalows, surrounded by flower and fruit gardens, and maybe tennis-lawns, are in evidence.

Coolie-lines, more or less solidly built, are scattered about, under and around which in the evenings the workers gather in light-hearted crowds, cooking their rice over small open fires, singing, dancing, chattering, and discussing the momentous happenings of the day. A crowd of laughing children, clad in the garb of Eden, are chasing each other around, while chubby and tubby infants sprawl and kick on the ground. At sunset such of their elders as are Mohammedans spread their praying-mats, turn their faces to Mecca, and kneeling down, bowing their foreheads to the dust at intervals, recite their evening prayers, with a complete absence of self-consciousness and an utter disregard of onlookers. They are in general a cheerful, contented crowd, although fights sometimes occur, the caprice of some fair one being usually the cause. Kissing goes by favour the world over.

At this stage 'a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of dividends,' or something to that effect. Trees are measured, and those of, say, twenty inches in circumference are marked out for tapping. This is done in a variety of ways, but the general principle is the same in all cases.

Usually a vertical incision is first made, from three to six feet long, according to the size of the tree, and spiral grooves running half-round the tree are cut at twelve-inch intervals, leading into the vertical channel, at the bottom of which a small cup is placed to receive the latex. The spiral channels are reopened daily or at short intervals by paring away a thin shaving from the lower edge of the cut; this is continued for several months until the cut has been widened to six inches or more, and the daily flow shows signs of falling off. The tree is then rested and time given for new bark to fill up the cuts, after which the other half of the tree is operated upon in the same manner.

The latex is collected from the small cups into milk-cans, and is taken to the curing-house for coagulation and conversion into the particular form of output of the estate.

In the preparation of sheets and biscuits little or no mechanical apparatus is required. The latex, which resembles cow's milk in appearance, is strained into pans, oblong or round, accordingly as sheets or biscuits are required, a minute quantity of dilute acid is stirred in, and in a few hours coagulation is complete, and the rubber can be lifted out in a flocculent mass, leaving a small quantity of clear liquid in the pan. This slab of soft, spongy rubber is first rolled out by hand, which expresses the surplus water, at the same time compressing and toughening it; and it can then be passed through rollers, some such machine as the ordinary household mangle being used.' It is now in the form of a thin sheet or biscuit, opaque, white in colour, and only requires a few days in the drying-house, when it changes to a clear amber, and is the 'fine pale sheet' of the Mincing Lane auction-rooms. On large estates other methods are necessary to deal with the heavier output and economise time and labour.

The rubber is then turned out as 'crepe,' 'block,' &c., and washing-machines, vacuum-driers, and hydraulic-presses play their part. The use of machinery in preparation makes little difference in the value of the finished product, but is essential to speed and economy. The first advance in this direction was the introduction into the country of the washing-machine, by the aid of which 'crepe' rubber is produced. This machine consists essentially of two iron rollers operated by engine-power, capable of adjustment from practical contact to about a quarter of an inch apart, and revolving at differential speeds. While at

work a constant stream of water is flowing over the rollers. Through these rollers the freshly coagulated rubber is passed. Owing to the differential speed of the rollers, the rubber, while being pressed, is torn into shreds, the water washing out any impurities, such as bits of bark, earth, &c., which may have accidentally found their way into the latex during collection. The natural adhesiveness of the material causes the shreds to reunite, and come from the rollers in the form of a thin granulated sheet, which is again passed through the machine until all trace of foreign matter is removed. This process does away with the necessity for the cumbersome pans and dishes, and saves time and space in the drying-house, as the 'crepe' is much more rapid in drying than solid sheet rubber.

On a few of the more up-to-date estates vacuum-driers have been installed. This apparatus consists of a sort of large air-tight safe, fitted with a series of hollow, steam-heated shelves. On these shelves the 'crepe' is laid, the door closed, and the air exhausted by an air-pump. Under these conditions the time of drying is reduced from days to hours, and the rubber, softened and rendered slightly plastic by the heating, is then packed tightly into iron moulds and put under hydraulic pressure until cooled. The final result is a solid, homogeneous block of perfectly pure, dry rubber, pale amber in colour, of excellent quality, and in the best possible form for packing and transport.

It appears inevitable that in the not far distant future it will be to the cultivated plantations that we must look for the bulk of our supplies, and I have here endeavoured to give the reader some general idea of the work entailed in the production of this most useful commodity, which now, in one or other of its myriad forms, enters so largely into the daily life of each one of us.

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# ONE HUNDRED 'FIRST NUMBERS.'

## NOTES ON 'No. 1' OF A HUNDRED JOURNALS.

By DAVID WILLIAMSON.

PART I.

THEY say there is only one newspaper in the world the editor of which never receives a letter signed 'A Reader from the Commencement.' This is the *Pekin Gazette*, which has existed for many hundreds of years! Several years ago I began collecting the 'first numbers' of new journals and magazines. It has proved an interesting hobby, and perhaps I may be able to convey some of the interest to those who read these notes on one hundred first numbers selected at hap-hazard from about three times that number.

### SUCCESS AND FAILURE.

I find that, roughly speaking, only one in five of the scores of first numbers in my collection represents a success. The total sum of money lost in trying to found newspapers and magazines during the last twenty years must be enormous. Probably it approximates to two million pounds, for the capital lost in vain attempts to found daily papers in London alone must be at least one million pounds! There is hardly any way in which money can be lost on a large scale more quickly than in the newspaper world. One London daily newspaper dropped one hundred and fifty thousand pounds before it 'turned the corner.' An experienced newspaper proprietor said the other day he would not think of starting a new daily journal with less than a million capital. Even a little penny weekly paper has lost eleven thousand pounds in nine weeks, to my personal knowledge; and a monthly magazine dropped forty thousand pounds in four years' vain struggle to establish itself.

### THE PATHOS OF DEFEAT.

As I survey my hundreds of first numbers I cannot help realising the pathos of the situation. Four-fifths of these periodicals have died after gallant efforts and high hopes. Every promoter has thought his or her idea was certain to be rewarded with success. Thousands of editors, writers, artists, printers, and publishers have been losers by the failure which has come to the great majority of these papers and magazines; and yet each year produces its long list of new ventures, of which only one-fifth will survive. Even if survival comes to the fittest, financial success is not always the result, for a large number of periodicals are carried on at a loss.

A famous editor said to me long ago, 'If a paper or magazine does not succeed after a fair trial, cut your loss by stopping it immediately. There is no virtue in fighting against the inevitable.' That editor acted on his own advice, and withdrew three of his enterprises after a short life. It needs little imagination to sympathise with the host of people who have been linked with the first numbers which soon were followed by last numbers. What hopes of wealth and influence lie buried within those pages! Many a young journalist thought the success of some old magazine was so easy to emulate, only to learn by bitter experience that there is no accident in any success; it comes as the reward of originality, ability, and incessant hard work. One fact I venture to assert without fear of contradiction, and that is the exceeding rarity with which early failure is retrieved by later success. If a newspaper has not got its secure footing within two years, and

a magazine within three years, the likelihood is that they never will.

Now let me turn to my collection, premising that I have made the selection at random, and have omitted purposely periodicals of recent date.

### DAILY PAPERS.

More than twenty-one years have passed since I bought the first number of the *Star*. It was then edited by Mr T. P. O'Connor, M.P., and had regular contributions from G. Bernard Shaw, C. K. Shorter, and others. The 'Mainly About People' column was a novelty which 'caught on' immediately. Some years later Mr H. W. Massingham took the helm. Next Mr Ernest A. Parke became editor, and remains in that post to-day, having seen most of the editorships of our London daily press change in the meantime. I shall never forget a circumstance in connection with the first evening the *Star* appeared. I had gone to hear Mr Justin McCarthy, M.P., lecture on 'Parliamentary Oratory.' The lecturer was delayed for an hour in his arrival, owing to a mistake as to the hall; but such was the interest taken in the *Star*—almost every one in that audience reading the first number—that no impatience was shown, and it seemed quite natural to sit waiting an hour for Mr McCarthy! By the way, the *Star* is one of the few newspapers which print each day the date of their foundation—in its case January 17, 1888.

The first number of the *Daily Mail* was on sale on May 4, 1896. The paper created a favourable impression immediately. Journalists recognise that it was 'right from the very beginning;' there was not a sign of the usual errors in form, type, or style which one expects in a new paper. The machines could turn out two hundred thousand copies in an hour—a rate much exceeded nowadays. For a halfpenny such a paper was phenomenal.

It was eight years after the foundation of the *Daily Mail* that the *Daily News* and *Daily Chronicle* came down to a halfpenny. In the case of the *Chronicle* the change was a rapid response to the challenge of the *Daily News*, which had been preparing for some months for an alteration. At first the *Chronicle* had only one column of news on the first page, giving the rest of the page to advertisements, but later on it gave the whole front to news.

One of the saddest failures to establish a new journal was Mr Stead's *Daily Paper* in 1904. It only lasted thirty-two days. Mr Stead's health broke down almost as soon as he had started the paper. His touching farewell in the last issue was enough to melt any heart, for it was full of brave acquiescence in defeat. What changes would have saved the *Daily Paper* I do not pretend to say. I think Mr Stead did not take sufficient time to prepare his plans. His experience on an evening paper did not show him the far harder conditions of running a morning paper. The problem of distributing the paper was never solved, and another mistake was the price. The public will not go back to a penny paper after getting such splendid halfpenny papers as they get to-day. Perhaps the price had something to do with the later failure of the *Tribune*, on which Mr Franklin Thomasson dropped many thousands in 1906.

The *Daily Mirror* started on November 2, 1903, first as a women's newspaper at a penny. The editors were, I believe, Mr Sutton and Mrs Howarth. In appearance it was rather like the ill-fated *Daily Courier*, which began its course in April 1896, but expired for want of support. The *Daily Mirror* was changed astutely into a halfpenny pictorial paper, with the result that success came rapidly, and its circulation rose to hundreds of thousands.

The *Daily Express* first appeared on April 24, 1900, and had a message of good wishes from the Kaiser. Tariff Reform may be said to have been the tide which, taken at the flood, led Mr C. Arthur Pearson's paper on to fortune. At all events, it was as the uncompromising advocate of Mr Chamberlain's views that the *Express* rose into its highest circulation. From the first number it was well put together, aiming deliberately at the 'man in the street.'

A real curiosity in my collection is the first number of a London daily paper which only lived four days! This was the *Majority*, a journal which lost no time in joining the majority. It came out on July 10, 1906, and claimed to be 'the first British Labour daily newspaper.' But the class for whom it was intended failed to give it a welcome, and its projectors knew so little of the intricate business of running a newspaper that it perished within a week. Again and again the Trades Union Congress has discussed the question of a special organ, but such a fate as that of the *Majority* may well cause thoughtful men to pause. Working men do not crave to be treated as a separate class.

In 1899 the *Morning Herald* made its first appearance, though it was not entirely new, being a continuation of the *Morning* and the *London Morning*. It was edited by Mr Thomas Meech, and was owned by the same company that controlled the *Echo*. David Christie Murray wrote personal articles for it; but its news department was weak, and it succumbed after a chequered career.

This was the period of the struggle for Sunday editions of daily newspapers. Happily both the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph* were induced to withdraw their projects under the pressure of public opinion.

### SOME MONTHLY MAGAZINES.

It is interesting to look at No. 1 of the *Review of Reviews*, dated January 1890. It was a good first number, preceded by autograph letters from Lord Salisbury, Cardinal Manning, Mr Gladstone, and many other great men. The frontispiece is a portrait of Mr H. H. Johnston, British Consul at Mozambique, now Sir Harry H. Johnston, G.C.M.G. It was signed 'A Souvenir in case I get killed

picturesquely in Africa.' The type was less attractive than it is in the present *Review;* but, as with other work of Mr Stead, there were many original ideas which have since become hackneyed by imitation. One cannot help realising how clever the notion of the magazine was in giving extracts from all the leading journals. One realises also what a galaxy of talent was then at the disposal of editors, when Gladstone, Huxley, Dr Magee, Stopford Brooke, Thomas Hardy, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were writing in the same month for the reviews.

The *Rapid Review*, issued first in February 1904, was a palpable imitation of Mr Stead's *Review*. My experience has been that most imitations in journalism fail. It was nevertheless a clever production, printed on good paper. Its portraits and succinct biographies were a popular feature. Though only five years have passed, the progress made in motoring is proved by the fact that the cheap motor was called 'a tantalising and elusive vehicle.' One of the books reviewed was Henry Harland's novel *My Friend Prospero*. Literature suffered a heavy loss by Harland's death. The *Rapid* lasted three or four years, changing in the end its scheme of contents.

No. 1 of the *World's Work* was a beautiful production. One of the best articles was on 'Garden Cities in Theory and Practice.' The full-page portraits—a feature of the magazine—included fine new photographs of Mr Balfour, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Canon Hensley Henson, and Mr J. M. Barrie. The *World's Work* has sustained fully the high reputation with which it started.

The *Butterfly* appeared first in March 1899, full of brilliant work printed in attractive form. It is sad to read once more the opening poem by H. D. Lowry, a man who seemed at one time to be secure of fame. Arthur Morrison, Adrian Ross, and Walter Emanuel were other contributors, as well as Alfred Slade, who was at the end of his pathetic career connected with the theatrical tours of eminent French actors. The black-and-white work by Maurice Greiffenhagen, J. W. T. Manuel, S. H. Sime, Joseph Pennell, and L. Raven-Hill was enough to give distinction to the magazine. No. 1 had an audacious cartoon by Max Beerbohm of the present Prince of Wales.

No. 1 of the *Girl's Realm* was issued by Messrs Hutchinson, who had made a success with the *Lady's Realm*. One of the rare short stories which the late Rosa Nouchette Carey wrote was in this first number. Mary E. Mann, who never writes badly, contributed a story, and so did Mr Crockett. One of the articles deals with 'The Girlhood of Lady Butler,' written, under a pseudonym, by Mr Wilfred Meynell. The frontispiece was a charming photo of the daughters of the Duke of Connaught. The *Girl's Realm* is edited by Mr S. H. Leeder, and is now published by Messrs Cassell. It has organised excellent charitable work.

More than ten years have passed since *Sandow's Magazine* first started its career. One of its best periods was under the editorship of Mr Howard H. Spicer, who enlisted the help of many well-known contributors.

A threepenny religious magazine was the *Christian Realm*, which had some good contents, but failed to gain sufficient support. In No. 1 I see stories by Katharine Tynan, F. M. White, W. Pett Ridge, Ethel Heddle, and Lillias C. Davidson. A bright article by the Rev. W. C. Chisholm dealt with the Kaiser as a religious force. His motto is 'to live resolutely a complete, good, and beautiful life.' There is no date to be found on this magazine, but I think it was first published about 1902.

There is very little difference between the first issue of the *Treasury*, dated October 1902, and a current copy of that successful magazine. It has been edited capitally by the Rev. Anthony C. Deane, who only resigned last September. He is 'a fellow of infinite jest,' as becomes a contributor to *Punch*. In No. 1 of the *Treasury* are reminiscences of Mr Gladstone by his relative the Dean of Lincoln. A touching incident related to Mr Nettleship's operation on Mr Gladstone's eye. 'Something for the time had gone wrong, and sight was not restored. The eminent oculist who had operated left the room to break the bad news to Mrs Gladstone. When she came to her husband he only said, 'Oh, my dear, I am so sorry for Mr Nettleship.' Poor young Fletcher Robinson, whose untimely death we mourned, wrote a sparkling account of 'A Day of my Life.' The *Treasury* has had a definite aim, and has pursued it steadily.

One of the magazines in my collection is No. 1 of the *Cornish Magazine*. It had the honour of being edited by 'Q,' and had an article by A. H. Norway (whose book on Cornwall is so admirable), a story by 'Q,' a sketch of Madame Fanny Moody's career, a sonnet by A. C. Benson, and a story by Charles Lee, whose careful work I always enjoy. Magazines of local or county interest have only a limited area and do not often become financial successes.

*Chapman's Magazine* began in May 1895, with Mr Oswald Crawfurd as editor. The serial was by Violet Hunt, and the magazine was 'all fiction,' except a long poem by poor John Davidson. But Messrs Chapman & Hall found the venture not profitable enough to continue.

The *Captain* made a bold challenge to existing boys' magazines when it appeared in April 1899. Ascott R. Hope wrote a serial for it in his customary style, and R. S. Warren Bell, a giant among London journalists, wrote 'The Storming of Greyhouse.' C. B. Fry gave hints on athletic training, and there was a racy interview with G. A. Henty, prince of schoolboys' favourites. 'I was a very weakly youngster; they did not expect me ever to see "man's estate" at all. Until I was fourteen I was practically a confirmed invalid,' said Mr Henty. When I recall his burly, nautical form at the Savage Club it seems an encouragement to invalid boys to think that Mr Henty outgrew his early

delicacy. The *Captain* goes on its way, delighting thousands of boys, and little changed since it began over ten years ago.

The *Royal* dates back to November 1898. It was a daring venture at threepence a month to bid for success among the popular magazines sold at sixpence. It did not trouble about 'big names,' for only A. W. Marchmont and Archibald Marshall are well known in the first list of contents. Photography took the place of artists' black-and-white work for the most part.

Miss Ella Hepworth Dixon edited the *Englishwoman*, an illustrated monthly magazine which was first issued in March 1895. She had a good list of contributors. Miss Violet Hunt (then rising into popularity) wrote a story for the first issue, Marie Belloc discoursed on Pierre Loti, L. F. Austin discussed plays, and women's affairs were in the hands of Mrs Aria, Mrs Humphry, and others. Linley Sambourne drew a charming design for the yellow cover.

The *Charing Cross Magazine* claimed in 1900 to be 'the largest threepennyworth ever offered.' It could not compare with other magazines, and most of the contributors seemed to be amateurs. In the same month the *Sunday Strand* appeared, and is still a widely read monthly magazine. A new 'Life of Christ' by Ian Maclaren was its chief feature. I think the title was a mistake, for the *Strand Magazine* had made a special position for itself, and a Sunday reflection of the *Strand* was really impossible. In the first number there was one of Harry How's inimitable interviews. What excellent work he did in his prime! Sir Walter Besant wrote a story for the *Sunday Strand*, and an article on Mr Chamberlain as a Sunday-school teacher attracted attention.

'The most original magazine in the world' was the claim made by the *Grand Magazine* when it started its career in February 1905. It had one hundred and seventy-six pages, no illustrations, and an astute mixture of fiction, fact, and gossip. The first story was 'A Straggler of '15,' which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said he considered was his best short story. George Bernard Shaw discussed 'The Theatre of the Future,' and John Oliver Hobbes the question as to whether men or women had 'the best time.' The *Grand* still continues in the world of magazines.

Apparently the musical public is very difficult to capture. I have known several failures in musical monthly and weekly journals. Here is the first number of the *Strand Musical Magazine*, issued by Messrs Newnes. Its editor was Mr E. Hatzfeld, and it had some capital matter, musical and literary, and a clever cartoon by 'F. C. G.' The magazine reached a sale of one hundred and fifty thousand and more, but ultimately dropped.

Who remembers that Mr E. F. Benson, author of *Dodo*, was once an editor? He held the reins of an ambitious shilling monthly, the *Imperial and Colonial Magazine*, published by Hurst and Blackett. It made a brave start with a poem by A. C. Benson and articles by Sir Geo. Birdwood, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir John A. Cockburn, and others, but ultimately came to grief.

Mr Harry Furniss started *Fair Game* as a sixpenny monthly in 1898. It had plenty of the artist's clever work, including an enormous cartoon. Mr Furniss enlisted several well-known writers and artists in this, as in more that one bold venture he has made. But the British demand for humour is strictly limited, and Parliament and politics apparently do not appeal to a very large section of the community as themes for cartoons. *Lika Joko* was another amusing paper maintained with great spirit by Mr Harry Furniss.

Sport has tempted many an editor, as my collection of magazines proves. Here is the *Badminton Magazine*, started by Longmans, Green, and Co. in 1895, under the editorship of Mr A. E. T. Watson. It is a capital first number, with lively articles by experts, and first-rate illustrations. Mr C. B. Fry wrote on 'Hard Wickets.' He says: 'Cricketers are rarely much interested in anything except the great game they play,' and I think he is right. Cricket seems to absorb a man's whole attention.

In 1895 a sixpenny monthly magazine called the *Country House* made its first appearance. It had eminent contributors, like the Earl of Winchilsea, Sir J. B. Lawes, Rev. S. Baring-Gould, and that evasive personality 'A Son of the Marshes.' I notice a short article by the late Sir R. H. Paget, father of Mrs Herbert Gladstone, who 'bid God-speed to all reasonable proposals for secondary education, old-age pensions, or any reasonable schemes of social progress.'

*Our Young Men* was a venture of Messrs S. W. Partridge in 1902. Mr J. A. Hammerton pervaded the little monthly magazine with his versatility. But after six years it was given up.

A very good beginning was made with the *Minster*, a sixpenny monthly magazine published by the now defunct firm of A. D. Innes & Co. I believe it was edited by the wife of the Rev. Montague Fowler, who has written plays and novels under the pseudonym of Dayrell Trelawny. This accounted for a contribution from the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose chaplain Mr Fowler was, and for a lively sketch of Bishopthorpe, the home of the Archbishops of York. Dr Maclagan tried to drop 'Palace' from his address, and had his notepaper stamped 'Bishopthorpe, York.' A visitor admitted a liking for the grander address. 'Why?' asked the Archbishop. 'Driven into a corner, I confessed somewhat feebly that "I thought it imposing."' 'That is just why I dislike it,' replied Dr Maclagan, who always hated ostentation. The *Minster* ought to have succeeded; where it failed, the *Treasury* captured a considerable clientèle later on.

I go back to June 1889 for the first number of the *New Review*, which was edited by Mr Archibald

Grove, afterwards a Liberal M.P. It ran until 1897, with various changes of form and policy, and its last editor, I think, was W. E. Henley. The first articles concerned General Boulanger, the French pretender who was then fluttering France. Mrs Lynn Linton the inevitable, Lord Charles Beresford on 'National Muscle,' the present Marquis of Northampton on 'Homes of the People,' and Lady Randolph Churchill on 'A Month in Russia' —these were the chief features of No. 1. It was a good magazine, but aimed too much at *Nineteenth Century* articles instead of more sprightly matter by less eminent writers.

It was in 1898 that Messrs Newnes started the *Wide World Magazine*, which continues to this day. The too marvellous tales of one Louis de Rougemont made it notorious. It has since settled into a steady-going magazine, with travel-tales and adventures.

### WEEKLY ILLUSTRATED 'SIXPENNIES.'

I suppose two of the most successful illustrated papers started within the last twenty years have been the *Sketch* and *Country Life*. The former emanated from the office of the *Illustrated London News* in 1892, and by its original use of photography and its lively literary contents secured a great sale from the very first number. Mr Clement K. Shorter introduced, through the pages of the *Sketch*, very many writers who have since come to fame. The paper was full of intentional contrasts—a Bishop's portrait faced the latest photograph of a dancer; the 'Literary Lounger' column was not far from Racing Notes. Each week when Parliament was sitting the Liberal viewpoint was stated by H. W. Massingham, and the adjoining column gave the Tory opinions of Mr Sidney Low. The 'Novel in a Nutshell' gave some brilliant examples of the short story at its best, by such writers as Frederick Wedmore, Mrs Andrew Dean (now so popular as Mrs A. D. Sidgwick), Flora Annie Steel, and others. The *Sketch* led the way in exploiting the theatre to its utmost, and since then many weekly papers have essayed to rival its success.

*Country Life*, started in 1897, has made for itself a unique position by the beauty of its illustrations and its devotion to outdoor life. It was from the first bold in its use of superb paper, which gave it a handsome appearance and attracted a fine array of advertisements.

Another splendid first number which has maintained fully its early promise is that of the *Sphere*. Mr Clement K. Shorter saw an opening for an illustrated weekly paper of the highest type, and grudged no expenditure to gain for the *Sphere* a European reputation. His own 'Literary Letter' has been a very popular feature of the contents. Foreign events and exploration have been specially illustrated. The Boer war and the revolutionary events in Russia were 'covered' with brilliant success.

*St Paul's*. Do you remember the sixpenny illustrated weekly paper of that name? It began in March 1894, and ran for quite a long time. It had engravings which look to-day singularly rich. Its contents were a medley—gossip of the churches close to gossip of the stage.

It was in July 1901 that the *Tatler* made its beginning as yet another sixpenny illustrated weekly. How this field of journalism has been enlarged since the days when the *Illustrated London News* was the pioneer! The *Tatler* had the advantage of the experienced skill of Mr C. K. Shorter (editor of the *Sphere*) and Mr J. M. Bulloch (now editor of the *Graphic*). It was printed beautifully, and was full of readable matter and charming illustrations.

The first issue of the *Ladies' Field* is before me. It is very handsome, and at once secured good support from the advertisers.

It is about eleven years since *Lords and Commons* appeared as an illustrated parliamentary paper at sixpence weekly. The editor was Mr F. Moir Bussy. Politicians are not numerous enough, I fear, to support a paper which does not appeal to the general public; so, despite articles by Tim Healy, K.C., M.P., Sir Horace Plunkett, and others, the venture came to an end.

Mr Frank Harris brought out the *Candid Friend* in 1901, as a sixpenny weekly paper. It had, as one of its features in No. 1, an autobiography by A. G. Hales, then much in the public eye as a war-correspondent. It ended: 'I don't think much of missionaries, politicians, soldiers, authors, or actors. The best fellows I have ever met are hard-up, hard-working, gritty newspaper-fellows. The worst are successful writers suffering from "swelled head."' The *Candid Friend* did not succeed in gaining a standing ground, despite its lively contributors.

*(To be concluded.)*

## SPRING'S WELCOME.

The golden harp of Spring is singing clear
Within the woods, through willows bending low;
Along the sea-dunes, or by lonely mere,
Her rhapsodies with sweetest music flow.

The bursting buds, the wakening earth, the sky
Welcome her coming and her halcyon hours;
And Hope on rosy-bosomed clouds flies high,
And Love awakes again with fragrant flowers.

The denizens of copse and hedgerows rude,
The birds, the flaunting butterflies, and bees
Join in their chorus, and in recreant mood
The warm sap rises in the love-lorn trees.

Welcome to thee, then, sweetest maiden Spring,
With arms outstretched we now awaiting stand;
And may thy music o'er creation ring
With notes of peace and plenty to the land.

WALTER SMYTH.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# A LITTLE MORE ABOUT DIGESTION.

By the Right Honourable ROBERT FARQUHARSON, M.D.

YOU have not said the last word about digestion; nor indeed is such a thing possible. We might as well try to explain why one man or woman has a Roman nose, or why the corresponding organ of another is 'tip-tilted' like a flower, as to dogmatise on the reason why my stomach is able to tackle the gigantic banquets of modern society, and why yours is weak and squeamish, and must be carefully nursed; why what is one man's meat is another man's poison. Argue as we like, dogmatise as we please, experiment up to the extinction of the canine race, no fellow can ever understand the mysteries and vagaries of idiosyncrasy; and when that strange perquisite of human nature goes hand in hand with heredity, in which, despite the microbe-mongers, I still believe, then physiologists and physicians alike must admit that there is something still to be learnt about man, that proper study of mankind.

I have the highest belief in the experimental method conducted on strictly scientific lines, and with a definite object; but no one will persuade me that if we establish a fistula in a dog's stomach and introduce a selected food to test the digestive processes, there can be any real analogy with what takes place in the gastric economy of our noble selves.

This is not a medical paper, and I ask pardon if I advertently make your flesh creep by horrifying descriptions of what goes on in our insides after a hearty meal. A very crude method was once adopted by an advocate of the simple life, who ordered some one who was enjoying a good dinner to place in a vessel standing by his side a portion of everything he had eaten and drunk, and the horrors to eye and nose of the resulting mixture were supposed to make the victim have pause before he again embarked on such a perilous combination of good things.

On far more practical lines were conducted the observations of Dr Beaumont on Alexis St Martin, a Canadian, who had been left after a gun-shot accident with a large and permanent hole in his stomach, enabling the shrewd American doctor to make and record a number of most interesting and important observations, which form the only real bit of absolutely dependable knowledge we possess about the behaviour of that all-essential organ under a great variety of circumstances.

The young man was taken into Dr Beaumont's service, and readily lent himself to experiment; and as he remained in robust health all the time, we may safely take the results as fairly indicative of how our stomachs dispose of a great number of dietetic materials, making allowance for probable variations due to the personal equation.

*Dr Beaumont's Experiments on Digestion* were introduced to the British public by the late Dr Andrew Combe of Edinburgh, a man of unusual clinical tact and sagacity, and a pioneer in physiology, sanitation, and the upbringing of children, whose premature death deprived the profession of one of its brightest ornaments. My father attended this truly great man in his lingering illness up to his death from consumption, and I have just discovered and read the presentation copy of his book given or left to his medical attendant.

Some of the experiments read rather quaintly. For instance, one day, when the minister of the interior announced a healthy appetite, twelve oysters were placed in St Martin's stomach through the artificial opening. Two hours later they were taken out and the operation of the gastric juice carefully noted; and a long series of observations were made in this way on the relative digestibility of various articles of diet. Tripe, we note, stands out an easy first, with beef much lower down on the scale; whilst cheese, which is said to digest everything except itself, retains its bad eminence at the bottom of the list.

Without entering into details, some general propositions may be laid down, derived from experience as well as from Dr Beaumont's epoch-making work, which stands as firmly as it did when it was first placed before the scientific world, over seventy years ago.



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(1) Dyspeptics bear fluids badly. A dry diet is usually needed for them.

(2) Due mastication is essential, as reducing the food by trituration to that state of fine division necessary to bring it into effective contact with the gastric juice. It will be remembered what great importance Gladstone attached to chewing his food, and I am almost afraid to say how often the morsel was churned between his teeth before it was allowed to slip down his gullet.

(3) Dr Beaumont shows 'bulk to be as necessary for healthy digestion as the presence of the nutritive principle itself.' 'This, in fact, is felt almost instinctively, as was amazingly shown in the reply of the spokesman of a party of the Veddahs or wild hunters of Ceylon to my friend Mr H. Marshall when the latter inquired why his people always mixed the pounded fibres of soft and decayed wood with the honey on which they fed when meat was not to be had. "I cannot tell you," said the practical Veddah; "but I know that the belly must be filled"' (Note by Dr Combe). And in this connection I may note a very wise remark made by the late Sir William Broadbent to an old medical friend of mine and his who was suffering from an acute form of dyspepsia, and whose life was undoubtedly saved by the suggestion of that wise and experienced physician, that his stomach should be washed out two or three times a day by means of a siphon-tube. 'You are not,' he said, 'giving your stomach enough to do.'

(4) Gentle motion is of great use, as helping the peristaltic movements which are necessary to mix the food with the gastric juice and help the formation of the chyme, which, being then boiled down into chyle, forms the basis of healthy nutrition. I remember once dining in the House of Commons with the late Sir David Wedderburn, whose quaint and ingenious mind was only equalled by his political sagacity, and we were three times called away from dinner by the inexorable claims of the division-bell. I, as a new member, was disposed to grumble at this; but my more experienced colleague said he liked it, and that it did him good; and although he had no explanation to offer, there is no doubt that he had, without knowing why, hit upon a profound physiological truth.

(5) Food should always be taken in cheerful society, and ought to be as varied as purse as well as inclination will permit. The solitary bachelor or the 'causeway saint but the house deil' who props the *Times* or the *Scotsman* in front of him while he devours his meal pays for his mental exclusiveness by Carlyle-like dyspepsia, whilst the family man and popular singleton who irradiate beams of happiness and good fellowship around them go through their day's work with comfort to themselves and satisfaction to others. Thank goodness, the cut from the joint and the tough steak or chop are now giving way to more sensible cooking, and those who preside over our kitchen-fires are being told plainly that they must learn their own business, and that the once despised kickshaws are really more wholesome even than the roast-beef of Old England.

(6) Experience as well as common-sense tells us that we must restrict our dietary a little as we grow older. We are no longer building tissue; we are not even destroying it as rapidly as of yore, and any excess of nourishment over our structural requirements only gives rise to accumulation of effete material and invites the insidious approach of gout and rheumatism and other disorders which dog the declining footsteps of the old. Here I must refer my readers to the writings of the sage old physician, the—I regret to say—late Dr George Keith.*

(7) I am almost afraid to touch the thorny subject of alcohol. I have pricked my fingers before now, but don't feel much the worse for it; and I stand, and don't intend to fall, by the article which by the favour of the editor I was privileged to publish in the honoured and widely read pages of 'Maga' some years ago, 'A Plea for Moderate Drinking.' I still agree, as I agreed then, with a wise saying in the Bible, 'Take a little wine for thy stomach's sake,' the experiments having shown that moderate doses of alcohol improve, and do not impair, the digestive process. But it must be carefully regulated, taken at proper fixed times, and with due regard to moderation. Never drink between meals, save under the following circumstances. When you come in chilled and perhaps wet from a depressing walk on a bad day, a little nip of pure whisky will whip up your circulation, replace the goose-skin of your cutaneous envelope by a healthy glow, and often prevent that sudden rush of blood towards the internal organs which finds out our weak spot and lays the foundation of disease. And, second, the not uncommon practice, more especially in tropical climates, of taking a glass of sherry-and-bitters or vermouth before sitting down to dinner is purely physiological; for the weakened stomach of its owner, tired out by hard work and exhausted by prolonged fasting, is quite unable to cope with the gigantic meals—happily now somewhat restricted in quantity—of social custom, and strikes more or less effectually against the task imposed on it, and the timely stimulant gives it tone, promotes the secretion of gastric juice, and enables it to do its duty in that state of life to which it has been called.

To sum up this part of the subject, let me recall the words of Sir James Paget, one of the wisest heads ever placed on medical shoulders, who said or wrote, 'I thank God for good food and good drink.' Now let me sum up generally. The conclusion to which I have come is that, whilst the stomach, sympathetically and sensibly treated, will be a good friend, if you allow it to gain the mastery it may become a relentless tyrant. Some one once wrote these true words: 'Brisk confidence still best with woman copes,' and the same remark applies to the hollow viscus whose success or failure in dealing

* *Plea for a Simpler Life* and *The Fads of an Old Physician.*

with the difficult work imposed on it has made or marred many a promising career. So 'take no care for the morrow;' but, save under definite physical conditions when a specifically regulated regimen is necessarily imposed by your doctor, eat and drink exactly what you please, and pay no attention to the fads and fancies of the dreary army of cranks who try to fill up their vacant lives by endeavouring to shove their mental or physical nostrums down the throats of their often unwilling victims; and don't, as a rule, take the advice even of fully qualified medical men about your diet. They usually prescribe what happens to suit themselves; and, as every man is supposed to be a fool or a physician after forty, you must surely have found out by that time what agrees with you. Some people prefer to be vegetarians, and we have all seen and admired very complete all-round vigour maintained by 'a dinner of herbs, with contentment withal.' Most of us, however, prefer the more succulent and satisfying flesh-meats, skilfully and variously cooked, and a due admixture of both sorts of ingredients undoubtedly holds the field. Above all, don't think too much about your food or your digestion, or fancy that you can't safely consume this or that; and never take the advice of old women of either sex as to what you should eat, drink, or avoid. You can upset any organ by thinking constantly about it, as shrewd old Sir Henry Holland pointed out in his sensible and suggestive essay on the influence of expectant attention on the bodily functions. So take an independent line, steer clear of tradition, chew and swallow what seems to agree with you best, and you will be rewarded by the success of a prescription which will make you both 'healthy, happy, and wise.'

# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXX.—HOW THE MARQUIS TALKED WITH THE TIGER.

MONSIEUR DE MONTESSONNE'S reception by the First Consul was all that he could have desired, unless, indeed, it had permitted the substitution of his legitimate sovereign for the First Consul himself. But Bonaparte's star was blazing to its highest, and the feeble constellations of the Bourbons seemed sunk below the horizon for ever.

The old Royalist had been not a little disturbed at thought of the necessity of meeting this man of the people, before whom the whole world seemed ready to prostrate itself more or less. But there was no help for it. It was part of the price of his rehabilitation, and the return was without doubt of the most solid. The interview left him more thoughtful than ever, and no one ever heard him say a word against General Bonaparte.

He found the First Consul in the little cabinet with the arched window, where the seeds of so many mighty projects were sown. In the middle of the room was a great table covered with papers; at a smaller table near the window, as the marquis was ushered in by Talleyrand himself, a secretary was still writing furiously his chief's last words. Rolls of maps stood in the corners. Evidences abounded on all sides of strenuous, hard work.

Bonaparte stood by the fireplace with one arm on the mantelpiece and one heel on the fender. He looked up with the thread of his thought still in his keen gray eyes, as though he had in his absorption forgotten already that he had given leave for the interview not five minutes before.

'Ah, Citizen Talleyrand?' he said, with a frown.

'Citizen Consul,' said Talleyrand, 'with your permission I present to you M. de Montessonne.'

'You are welcome, Citizen Montessonne. You are desirous, I am told, of living at home again.'

'To a Frenchman, Citizen Consul,' said the marquis, with the De Montessonne bow, 'life anywhere save in France is exile.'

'But you have fared well abroad.'

'I worked hard for my living till happier times came.'

'Ah, you worked! At what?'

'Driving the only perfect language into the heads of English boys, Citizen Consul—the hardest work I ever encountered.'

'*Ma foi!* yes. The easiest way to put things into English heads is to split them open. You have met Fox—Pitt—Burke?'

'I had the honour of meeting most of the men of note over there.'

'The Prince?'

The marquis bowed.

'He is *bon garçon*, is he not?'

'He has his weaknesses, like other men, Citizen Consul.'

'Where did you think of living?'

'With permission, among my own people, at Mortaigne, in the department of the Yonne.'

'You have a house here also?'

'I had, Citizen Consul.'

'For the present you will reside in your own house in Paris, Citizen Montessonne,' said Bonaparte, drawing out his snuff-box. 'The rest will follow. We—I may require more of you before long.'

He snuffed thoughtfully, then offered the box to the marquis, who helped himself in his grandest De Montessonne manner, which cast the First Consul's much into the shade, but yet seemed to meet with his approval.

'I have but one desire, Citizen Consul,' said the marquis, 'and that is to pass the short remainder of my days in peace among my own people.'

'We are all young nowadays, citizen, and the

country desires peace.' And the marquis, who prided himself somewhat on his experience of men, could make nothing of the inscrutable gray eyes which still rested upon him in thoughtful approval.

Then, with a sharp snap of the snuff-box lid and a brief nod of dismissal, Bonaparte came out of his day-dream and turned to his secretary.

'Where were we, Bourrienne?' And they bowed themselves out.

'Well?' asked Talleyrand, with a smile, when they were in the court outside.

'He is a man,' said the marquis thoughtfully.

'Undoubtedly; though some across there hold him to be the devil.'

'What can he possibly want with me? My days are over.'

'The Marquis de Montessonne was one of the shining pillars of the Court—before the deluge. Why should he not grace a Court again?'

The marquis stopped and looked at him with raised eyebrows. Talleyrand nodded with his knowing smile.

'So!' said the marquis, and walked on more thoughtfully than ever.

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### CHAPTER XXXI.—HOW THEY DECIDED JOYOUSLY TO GO INTO THE TIGER'S CAGE.

NOT until his preparations were fully completed would the marquis consent to his wife's joining him in Paris. She waited in London impatiently, eager to taste at the earliest moment the cup for which her lips had thirsted so long; and those restless transition days seemed to her as though they would never come to an end. Now, at last, her loftiest dreams were to be realised. She was to be a Marquise of France in fact as well as in name. Her deportment showed it.

Mistress Honeybun's showed it no less. Jerry MacClootie did his best to prick her rainbow bubble with sharp, dark hints that her head would be loose on her shoulders from the moment she set foot in France. But she was proof against all attacks. As the confidential woman of a Marquise of France she could afford to look down with uttermost contempt on the virulence of a mere baronet's coachman; and as for the coachman's wife——

But Hepsy's mind was too full of her own mistress to be troubled by any outside concerns whatever. Lady Lauriston's sweet face still wore to the world the brave mask of her indomitable will. But the cost was telling on her. None but Hepsy MacClootie knew what she suffered at times, and from her the meaning of it was hidden; and even to Hepsy was only permitted such knowledge as no amount of stoical endurance could hide entirely from the keen insight of a whole-hearted devotion. She only knew that for reasons of her own, which must therefore be good and all-sufficient ones, her dearly loved mistress was wearing herself out in the assumption and assertion of bodily powers which were not really in her. It was a perpetual marvel to Hepsy that so frail a body could still keep up any appearance of strength whatever, and she lived in constant fear of a collapse and a sudden and final ending.

But to all her pleadings her mistress turned, not a deaf, but a steadily unresponsive ear. For Mary Lauriston's fears for her husband had grown—the grimmest of all fears—the fear of the unknown. What dreadful thing it was that threatened him she did not know. Only that it was something so terrible that often of a night his weary brain could not suffer it in silence, and that by day he too wore a mask of gentlest consideration and quietest courtesy to all. Oh, if he would only tell her the whole matter and let her share the burden! That he did not, confirmed and heightened all her fears. But if he did not it was because he could not, and at all events his burden should not be the heavier for concern about herself. And so she wore her strength to a shell, and spent herself in agonies of prayer for him, and drew therefrom unconscious stores for her own sustenance.

And he! How could he disclose to her this dreadful thing? It was a man's burden of sin and shame, to be hidden at any cost from those he loved. And so he struggled on under it, suffering, with a quiet and even a smiling face, tortures of self-reproach and unending agonies of fear lest all his strivings should but drag his loved ones into the pit with him after all. Oh, beyond a doubt this man's path, broad and fair and prosperous to the world, was paved with suffering and hedged with thorns, and he trod it with bleeding feet.

Mavie Lauriston at fifteen was as charming and delightful a bit of human nature as one could conceive of. Her face was not perhaps so regular in its features as her mother's, but it was instinct always with the vivid joy of life, and every single feature in it was good. Her eyes were large and eloquent; her mouth perhaps a trifle wide for true classic proportions, but altogether bewitching in its ready smiles and laughter. She was always all alive to her finger-tips, and all the joy of it sparkled in her eyes and face. She was keenly interested in everybody and everything. Life to her was a wonderful opening book, and she followed with alert curiosity and quick intelligence every turning page and every mark upon it. She was gifted, too, with her mother's charm of easy and natural manners. Her body had kept pace with her mind. She was tall for her age, slender as yet, and as graceful as a young thing of the forest or the prairie.

Charlie had been gazetted to his father's old regiment, and was spending a year at a military tutor's.

Young John Sax and Etienne de Montessonne were still at Westminster, the former completing a full and honourable, if not in any way a startlingly brilliant course, prior to climbing the stool that awaited him in the bank; and the latter just waiting on until his grandfather's negotiations with the

Government should open the doors of a career to him in his native land.

Aunt Charlotte's excitement at thoughts of her forthcoming transplantation to what she had come to look upon as her natural lofty sphere was damped somewhat by the marquis's quiet insistence that for some time to come—in fact, until, as he put it, their alien feet had grown accustomed to their native soil again—it would be both necessary and becoming to live quietly and without ostentation. She would, if she had had her way, have travelled with six horses and a gilded coach, and let all the world on both sides of the Channel know, without possibility of mistake, that the De Montessonnes were coming to their own again.

But '*Doucement! doucement, mon enfant!*' was the marquis's constant precept—murmured, it is true, but none the less inflexible. 'All in good time you shall have all your heart's desire; but it would be neither politic nor seemly to go back in the guise of conquerors when we are in reality but returning fugitives.'

It was under the sum of all these circumstances that the marquis suggested that Sir Charles might find it profitable to make a short visit to Paris for the sake of personally viewing the condition of affairs there; that, if he knew anything about such things, Miss Mavie would give her eyes to accompany him; and that they might all go across together. And Mavie's eyes indeed bore eloquent testimony to the truth of his observation.

The idea commended itself to Sir Charles. Half the world, and the other half's wives and daughters, were flitting across and bringing back wonderful and garbled reports of the new order of things.

'In even a fortnight,' said the marquis, 'if you could spare that time from the helm, you could form your own opinion of men and matters; and an hour with M. de Talleyrand will tell you more about the possibilities of the future than you could learn on this side in five years. He is not one to put his inmost thoughts on paper, as you know.'

Sir Charles nodded thoughtfully. Mavie watched him with sparkling face and eager eyes.

Lady Lauriston, without seeming to do so, quietly observed them both and what was in them, and schooled herself to their going. 'You would like to go, Mavie?' she asked with a smile that showed her own knowledge of the futility of such a question.

'Oh mother!'—and the slim hands clasped ecstatically—'to see Paris! and General Bonaparte!' For Bonaparte was not as yet by any means the bogy he came to be later on.

'There is no danger in their going, M. le Marquis?'

'Not the slightest, my dear madame, or I would never have proposed it. For months past there has been mighty traffic between Paris and London; and the English are well received over there, curious specimens though some of them are,' said the marquis with a reminiscent pinch of snuff. 'And that reminds me, I must put this away;' and he looked regretfully at his favourite snuff-box, which bore inside the lid a very fine miniature of Marie Antoinette. 'I was on the point of returning a courtesy of the First Consul's one day, when I remembered, just in time, that its decoration might not be acceptable to him. On so small a thing may one's fortunes hang when one man holds all the power in his own hands. He would probably have deemed it intentional, and ordered me out of the country.'

'It sounds somewhat like venturing into a tiger's cage,' said Lady Lauriston apprehensively. 'The door, however, is always open should the tiger show his claws.—And you are sure you would not find her a trouble, Charlotte?'

'Oh, my dear, not in the slightest! It will do her good to see the world. She has learnt more at school than ever I did, I am sure. And one never knows, she might not get so good a chance again. Though, when we are quite settled over there, it would please me greatly to have Mavie come and stay with me for as long as she could.'

And so it was settled, and they little knew into what they were so lightly adventuring.

*(To be continued).*

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# SHIFTS FOR A LIVING.

By the Honourable GLADYS GRAHAM MURRAY.

N studying the world of animal life we are at once struck with the many and diverse tricks which the various species exhibit in order to foil their prey and escape with their lives in the great struggle for existence.

Foremost among these 'shifts for a living' is that of protective colouring, though one can hardly say that an animal practises protective colouring. Take, for instance, the partridge: see how the shades of gray and ruddy brown of its plumage harmonise with the tints of its environment, and consequently how difficult it is to notice that bird when it is squatting.

During the summer of last year I was very interested in watching the baby sandpipers on the banks of the Tay. There were several broods; one in particular I kept under constant observation through my binoculars. The little chicks were soon taught to crouch or skulk at the first sign of danger, and thus make themselves almost entirely invisible. If one took one's eye off them for a few seconds it was almost impossible (so long as they remained in their crouching posture) to rediscover them, so

strong was the protective value of the colouring of their down.

The same protective colouration is very marked in the case of the ringed plover's eggs, which are generally laid on the bare shingle of some river-side or beach. One may step on the eggs before actually seeing them.

In India we find that the stripes of the tiger harmonise admirably with the lights and shades of the jungles and thickets, and that instead of their colouring rendering these animals conspicuous it makes them almost invisible—at least to the human eye. The giraffe, again, might strike one as being very conspicuous; but hunters and naturalists tell us exactly the contrary—the various shades of the different patches or marks on the body breaking up the light, thus rendering these quadrupeds almost invisible.

There is in the central hall of the History Section of the British Museum at South Kensington a most interesting case of stuffed Arctic animals, showing how in winter their pelts and plumages turn white, thus assuring them of protection. The ptarmigan and the Arctic fox are both, in winter, invisible among their snowy surroundings. In the case of the Arctic fox his snow-white coat enables him to creep up to the ptarmigan on which he means to feed without being noticed, whilst at the same time he escapes the wary eyes of the hungry wolf who may be on the lookout for a meal. This is a case in which protective colouration performs a double duty. In the same museum, side by side with the above, is another case full of specimens of desert-birds, which show the harmony of their plumage with the dull brown of their Libyan surroundings.

An interesting experiment was made by an American naturalist, Mr Thayer, which illustrated the value of light and shade as a protective factor. He hung two wooden birds shaped like woodcocks on thin wire supports, and coloured one of these in a uniform tint, coating it with a little earth. He treated the upper half of the second decoy in the same way, but the lower part he shaded to a pure white. When he looked toward the two, at a distance of about forty to fifty yards, the shaded one was invisible, whilst the one of uniform colour stood out clearly.

Mimicry also plays a most important part as a 'shift for a living,' though in the case of animals the mimicry assumed may be unconscious. The cuckoo unconsciously mimics a hawk in appearance, and is held, no doubt, in greater awe on this account; but it is among insects that we find the most marvellous instances of this quality. The gorgeous colouring of the wings of some of our butterflies is well known, and these are even surpassed in splendour by their foreign relations. Yet when these butterflies alight on the various flowers and turn up their wings, at once the under-side harmonises with the surroundings and the insect becomes inconspicuous. In the wonderful stick-and-leaf insects of Central Africa mimicry reaches its highest point, and the closest scrutiny may often fail to show whether it is an insect or a twig of wood at which one is looking; whilst the leaf-butterfly plays one just the same trick. Other insects imitate mosses or lichens; whilst certain butterflies imitate—if one may say so—their neighbours, and thus pass as members of a family to which they do not really belong; this trick being of great benefit to them, as in many cases it is found that the mimicker adopts the hues and colours of its unpalatable neighbour, which is left alone on account of the nauseous fluids which its body possesses.

Some animals will part with their limbs in order to escape with their lives. For instance, if a lizard is seized by its tail it vanishes, leaving only its tail in one's hand; whilst the starfish thinks nothing of parting with one of its rays so as to escape with its life. The cuttlefish, swimming in the sea, when pursued by an enemy, at once opens its *sac* and squirts out a volume of black liquid (sepia), thus effectually darkening the water and effecting its escape. Many animals when alarmed emit harsh sounds and noises, while some even feign death.

Perhaps it may seem hardly correct to include the different habits and habitats of various birds and animals under the head of 'Shifts for a Living;' but one has to remember that each animal is adapted to its special mode of life. Of course the most important factor in animal life is the procuring of food. It is obvious that the sharp teeth and claws of the flesh-eating animals (the carnivora) would be of no use to grain and vegetable eaters; therefore the flesh-eating animals, such as the lion, are constructed on a different principle from the graminivorous ones, such as the ox. The teeth of these animals are totally distinct, whilst one is provided with hoofs and horns and the other with the sharpest of claws. That splendid creature the reindeer, which is so invaluable to the Laplander (so valuable is it that a Laplander's wealth is reckoned by the number of reindeer which he possesses), has its feet adapted to its special needs. They are deeply cleft, so that when pressed on the ground they spread out, thus preventing their owner from sinking deeply into the snow, and affording at the same time a secure footing on the slippery ice.

The tongue of the giraffe is especially long and slender, and prehensile at the tip, so that it can be coiled round the stem of the leaf on which it feeds, and with its long neck it is able to pluck the leaves of the highest trees, whilst when grazing or drinking it straddles its legs apart. It is interesting to note that the giraffe possesses only the same number of neck-vertebræ as we ourselves have—namely, seven.

The stomach of the camel is especially adapted for life in the arid desert, being composed of three chambers; so that it practically carries a reservoir of water with it, and subsists on the fat of its own hump, which it assimilates on the journey or march, and which actually serves as nourishment; whilst its broad, splay, cushion-like toes do not sink deeply into the sand.

The crocodile, which kills its prey by drowning, is able with perfect safety to keep itself under water with its mouth wide open; for, by the aid of a little valve which is situated at the back of its throat, and which is closed tightly when its mouth opens, water is prevented from passing down the throat.

In the various bills of birds there is the most wonderful adaptation for the mode of life which each species pursues. The soft, long, and flexible bills of the snipe and the woodcock are most admirably suited for the diet of these birds, which consists chiefly of worms. In the beak of both, the tip of the upper mandible is solid; the lower mandible is not quite so long as the upper, and fits into a small notch in the latter. The beak of another water-bird, the spoonbill (long ago resident in Britain), resembles two long, flat spoons, so that the bird dabbles about in the mud. In the duck family the mandibles are flat and broad, and are provided with a straining arrangement, in the shape of a fringe at the sides, by means of which they can sift out the water and mud.

The soft, flexible bills of the thrush family are well suited to a 'wormy' diet; whilst the strong, blunt little beaks of the finches are admirably adapted to one of seeds. In a small European bird, the crossbill, the beak is actually crossed like a pair of scissors, so that the bird gets additional strength for splitting open the fir-cones for the purpose of extracting the seeds.

The sharp and hooked beaks of birds of prey are adapted to their mode of life. A very singular instance of this adaptation is found in the huia-bird of New Zealand, where the male has a short, straight bill with which it chisels away the decaying wood, whilst the female is able to probe for the insects with her long, slender, curved bill. This is truly a case of the division of labour.

The bills of the humming-birds are adapted for piercing the flowers from which they suck up the juices and the tiny flies which are found in them; whilst the long tongue of the woodpecker is provided with a sharp, hard point and several barbs, all of which are covered with a sticky substance, so that with its powerful, axe-like beak it is able to chisel away the decaying wood in the trees and then lick up the grubs and insects. The long tongue of the woodpecker is a most curious and wonderful contrivance, as when it is not in use its long roots extend backwards, forming a loop on each side behind the head, and then curve round over the top of the skull to their seat of origin near the right nostril. When the bird wishes to protrude its tongue this apparatus acts like a coiled spring which is let out with a sudden jerk.

The feet of various birds show the same modification. The ducks have webbed feet, and the birds of prey have large claws, whilst the climbing-birds have their toes arranged so as to ensure a firm grip. The jacana (a native of South America) has the toes and toe-nails much lengthened, enabling the bird to pass over floating aquatic plants which otherwise would not bear its weight.

In studying these few examples of 'shifts for a living' in the animal world we are left with many an unsolved problem. Is it instinct or blind chance which guides and rules the great world of Nature, or does there lie beneath all phenomena the guiding hand of Providence? An American poet answered in part the question when he wrote these lines:

A fiery mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell;
Then a saurian and a reptile,
And a cave where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and order,
And a face turned from the clod:
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

# THE PATH OF ST PETER.

PART II.

WAS already searching the unconscious man's clothing for despatches, since at any moment Montmorency's troopers might arrive. A roll of papers was quickly found and opened. It contained minute directions from Coligny, also a plan of the path over the marshes, the secret of which he had learned from a fisherman.

Fortunately for myself, as it afterwards turned out, I took in the details of the map with keen, though hasty, attention. St Peter's Path was no fanciful name, for some portion of the way was actually submerged. It led from the high-road beyond the village of Essigny across a stretch of marsh in the direction of two long pools, one rather in advance of the other, between which it ran for some distance, till, beside a small willow, it plunged straight through the water of the larger pool, passed diagonally to the farther side, where it swerved towards the Faubourg d'Isle, one of the suburbs of the city, and finally wound round the curves of a vast bed of reeds, till it reached sound land once more. Before the night was over I had good reason to be thankful that I had a fair memory for lines and markings.

'Should we be pursued 'twill be the only road to safety,' said Maher over my shoulder. 'Ready? Good! But first let us hide this proof of our real mission,' pointing to Brueuil. 'Those dumb lips could yet betray us. What have we here?' he added, opening a low door almost screened from sight by the heavy settle, which disclosed a recess in the outer wall.

And there we left poor Brueuil with his broken sword across his knees.

Then, scattering ashes over the earthen floor where his body had fallen, Maher bade me make ready the horses.

'Wait at the head of the path by which we came, and it will go hard if we do not give Montmorency the slip.'

I went out, leaving him tying up the plan and other papers, and in a few minutes I was waiting, mounted, under the trees. First, however, I turned Brueuil's horse loose and drove him away into the forest. Wandering and riderless horses were too common in those days to excite suspicion.

I listened for Maher's coming with anxiety. Then, on a sudden, a clatter of voices and harness from the opposite side of the hill told me that an armed cavalcade were mounting to the inn from the main pass. Still Maher did not come. Between the trees I saw four men ride into the inn-yard. They called for attendance, but the innkeeper had apparently betaken himself to quieter quarters, for no one answered.

'They have not yet arrived,' grumbled the officer. 'De Rochefort should have come himself to see to this affair.'

'He is by this time happily drunk at Essigny,' laughed another with a coarse jest.

'Let us enter. We may at least find wherewith to wash the dust from our throats,' suggested a third.

Three of the party dismounted and went into the inn, the fourth remaining in charge of the horses.

A second later Maher slipped out and ran round the yard under shadow of the buildings and entered the wood at the point whence they had emerged, then made towards me through the trees.

The trooper on guard raised an outcry and fired in the direction of the flying shadow. I had scarce time to look back when Maher was in the saddle and urging his horse at breakneck pace down the steep hill-track.

'I'll wager they don't know this path nor the hollow behind the hill. They will follow us by way of the main pass, but we may get ahead of them for all that,' Maher said, when we no longer heard the shouts of our pursuers.

'You managed to give them the slip,' I said.

I heard him chuckle.

'Oh, I stood behind the door as they passed in,' said he.

We pressed on recklessly down the narrow, stony bridle-path, which fell away rapidly to the gorge below. The hazardous moment was yet to come, when, leaving the obscurity of the woods, we should begin to gallop across the open plain towards St Quentin.

'We must keep well from Essigny,' I said. 'The enemy are there.'

'Then the saints be with us! The Path of St Peter is our only hope,' returned Maher. 'But we were not bred among the Irish bogs for nothing. Now!'

He put spurs to his horse as we dashed out of cover of the woods into the clear light of the moon.

At the same instant we heard a hoarse shout. Our fears were realised. Rochefort's men, who had been lying in wait for our appearance, gave chase. Luckily we broke cover in the right direction, and for some miles kept the start thus gained. The wind sang in our ears as we sped across the rough country, hoping to strike the road beyond Essigny. The furious pace was beginning to tell upon the horses, especially Maher's, as with outstretched neck it lagged more and more. At length we reached the road. Here the easier going relieved our straining beasts for a time. But Maher was a heavy man, and hard upon his horses, from a habit he had of sitting loose as it galloped, and it was soon only too clear that the men behind were drawing up.

'They gain at every stride,' he said. 'You must ride on with this, boy, sink or swim, by St Peter's Path. I stop at the mill.'

At the edge of the morass, a ruined mill with a group of alders about it cast a deep shadow—the first for miles—across our way.

The foremost of our pursuers fired a shot, then another. Maher threw up his arm; then, leaning painfully out of his saddle towards me, he tried to hand me the white bundle of despatches. Twice I essayed to grasp them, but his shaking hand evaded mine.

There was a harsh cry and a quickened beat of hoofs behind us.

'You are wounded!' I said, as I seized the papers.

'It is nothing. Ride like the devil, boy!'

Into the shadow and out again, and Maher was gone from my side. Shots echoed behind me. I turned my head. The Frenchmen were coming straight on, having fired into the alders as they whirled past. Then came Maher's answer short and true, and the horse of the last man rolled over with its rider, kicking convulsively.

By this time St Quentin rose in full view, towering above its ring of marsh and water. To the left of me lay the Spanish camp, while all around me spread stretches of dark swamp, through the heart of which I must thread my perilous and difficult path.

I had now reached the point when I must leave all of certainty behind me, and trust to the recollection of my hasty study of the plan and to the instinctive judgment born of early experience in similar places.

The riders in my wake were fast making up to me when I plunged into the morass. They stopped, as I expected, and watched my progress, believing that instant destruction awaited me. But soon, seeing that I passed safely over the quagmires, and especially as I seemed to be going towards the city, they made up their minds to follow. My tired horse laboured gallantly through the sticky, evil-smelling ooze, into which it sank at times to the fetlocks. It was slow work, but I pushed steadily on towards the twin pools. Very still and threaten-

ing they looked, glittering black in the moonlight. The chill of the marshes ate into my bones, and I turned sick at the thought of a death in the foul mire of these waters. But I pursued my way between them, my gray, failing at every step. A shot flew past me.

The willow at last, scarcely visible above the surface of the swamp! The supreme moment had come. I forced my unwilling beast into the dark, oily water, and watched it creep to its knees. Had I missed the track? No; the water began to grow shallower; that danger was past!

Meanwhile the troopers, seeing my plunge into the pool, which altered my course from the direction of the city to that of our camp, imagined that, in despair of otherwise escaping them, I had committed myself to the mercies of the water. They stopped, and as I was still within range, they fired, but failed to touch me. Perceiving, however, that I had succeeded in crossing the pool, and had indeed gained firmer ground near the spread of reeds beyond, they took heart and splashed in after me, meaning to head me from the farther bank.

But in their haste, and doubtless emboldened by the immunity they had so far enjoyed in their adventure among the marshes, they took less heed than at the first to follow warily in my steps, and thus they turned into the water almost abreast some paces below my guiding willow.

I sought to urge my panting horse to better speed, when there arose behind me a hideous confusion of sounds—the snorting and plunging of the terrified horses as they felt the black mud suck round their helpless hoofs; the cries and curses of the riders, who now realised too late into what a grievous strait their overconfidence had brought them. They were beyond all human help, I knew.

Then the clamour sank.

In the silence I glanced back. The sinking moon shone full in my eyes athwart the pool. I saw nothing but the face of the sluggish water gently moving and a patch of foam rocking on the dying ripples.

I scarce knew how I rode till the challenge of a Frisian sentry roused me. I made my way to Count Egmont's tent, and was at once admitted. He sprang from his couch to meet me, with a score of rapid questions, as was his wont.

I handed him the white roll of papers, explaining their important contents in as few words as possible.

He opened the roll. Surprise, chagrin, then a flush of rage surged over his handsome features. He flung the papers at my feet.

'The shell is here, but where is the kernel?' he cried.

Bewildered, I stooped to pick them up. What unhappy blunder had I been guilty of? I pressed back the curving parchment. It was blank!

The shock and shame of the disappointment overcame me. My eyes seemed to fill with blood, and I dropped senseless where I stood. When I awoke as from a deep sleep, in the soft summer morning, I found myself in my own tent, and a face looking into mine which I had scarce hoped to see again.

It was Maher, ruddy as the rising sun.

'The despatches?' cried I.

Maher laughed. 'I handed them to the Count two hours ago.'

'Then I was a mere decoy?'

''Twas all that could be done. I foresaw that such a thing might happen if we had to ride for it, and tied the despatches into two bundles. 'Twas that kept me at the inn.'

'And you have no wound?'

'None. When the coast was clear I simply came into camp by the longer road.'

'And the Count, what said he?'

The flap of the tent was raised, and the Count himself entered.

'He said 'twas a brave ride over the Path of St Peter, and was fain to ask what reward the young gallant most desired.'

I threw myself at his feet.

'The honour to ride on another such errand for you, my Lord Count.'

THE END.

# ONE HUNDRED 'FIRST NUMBERS.'

PART II.

## WEEKLY LITERARY PAPERS.

FORTUNES have been lost in the last twenty years in floating weekly papers devoted to the interests of literature. The steady drift of advertisements of books to the daily papers has made it almost impossible for new weekly journals to gain revenue in this direction, and of course the sale of such papers is too limited to be remunerative. Yet 'hope springs eternal in the breast' of young men who are burning to express their opinions on current literature. Sometimes the promoters have not been young, but experienced journalists like Mr Frederick Greenwood; but, whatever their age or experience, the result has been the failure of most of these reviews at a total cost which must have reached at least two hundred thousand pounds in twenty years. Take three examples. The *Speaker* failed despite the most eminent support, and though it had weekly contributions from men like Dr Fairbairn, Mr Birrell, Barry Pain, A. T. Quiller-Couch, and a host of other writers. The *Pilot* failed though it was edited by D. C. Lathbury and printed some fine work, including 'The Road-Mender,' which

goes on selling in volume-form to this day. The *Anti-Jacobin* could not hope for success with such a mysterious title, although it was edited by the man of whom Lord Beaconsfield said, 'I always feel I am in the grip of a statesman when I read Greenwood's articles.'

The first number of the *Realm* appeared on November 16, 1894. It was intended to be a source of strength to the Conservative party. In No. 1 there were some amusing stories of Father Healy. 'On being asked what would Mr Tim Healy be when Home Rule came, he said at once, "'An old man."' When he was at Monte Carlo a friend tried to induce him to go to the gaming-tables. 'The room is like a cathedral.' The witty old priest said, 'Ah, there is all the difference. In a cathedral they pray for a man; here they prey on him.' Right at the end of this first issue of the *Realm* I find a story signed Warwick Simpson. Surely that was the early pseudonym of Mr Pett Ridge.

I have the last number of the *Pall Mall Budget*. It ended in March 1895, it was said owing to the death of Mrs Astor, the proprietor's wife. The *Budget* was in its first form a brilliant production, edited by Mr Charles Morley. Its concluding issue had a story by H. G. Wells, and charming sketches by Phil May, Lewis Baumer, E. J. Sullivan, F. H. Townsend, and others. It was a brilliant but pathetic finale.

Not many people recall the *British Review*, a threepenny weekly paper, formed avowedly on *Spectator* lines, as so many other papers have been. The best thing in the first number was a poem on 'A Deserted Palace,' signed Violet Fane; she married Lord Currie, who was British Ambassador at Rome.

The *Academy* made a new start in November 1896, under that gifted writer Mr Lewis Hind. He had been editing the *Pall Mall Budget*, but the *Academy* was more in his line. I was very sorry when vicissitudes overtook the paper in its early career, for it was full of pleasant writing. Mr G. S. Street wrote on the Drama, Mr J. S. Sherlock on Music, and Mr Hind's witty work was a regular feature. The *Academy* began in October 1869, under Dr C. E. Appleton. Mr J. S. Cotton was its editor for several years. Despite the fact that many thousands love literature, it seems as though only one or two weekly papers sufficed for their needs. Mr Hind left the *Academy*, and is the art-critic of the *Daily Chronicle*. The *Academy* is still in evidence.

The *London Letter* was a sixpenny weekly review which was edited by Mr Algernon Locker and Mr Stafford Ransome. Its policy was declared to be 'Palmerstonian,' but people had moved onwards, and this policy did not secure the paper's success.

The *Week's Survey* was an attempt in 1901 to found a penny literary and political review. Its first article pleaded for a centre party in politics. Sir Wemyss Reid—who knew how hard it was to keep a Liberal review running—wrote on 'The First Liberal Imperialist—Mr Forster.' Mr George Radford published the paper, which did not long survive.

A dignified but dull weekly review was *Literature*, one of three or four unsuccessful enterprises of the *Times*. The first number came out in October 1897. Mr H. D. Traill edited it, and in the first issue Rudyard Kipling's poem 'White Horses' appeared. With all the splendid resources of the *Times* at its back, *Literature* ought to have done better; but it contained too little news and gave too many long reviews of uninteresting volumes.

When the *New Review* ended, the *Outlook* appeared. It was threepence a week, and had an excellent editor in Mr Percy A. Hurd. To its weekly issues many good writers—notably Mr George Wyndham, M.P., W. E. Henley, H. G. Wells, L. F. Austin (prince of after-dinner speakers), and Sir Herbert Maxwell—contributed. I am able to state that Mr Wyndham was the writer of a singularly beautiful article on Mr Gladstone, which gave the dying statesman and his family extraordinary pleasure by its affectionate sincerity. The *Outlook* is now more associated with the Unionist party, and ranges itself with the other sixpenny weekly reviews.

Mr A. Kalisch, who was once musical critic of the *Star*, started the *Londoner* as a twopenny weekly review in 1900. W. H. Pollock, Edward Clodd, W. J. Locke, and C. L. Graves gave a helping hand in the first issue; but it did not become indispensable, and that is a test of success in journalism.

Methodists in the north were offered the *Methodist Weekly* in 1900. Its first editor was Mr Hudson, who had written stories under the pen-name of Harry Lindsay. The Methodists, however, seemed satisfied with well-established weekly papers, and this one succumbed. That reminds me of the fate which has befallen several denominational weekly papers in the last few years. The religious public seems less inclined than formerly to support papers devoted to denominations. The great success of the *British Weekly* (whose first number I treasure with special interest, as I helped to print it) has been achieved by the width of its interests—ecclesiastical, social, and literary. Its history is a record of persistent triumph over difficulties, and redounds to the lasting credit of its brilliant editor, Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, LL.D., one of the hardest workers in journalism.

It was on November 14, 1902, that Mr T. P. O'Connor's long-heralded literary paper, entitled *T. P.'s Weekly*, came out. As it has hardly altered in the succeeding years, there is no necessity to describe its features. The first serial story in *T. P.'s Weekly* was 'Stella Fregelius,' by H. Rider Haggard. As the years have gone on, the answers to correspondents have proved a very popular feature.

The *Review of the Week*, started in November 1899, went through various vicissitudes before it came to an end. It aspired to be a penny *Spectator*—an impossibility. George Gissing wrote on 'Tyrtæus,' protesting against poets raising a blood-thirst for war. George Bernard Shaw had an amusing article on 'Trials of a Military Dramatist.' He

says sarcastically: 'It is just about as possible for Tommy Atkins to be a marksman as it is for him to play the fiddle like Sarasate.' Another article is on 'The Painless Extinction of Persons over Forty.' In the same field of weekly literary journals appeared the *London Review* in 1898. I believe it was edited by Mr Oswald Crawfurd, C.M.G., and Mr Edwin Oliver. It was dull in contents and appearance, with articles by Dr A. H. Japp, John Leyland, and others. What thousands of pounds have been sunk in attempts to found weekly literary journals!

PENNY POPULAR WEEKLY PAPERS.

Immense sums have been dropped in starting penny weekly papers during the last twenty years. Only a very few of those first numbers in my collection are now represented by profitable papers.

*Stories* was a penny weekly paper which rose to a circulation of about fifty thousand by January 1898. I believe Mr Harvey du Croz was interested in it. Its editor was Mr J. F. Williams. Who recollects the *Longbow?* It was edited by Mr Henry, of the staff of *To-Day*, and had sketches by Dudley Hardy, a serial story by Rider Haggard, and other attractions. But it could not make itself indispensable.

The *Lawyer* was a penny illustrated weekly paper. It had good portraits of Lord Alverstone, Mr Asquith, and other leading lawyers. There have been several ephemeral legal papers, written, I presume, chiefly by the junior Bar before briefs took up their time and energy. The *Onlooker* at threepence weekly started in 1900, under the editorship of Mrs Harcourt Williamson ('Belle' of the *World*). One of its novel features was signed 'Lists for the Libraries,' by eminent folks like the Duchess of Sutherland.

What strenuous efforts have been made in trying to counteract the 'penny dreadfuls' which circulate among boys! But I am afraid, despite the success of the *B.O.P.*, *Chums*, and other papers, the world of boys remains loyal to the lower type of periodical. Here is the first number of *Boys of the Empire*, dated October 27, 1900. It had good stuff in it, and was under the guidance of experienced men like Mr Andrew Melrose and Mr H. H. Spicer.

It is eleven years since the *Home Magazine* was started by Messrs George Newnes. Its first editor was Mr George Clarke the missioner. It was a penny weekly, and it was stated that 'no expense will be spared to produce the best magazine that it is possible to produce for a penny.' Mrs L. B. Walford wrote the serial. However, the magazine did not secure sufficient support, and it was amalgamated later on with the *Sunday Strand*.

The *Unicorn* was started in 1895, under the editorship of Mr Raven-Hill, who is now one of the chief artists in *Punch*. Its first number contained a clever sketch by Phil May, showing his resemblance to Pope Leo XIII. The literary matter was very ordinary, and was set in unattractive type. The price of this weekly paper was threepence, though it had only twenty pages of letterpress. Not even the capital sketches could save it.

One hundred thousand copies were issued of No. 1 of *John Bull*. It was a humorous weekly paper, edited by Mr Arthur W. A'Beckett, formerly of *Punch*. Harry Furniss designed a striking title-page, and Sir Lewis Morris had a Coronation Ode, for the paper made its bow in June 1902. But as I have said before, the British capacity for comic papers is strictly limited. The title *John Bull* was assumed in later years by Mr Horatio Bottomley's paper.

*Smith's Weekly* was issued in 1904, one of the army of penny journals which storm the citadel created by *Tit-Bits*, *Answers*, and *Pearson's Weekly*.

The *Minute* was said cruelly to have lasted a little longer than its name. It began in January 1896, under Mr C. N. Williamson, formerly of *Black and White*. The first picture in the little weekly paper was of the capture of Dr Jameson by the Boers. The *Minute* seemed to be gaining a hold on the public just when it came to an end.

In October 1897 *News of the Week* appeared as a Saturday morning penny weekly journal. Its editor was Mr C. Herbert Grinling. I possess two 'first numbers,' yet each is dated differently and has a different shape. A short story by Robert Hichens is refreshing amid the morass of police reports, &c. The paper made a gallant fight.

Mr C. Arthur Pearson tried to reach a new public with a penny weekly called *Girls*. This was in 1897, but the paper did not receive enough favour. I have never forgotten 'A Very Improbable Story' which was in the first number. It was anonymous. The *Scots Pictorial* was another débutant in 1897. It had some fine half-tone illustrations of Inveraray Castle and the Duke of Argyll. There was an account of the memorial to Dr Wm. Alexander, the author of *Johnny Gibb*, a Doric classic. It is still to the fore.

A lot of money was dropped on *Men and Women*. It appeared first in 1903, 'edited by G. R. Sims.' One of the articles was by H. W. Massingham on the 'Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.' It ends: 'If the private secretary would only tell what he knows! But he never will.'

Another Newnes enterprise was *Fun*, an old paper revived under the lively editorship of Leslie Wilson and P. W. Wilson. The latter is now M.P. for South St Pancras and the parliamentary sketch-writer for the *Daily News*. *Fun* ought to have lived; it was very witty, and had brilliant sketches by Raven-Hill, E. J. Sullivan, Sauber, C. E. Brock, and other artists. But clubs, restaurants, and hairdressing saloons which used to 'take in' all the comic papers have 'verted to the daily journals.

Here is the first number of *M.A.P.*, dated June 18, 1898. It was 'the realisation of a scheme I have had in my mind for at least eight years,' said Mr T. P. O'Connor, M.P., its founder. For ten years it maintained an almost identical form, but

lately it has tried experiments in type, &c. Mr O'Connor has been a volatile force in journalism, and in *M.A.P.* he was a pioneer who has been imitated but not excelled.

A paper called the *Rocket* was an unfortunate exemplification of its name. 'We shall be told by "candid friends" that our name is ominous; that if we *do* go up like the rocket we are bound to come down like the stick,' said the editor. The paper contained a long article by Clement Scott, whose pen was always in demand for new ventures.

The *Lady Cyclist*, edited by Charles P. Sisley, tried its fortunes in 1895. I notice in the first issue an interview with Miss Lillias Campbell Davidson, who was then a pioneer among lady cyclists and a busy contributor to all papers devoted to cycling.

The *Wheel of Fortune* was an attempt by W. G. FitzGerald in 1903 to add to our penny popular weeklies. A curious item in No. 1 was a short poem by Flora Annie Steel the novelist. Among other similar ventures there was *Anecdotes*, of which Mr George Knight, formerly editor of the *Porcupine*, was a moving spirit in 1896. It offered thirty-one shillings and sixpence for the best anecdotal paragraph, truly munificent pay.

An Irish M.P. was concerned with Mr Henry Reichardt in starting in February 1902 *Chic* as a twopenny weekly paper for ladies. It devoted most of its space to fashions.

I think the death of a little weekly penny paper with the curious title of *V.C.* was regretted genuinely by a large circle of readers. It was a very readable paper, with a vein of real originality, and it brought Harold Begbie to the front if it did nothing else. In March 1904 it was amalgamated with another weekly called *Competitions;* but, though in illustrations and matter it was far ahead of some of its contemporaries, it passed away, mourned, as I said, by many.

The *Coloured Pictorial*, started in 1902, was one of the first papers to employ the three-colour process. For twopence it was a wonderful production. The *Easy-Chair* was superior to the generality of penny weeklies. Arthur Waugh wrote reviews for it, and it was printed well. But, alas! it succumbed.

The *Golden Penny*, issued from the *Graphic* Office in 1895, improved on its first number, and attained a very large circulation. Looking at the half-tone illustrations in this first issue, one can realise how far we have travelled since in the art of reproduction. A curious paragraph related to Monsignor Capel, formerly a famous Roman Catholic ecclesiastic; it stated he had become a Californian ranchman, and was very wealthy. It used to be said that Capel was the original of 'Catesby' in Disraeli's novel *Lothair*.

The periodicals mentioned in this article are probably only one-tenth of the total number which have been started in the last twenty years. What a proof of the development of journalism in this period we have as we look at the railway bookstall crowded with periodicals dealing with almost every belief, trade, and recreation! No one will have an excuse for being ill-informed in the future.

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# THAT BIG TROUT.

By the Reverend E. ADRIAN WOODRUFFE-PEACOCK, F.L.S., F.G.S.

UNDER the low escarpment, called the Barf by our Danish fore-elders, which it has been fretting and cutting away these thousands of years—ever since the great ice-sheet laid down the chalky boulder-clay the hill is composed of—runs the beck. It is only an ordinary brook, some fifteen feet wide, flowing eternally along its bed of varied sand and pebbles, and carrying its wearings and the weatherings of the wold—the great chalk-hills on the east from which it springs—to the dead level of the embanked carrs or peat-flat; but it is still a perpetual demonstration of many immutable laws of nature. Beauty is truly in consciousness of the beholder, not external to the man; it is only apprehended by the eyes of the trained mind. The beck proved this to us one bright summer morning.

Descending the incline above the hunting bridge one glorious June day with a native who lived close by, we inquired if he did not see any loveliness in the view before him. 'I see nought new. I've looked on it all a hundred times before. Let's see now;' and he spoke in the most matter-of-fact voice and way, as if he were summing up the points of a Christmas bullock. 'There's the hill, and water, and wood, and rising ground, and the town in the distance amongst the trees. I've seen 'em all before. The market-town means men, and that means food. The crops o' corn growing here and there, as you may see, to feed 'em. There's yon sheep on the turnips, and the cattle in the pasture. Now, give me the job o' sitting by a woodside a day like this to hear the corn a-growing as the winds sough through it. I can see a beauty in that. It means harvest wages for families wi' many mouths and feet, and thrashing days in winter, wi' extra pay, when work is slack and hard to come by. It means a lot; I cannot say the half—folks and beasts fed, and God thanked. Amen. That's the beauty o' the country in a growing time. I cannot say as I sees any other.'

'Amen!' we said too, for this son of the soil was at least thankful for something. He was a true child of his environment. Had he been left by a woodside 'to hear the corn growing' the squire would have been many couple of rabbits and a few hares less by the evening. He saw in the scene

before us what his training fitted him to look for, ignoring the game as beside the mark just then.

The view was an ideal one of sweet country charm and peace. The landscape sweeps down on every side to the rippling waters of the winding stream, whose quiet pools reflect every dimpling cloud that passes overhead. On the north, over wooded ground, a huge shoulder of the wold stands out prominently, and constant lines of white steam below it betray the hidden presence of the busy junction. On the west lies the little market-town, ruined because a former squire forced the railway junction from its precincts. Far away beyond, on the skyline over the great woods of the county, the smoke of the ironworks comes into evidence, made hazy by distance, a proof that man—as a smelter of iron, as he was there in prehistoric times, and now a maker of steel and basic slag, and as a seeker for coal—has destroyed the wild beauty of those wind-blown commons with their old-world flora in his lust for the wealth of nations, which lies hardly buried below the surface soil. Just to the north by the beckside comes the Barf wood, a trifle of untouched nature, for the plough has never scored its surface yet. The steep incline and poor clay have proved 'too stiff a job to pay.' Too much, also, even for some of our sweetest woodland flowers, such as the primrose and wild hyacinth. On the south, for some distance, a narrow line of trees follows the course of the stream, till all at once it reaches the fenland level, and runs between banks made by man from its own alluvial gatherings to protect the cultivated peat-fields. It was a scene, that glorious June morning, instinct with beauty, full of life and action, pregnant with teaching, from the history of its rocks and soils to the crowning efforts of man's handiwork.

It was not, however, an ideal trout-stream, or one easy to fish; but the big trout and his following were there, and so my story is of it. It is not an invented tale, but plain, sober, everyday history, romantic and tragic, like life itself; truly romantic from the number of broken casts, rods, and reputations left behind. There was one pair of spectacles at least lost in the quest. The good sportsman they belonged to had hooked a fish—if not 'that big fish'—and could not stoop to pick them up. When he had landed his pound prize he could not see without his glasses where they lay; so the beck sand buried them, and they remain a relic of conquest. Tragic, for the end of life is always that, however bright and glowing its active moments may have been.

The failures that old hunting bridge has seen! Luckily it cannot repeat all it has heard. Prodigious is the only single word in our mother-tongue that exactly expresses everything—the frequent scenes of disaster by the pool and the language of those gentle and patient fishermen. It was exceptional in all ways. Every visitor had the best of reasons for his many failures, and in his vexation talked much of his disappointment. The slight curve above the bridge, the overhanging thorn-tree, the suddenly shallowing waters on each side of the pool, the six-foot deep and twelve-foot wide cavern under the roots of the tree, the high, steep banks, and that unnameable bridge itself—everything was 'well called' except the angler's want of art and bungling. We always smiled kindly, but ever made the same comment, 'Ha! you mean you did not get him.' Some of the would-be Waltonians with hopelessly lost reputations were quietly riled; some rushed off again to meet further failures; the naughty one used pictorial, not piscatorial, phraseology; the wise ones smiled—smiled sadly, we mean, as we had done when we owned ourselves beaten. The big trout lived on, and flourished, eating his children and grandchildren with evident relish.

His former history was simple, and well known to a few old friends. Ford's fish-hatchery at Hundon was flooded by a sudden semi-tropical shower during a passing thunderstorm. Such a rush of water on the side of the wold was unexpected, and therefore unprovided for. In the height of the wash-out much fry escaped from the rearing-ponds down-stream, and finally reached the Aucholme. Such a streamless river—for it is nothing better than a canal—did not satisfy them. So the youngsters commenced working up its tributaries; and they or their descendants took possession of every likely spot in all the becks that feed the river. We at one time or another, before we gave up fishing, accounted for a good hundred of them. Eight taken one afternoon on another beck scaled sixteen pounds two ounces. They were own brothers in growth, and were some of the original fry, we believe.

The big trout, to judge from his age and size, was another of the escapes, but as he was not 'earmarked' this must ever remain a conjecture. His weight, too, must be a matter of doubt, as he was never on the scales. The best judges, when he was fully fed up, put him down at 'better than five pounds.' Whatever were his defects from the fisherman's point of view, and fry-eating was his worst characteristic, he had a mind of his own, and a way that showed it. Nothing could demonstrate the fact more clearly than the position he chose for his abode and following. A four to eight inch flow of water between nearly upright banks led to a pool in the bend of the stream not more than two feet deep and thirteen by fifteen wide, with a cavern below the roots of the wide-spreading thorn-tree. Not a foot beyond the foliage, which extended to the other side of the stream, came the wooden hunting bridge of reprobate memory. Under it the water ran no more than five or six inches deep, with another slight bend and smaller pool and cave just beyond the bridge. It was these many-rooted caverns in both pools which defied the skill of the best fishermen, in conjunction with the bridge and the big trout's wide experience. If he were not found in one, he was always to be detected in the other pool or cave. Many a time have we seen him cross from one to the other as the

case might be, his broad back well out of the water; but never did he stay in the pool on such occasions—he retired into hiding immediately. The smaller fish of edible size forsook the pool or cave at once for the shallows, where they were safe. By watching their actions it was always possible to tell where he was laid up.

The hunting bridge was the insurmountable difficulty in getting him, for, whichever side of the woodwork he was hooked on, he crossed over to the other the moment he felt the prick of the barb. With a few skilful turns round the roots in the cavern he tied up the line, and then took his own time to work himself free of the encumbrance. While he was still young he was twice landed on the bank, but when he touched the ground and the pressure was off, he was as quickly back in his native water through sheer bungling on the part of the fisherman. There in his self-chosen stronghold, when he was fully educated, he defied the united fishing skill of the neighbourhood and of such outsiders as heard of him.

Men of low sporting instincts even shot at him, but not knowing the trick, invariably missed their reward. In this way he is believed to have lost the use of his left eye, but he could see as well with one as most fish can with two. Another occasion found a party, with any amount of show in fishing-tackle, by the bridge pool in the evening. Borrowing planks, spades, and buckets, they made an attempt to stop the flow of the beck and bail out the pool. As they did not understand the proper methods for such work, a burst dam and thorough wash-out carried them down-stream some distance, and brought their ineffectual efforts to a sudden, wet, and inglorious conclusion.

When we at last arrived on the scene the big trout was an aged and educated fish, too large for the confined limits of his waters. No lure would he notice, not even white moth in the moonlight. We persisted till we found the place was impossible. We hooked him no less than three times, and always by means of a bare bright hook on gossamer tackle in the brightest sunlight. It was trifling, for such gut was useless with a fish of his weight and knowledge. The old sportsman who told us how killing a bare hook was sometimes on educated fish had met with some curious experiences in his time, but never with a fish in a position quite as difficult as this one. We gave him up at last, and fishing at the same time, but in no spirit of vexation—the frame of mind of the boiled cockerel which calls 'cockadoodle don't.' We kept on the watch, and have spent fruitful moments, running into many hours at one time or another, on the hunting bridge, studying the big trout and his surroundings.

It came about in this way. Age makes a man full of new interests, and more kindly disposed towards his fellow-creatures. The last time we took our rod and flies it was with the hope of catching some members of the big trout's following, as we had frequently done before. As we came down the Barf incline we perceived in the distance a much more expert master approaching the spot, and pulled up to watch the outcome. A heron was slowly winging its way up every curve of the stream, and when it came to the pool, or more likely saw a trout in the water, it took a magnificent circular sweep over the field beyond the wood, and settled down some distance below the bridge. From that point of vantage it made a stealthy approach with measured gait, till it found a suitable spot for 'sentry go' within striking distance of the lower pool. The thought that flashed into our mind at once was: 'Is this bird to do what man has failed to effect? We will watch and see the result.' We did, and found the sport far more engrossing than fishing. It proved so interesting that we never took the rod out again, and never shall now. We shall fish for ever, we hope, with good luck, though not with the rod, line, and fly, but with the lure that lands facts—with the meditative mind. We watched the bird that day through a screen of privet, and later, on many subsequent occasions, from one side of the bridge or the other. The circumstances of the situation were almost as difficult for it as for the human fisherman. It proved more persistent than we had been, visiting the spot early in the morning, during the day, and after the shades of evening had fallen, for it was frequently disturbed on account of the footway over the bridge. In the end, however, it was no more successful than others had been. It did not catch the big trout; though, like the rest of us, it was rewarded by a few of his less wary followers. I cannot tell on this occasion the tale of that bird's efforts.

Summers came and went, but the big trout defied all efforts to take him. How I wished that an otter might come up the stream! for he would have done the trick at once; but one never did come. The cuckoos came to drop their eggs into the nests of unsuspecting wagtails, and haunted the beck, for they are thirsty birds, and love also to sun themselves on its sandy banks. The kingfishers built below in a hole on the upright face of the stream-side. Many a time they flew under the bridge when we were on it, a blue sheen of glory, with the big trout's offspring in their bills. The swallows and sand-martins hawked the stream, and took the fly the educated trout either dared not or would not touch. We saw all this frantic struggle for existence, and mused over it. The water-voles feeding on the cow-mumble (*Heracleum*), along with the field-mice and bank-voles, were constantly hunted by weasels and stoats. Everything was preying on something else. As the seasons came and went the pool was fully frozen over in the spring of 1895. The fox left his pad-marks on the snow blown over the ice under that thorn-tree as he hunted for a supper of voles, but the big trout remained untaken. How he lived that spring through I cannot imagine. He lived by his wits, the life of a cannibal, and luckily, not being visited by an otter, survived.

It would give us pleasure to state that he died

from choking in the act of swallowing one of his great-grandsons. Such an end would have been well merited, but it would not be true history; it would have been too ethically romantic. He was on the gravel shallows higher up-stream with one of his followers, in the act of spawning, when the end came to his long-sought life. The tenant of the farm perceived him, and a well-directed blow with a hazel rod brought an end to much cannibalism and as masterful an existence as we have ever met with in fishing records—not stories, mind; there is no limit to them. He was poor eating, we were told, though very finely coloured in the flesh; and have no reason to doubt it, from the years he was known.

We have given up fishing with the rod, for we were fairly beaten by honest means. We knew how we could have secured him easily, but could not stoop to it. Sport *is* cruel enough; anything outside is barbarous and little better than poaching. So we watched the big trout and his cruel ways, with the swallows, martins, kingfishers, heron, and water-hens, and all the mammals by his pool; and it was a liberal education. So few can watch, and it is so good for men to observe and think sometimes without any desire to take part in the destructive battle that is waging all around them. The fish in the waters, the mason-wasp building on the bridge, the old fisherman with the long legs who failed as conspicuously as we did, or the little blue bird from his barren perch diving for his smaller prey, the cuckoos with their cozening ways and love of caterpillars, the struggles for existence in the floral growth in the stream or on its banks, in which the opium poppy took part for years in the most curious way, all showed the battle that life implies. It was good for us to sit aside from the conflict to watch a while and learn, to seek after that true knowledge which should be light and wisdom for all who can find it.

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## THE TREACHERY OF THE SEA.

And I looked upon the true sea—the sea that plays with men till their hearts are broken, and wears stout ships to death.—CONRAD.

THESE words, by one who knows the sea for his enemy, have often recurred to me as I leant over the shaking bow of some great liner that was putting leagues of Atlantic trouble between me and home. You get this measure of the sea's wolfish treachery in the sea-books. It has no code of honour, this sea of ours. Fair-play is foreign to its spirit. The weaker the foe, the harder it strikes. Now and then it puts forth its futile strength against the great hulks that mock its fury between the Mersey and St Lawrence, but more often it holds itself in reserve for some helpless tramp, which, though more defenceless than many a wind-jammer, angers the sea by assuming the dignity of steam.

The ocean is a good servant when flogged, but a bad master when feared. It helps those only who help themselves; it fawns to the strong, but is pitiless to the timid. There are men who profess themselves without fear of it, but their indifference only measures their ignorance. Those fear it most who know it best. Addison could write delicately of the 'agreeable horror' of a sea-storm, but Addison was a better essayist than traveller. Aristotle came nearer the truth when he classed it, with earthquakes, as among the phenomena all men must fear. That is the Greek view of it to this day, and recalls the Hellenes in *Eothen*, 'pale and grim under their hooded capotes, like monks awaiting a massacre.'

Landsmen usually make the mistake of fearing it only in its rage. They are cowed by the hissing combers which hurl themselves with gathering strength against the timbers of the ship or the buttresses of the land, like ravening beasts falling back from their prey with dripping jaws. They are daunted—and no wonder!—by those running mountains of green tipped with white, suggesting a snow-capped range gone mad. The vessel, reeling under their impact, as she painfully claws her way a little farther from a lee shore, looks every moment as if she must broach-to and founder. In these tremendous moments of unrestrained paroxysm, the landsman closes his eyes and forgets to pray, since science and faith seem alike unavailing.

Yet to the informed eye of the seaman the oily calm of the ocean often brings a more baneful message. He knows that there are claws beneath the velvet, and that this deceptive mood is but the purring of a tiger before the spring. Raging or purring, it is always the enemy. '*Elle rugit, puis moutonne*,' says Hugo—first the bellowing bull, then the bleating sheep, always the foe. And since a blustering enemy was ever less to be dreaded than one who plots quietly, there is a terror in the silence of the sea.

There is none of this cunning in the calm which comes after a storm at sea. That is no more than the exhaustion of the elements, a benediction, a truce. The wind dies away on far horizons. Even the sea seems for a moment content that its ally is gone elsewhere, and that it has no choice but to smile under sapphire skies.

Our own seas, lying outside the zone of typhoons and hurricanes, do not pass so rapidly from the peace of God to these fits of terrific rage; but in the tropics the transition is instantaneous. I recollect once, off Santiago, on the south shore of Cuba, where Cervera found his last ditch, seeing the Caribbean change from a dream-like stillness to a black maelstrom of devilry within an hour. That was the

first and last occasion on which, in skies ranging over a hundred degrees of latitude, I ever saw the cloud literally no bigger than a man's hand come up from the skyline and burst over the land. Another day, off the low Keys of Florida, I saw the Gulf of Mexico change from the calm of death to the frenzy of a homicidal maniac in a few minutes, and this time the hurricane came suddenly out of a cloudless sky, and the low trees on that coral strand whispered no warning ere the scene was pandemonium.

Here is treachery such as the sea delights in. I recall a worse case yet. A great cargo-boat lay at anchor in one of the smaller Queensland ports, a little south of the Barrier Reef. The sea was like glass, and a continuous procession of roomy lighters, laden to the water's edge, brought wool and gold from the wharves, and donkey-engines brayed merrily over yawning hatches. It was a sultry September evening, and blue lightnings stabbed the blackness over the hills. It was such a calm as would have cozened a landsman; but the captain, who had bought his knowledge with white hair on the sunny side of fifty, saw beneath the surface, and telegraphed an order from bridge to engine-room. Of a sudden the wind, coming out of the south-east, whistled up the hell-hounds in a white line that bore swiftly down upon our anchorage. But the anchors were already out of the mud, and we steamed hastily away northward into the shelter of the Barrier, leaving the half-full lighters to wait for the next boat. Doubtless the fortnight's delay would chafe the good traders of Bradford, impatient for their wool, and would annoy the Bank of England, looking for its ingots; but it was better to keep them fretting at home than to go to a destination where bills of lading do not run.

The Gulf of Mexico is one of the most unprincipled of seas. The quays of Galveston know its wickedness. Yet I have found it in gentle mood enough, and I once crossed from the isthmus to New Orleans in a little tramp that first gorged half a million bananas at the port of Costa Rica, and then lurched north through tranquil seas, which could in other mood have sent us and the fruit to the bottom, to the old French settlement on the muddy Mississippi. And again I knew it, two years earlier, in a yet smaller craft, crossing from Tampa to Key West, just at the beginnings of the Gulf Stream, where that beneficent current rounds Cape Sable. As I leaned over the bulwarks and looked on the sunny shore of Florida, it seemed to me that our national debt to that stream has been, when one comes to think of British weather in a perspective of three thousand miles, somewhat exaggerated; but this must be heresy, as every geographer joins in its praise as the author of the mild British climate.

Only when the sea is dominated by the land can its treachery be ignored. Within the Barrier Reef, or in the lovely landlocked scenery of Puget Sound, between Victoria (B.C.) and Vancouver, I have watched it robbed of its sting, impotent, servile, cringing to those whom it is powerless to harm. It is in the great Southern Ocean, which heaves between Australia's unfriendly coast and the polar ice, that one gets the most tremendous impression of boundless space and power without limit. Since the days when I tossed on helpless liners in the Bight, with albatrosses and mollymauks wheeling round the rolling vessel, Scott and Shackleton have lifted a corner of the veil from off the face of the cold and mysterious Antarctic; but in those days, when we had forgotten the remote discoveries of Cook and Ross, all that lay beyond the southern skyline was baffling enigma. To-day, with the return of one expedition from the frozen nurseries of penguins and sea-lions, and the departure of another, that gloomy Southern Ocean might perchance lack the terrors of the unknown, but fifteen years ago the immensity of it was awful.

North, south, east, and west, the sea weaves its spells. Its food is prepared for it from the Dogger Bank to the Cape. A cunning enemy, it can afford to be patient, knowing that its chance will come some time. It plays with men as a cat plays with mice. There is something almost sublime in its treachery. The land has no cunning like it. Earthquakes and volcanoes take their toll, but only in the zones that are their freehold, where those who choose to defy the elemental forces of Nature do so at their own risk. Those who go down in ships play the same hazard; but, since there is not room for all ashore, they must either do so or starve. This will be for all time. Railways or the conquest of the air may rob the ocean of more tender prey, but the fishermen and grain-carriers must always be sacrificed on its dim altars. And the sea, the unsympathetic, malignant, boundless, wanton sea, will still levy its cold tribute from the sons of men, will still leave the wives and daughters red-eyed beside empty chairs. Such is its hateful pleasure.

## A BIRD'S SONG.

A birdie sang, from a leafy spray,
His matins at dawn of one sweet day;
From a joyous heart each pearly note
Came bubbling up to his tiny throat.
Oh, green was the grass, and blue was the sky,
The birdie was glad, and so was I!

A fountain of joy was my breast that morn!
There were snowdrifts of bloom on the old blackthorn,
The tranquil air was so cool and sweet,
The daisies foamed round my dancing feet;
And I joined the bird in his gladsome lay,
And I thanked the Lord that I *lived* that day.

And ever since then, whenever I hear
The song of a bird rise sweet and clear,
I feel—though there 's sorrow and pain abroad—
That around and above and below is God;
And I go my way with a soul made strong
Because of the hope in a birdie's song.

M. Heddebwick Bbowne.

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# ONE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—AND AFTER.

By H. HALYBURTON ROSS, Author of *The Tutor of Tyndrach*, &c.

## CHAPTER I.

RED-LETTER days there are, I suppose, in every life, that stand out in the calendar of memory, reminder of some festival or the starting-point of a new epoch.

To Helen Campbell this particular May day was to prove such a fateful anniversary, though she had no suspicion of what was in store for her when she took her first look out of the window that morning over the familiar expanse of purple strath and mountain that surrounded the Manse of Muirton like a sea. It was all the result of a letter that her mother read through twice, and then handed across the breakfast-table to her father.

One glance at her face had told Helen that it contained important news, and she saw a confirmation of the suspicion in the minister's expression as his rather short-sighted eyes perused the contents. He laid it down beside his plate and gazed straight across the table at his wife.

'After twenty years!' he said.

She returned his look steadily; but Helen could not know that he saw in her eyes a revival of the old wounded expression he had grown to dread in the first years of their married life, when the post-bag had been searched in vain for an answer to her loving appeals to her own people. It was for his sake she had had to suffer the coldness, the neglect, and to forgo all the accustomed privileges of wealth and station; but time had proved for both of them that the sacrifice was worth while in the hallowing of their married love.

The appeals had ceased long ago, and the years of silence had created an ever-widening gulf between Mary Campbell and the friends and associations of her youth. Now this letter had come too late, as it seemed to her in the first flush of bitterness.

'I suppose we had better tell Helen?' she said at last, in her quiet, restrained voice.

Both parents glanced instinctively at the girl who was seated at the side of the table. Here at least was a triumphant enough indication of their union, yet mingling with their pride was an undercurrent of apprehension. Was not beauty often a tragic heritage, especially when unaccompanied by corresponding benefactions? And of Helen Campbell's beauty there could be no question.

That she was entirely unconscious of it herself rather enhanced its effect. The soul gazing out of the gray eyes was at this time the soul of a child, trustful and inquiring. She would have called the clear, creamy pallor of her own skin sallow if she had been asked, and the slight irregularity of feature that gave charm and character to her face she often bemoaned, comparing it with her mother's more classic contour. But the rare gift of beauty was there nevertheless, indefinable, yet to a prescient eye already charged with fateful possibilities.

'Yes, mother; what is it?' she echoed eagerly.

The minister answered for his wife.

'Your mother has had a letter from her aunts, the Miss Dalry Drummonds, in Edinburgh, inviting us all three to town for the General Assembly next week,' he announced in his deliberate accents.

Helen's face flushed, her eyes became luminous with excitement, then the colour faded.

'Of course we will not go,' she said in a little, proud voice.

The minister and his wife exchanged a quick glance.

On Mary Campbell's face a curious mingling of emotions were fighting for the mastery.

'There is no "of course" about it,' returned the minister quietly, and paused.

Helen's gaze travelled from one to another of her parents.

'They don't deserve that mother should go,' she declared at last with a fine loyalty, putting back her head.



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'Hush! The wrong was to your father,' interpolated Mary Campbell quickly.

The minister smiled, a smile that spread an extraordinary radiance over his plain, rugged-featured face.

'It isn't the wrong we must think of to-day,' he said, 'when the peace-offering has come.'

Again there was a pause. All at once Helen pushed back her chair violently.

'Oh, if we could go!' she cried, her hands clasped, her eyes gleaming with excitement. 'Just for a week.' Then she checked herself, glancing half-shamefacedly at her mother.

Mary Campbell met the look with a strange smile.

'It would mean an awakening for you, child,' she said.

'A fine house, and horses and carriages—and Muirton Manse afterwards,' interrupted the minister dryly. 'How would that strike you?'

Helen turned indignantly on him.

'You know nothing would ever change my love for Muirton,' she exclaimed. 'But just for a week to see the town and the Assembly and Holyrood.'

'Ay, the Assembly,' echoed the minister in a reminiscent tone, not untinged with regret.

For many years now he had forgone the annual treat for economic reasons, putting by a little sum each year out of his narrow stipend until the time when the three would be able to enjoy the occasion in comfort. But this invitation had altered everything. It seemed to have opened out a whole vista of new possibilities in the future, the consequences of which might extend far beyond the one short week of the Assembly.

It was of Helen the minister and his wife were thinking, not of themselves. In each of their hearts was a lurking foreboding of what this crisis might mean for the girl. Yet would they be justified in depriving her of the opportunity it presented of seeing the other side of life? And there was their pride in her, too—the yearning to let those proud, aloof relatives see what a choice blossom they had reared in the simple north-country manse.

'I think,' said Mary Campbell softly at last—'I think we will just write to Aunt Charlotte and say yes.'

She was always the one to come first to a decision. It was just that vein of quiet strength in her nature that Helen had inherited, and that had kept the minister her slave through all these years.

He looked across the table at her now, a straight, long look.

'What three brave voyagers we shall be,' he said with a whimsical little laugh, 'setting forth on our adventures from the home-port!'

'It is only for a week,' interrupted Mary Campbell sharply.

'Father speaks as if we were never coming back,' said Helen in a gleeful tone. 'Why, the home-port will be all the nicer and more home-like when we do,' turning to him with a smile of supreme assurance.

'Of course, of course,' he agreed meekly. 'I was only'—— and he broke off, glancing at his wife.

But Mary Campbell's face was grave. This return to her own people meant something more for her than perhaps even her husband fully realised.

. . . . . .

It was a dark, drizzly evening when the travellers arrived at their destination a week later. Helen never forgot her first drive through the streets of the capital—the shining pavements, the brilliantly lighted shop-windows, the muffled-up pedestrians hurrying by, and above all the strange, tense silence of her mother that seemed to act like a stimulus to her own excitement.

Twenty years ago Mary Campbell had left those very streets behind her in defiance of the wishes of father and mother, preferring the love of the young assistant-minister she had chosen to be her husband. Now both parents were dead, and she was come to make her peace with her sole remaining relatives, her father's sisters, whose worldly counsels had, she believed, helped to embitter him against her. Little wonder that she was silent.

Helen had a vague perception of what she was feeling, but her own sensations were bewildering enough to engross her attention. By the time the great house in Moray Place was reached, and they had been ushered into the stately, luxuriously appointed drawing-room, she was almost too confused to reply to her aunts' greetings.

'So this is Helen!' said Miss Dalry Drummond, smiling into the girl's face with her hard, bright eyes.

She looked young to be the grandaunt of the tall, slim Amazon before her; but prosperity and a past blank of emotional experiences had combined to preserve her youth.

There was no attempt on her part to assume the rôle of affectionate relative or disguise her curiosity as to Helen's attractions; a candour for which, even in her bewildered state of mind, the girl allowed her aunt full credit.

It was very different with her younger aunt, Miss Effie, who rose from her chair and embraced her niece with nerveless effusiveness.

'My dear, what a great strong girl you are!' she said. 'I have been such an invalid all my life!'

One glance at her confirmed the statement, but a vague realisation of the egotistic devotion she had lavished on her own invalidism seemed to check Helen's sympathy.

The third occupant of the room, who had been standing before the fire, now came forward to greet the travellers.

Miss Drummond introduced him as 'Our cousin, Captain Napier.—I don't know whether your relationship would be recognised out of Scotland,' she added, turning to Helen.

But the young man laughed aside her scruples.

'What matter? We are on the right side of the Border, are we not, Cousin Helen?' he said. His blue eyes smiled into the girl's face as he bowed in mock solemnity over her hand.

All the charm and finish and bravery of him struck her full as she raised her eyes to his. He seemed the very personification of the heroic dreams of her girlhood. In a hardly articulate contrast, the other men she had known grouped themselves together in her consciousness—ministers of the neighbouring parishes, probationers who had sojourned at Muirton for a night, the local doctor with his familiar handshake and boisterous laugh.

This was the true moment of the awakening Mary Campbell had foreseen for her. All that happened subsequently belonged to the new chapter of her history that began then.

To judge by his enthusiastic comments when a few moments later the three had been carried off to their rooms by Miss Drummond, the young man had also found his new relative something of a revelation.

'You should have warned me, Cousin Effie,' he exclaimed reproachfully, returning to his place on the hearthrug. 'The girl is a beauty, and has a soul. Dress her in white satin, without diamonds, and'——

But a thin laugh from Miss Effie interrupted him. Her pale eyes were fixed innocently on his face, though there was a curious intensive gleam in them.

'My dear Archie, white satin in a manse!'

The young man scoffed.

'You don't suppose she is going to be buried in a manse all her life!'

'Well, in any case, no nonsense.' She lifted a reproving forefinger and shook it at him. 'As you are strong, be merciful. Remember she has never met men of our world before.'

'You forget my peril,' he retorted.

Yet, despite her warning, Archibald shamelessly exerted himself to entertain his new cousin during dinner.

Even in her simple, high-necked frock, Helen was fair enough to make the effort worth while, and a hint of deeper possibilities in her womanhood lent a subtle zest to their intercourse.

He could not help being flattered by the naïve interest she displayed in his military career. She plied him with questions as to the exploits of his regiment, the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth Highlanders, and never had the regimental history had a more sincere or enthusiastic listener. To be stationed at the Castle of Edinburgh, too, must surely be the very acme of his ambition. And when he muttered grumblingly of awkward stairs and uncomfortable quarters, she gazed at him with reproachful incredulity.

Before they parted that evening he had pledged himself to introduce her to some of the realities of a soldier's life, amongst which a personally conducted tour of the historic Edinburgh Castle was not the least attractive item.

The result of it all was that Helen's first night in the capital was a wakeful one, though her thoughts were pleasant enough to compensate for the lack of sleep.

Only one dread haunted her: the speedy termination of this week of enchantment. Six days, and then the home-port again. But already her whole thought of Muirton had changed. From Sunday to Sunday, what had her life been there? Could she ever be contented to go on in that easy, unthinking way again?

Downstairs, had she but known it, this very question of her future was being earnestly debated by her aunts. They had drawn their chairs in to the fire after their guests had retired, and were exchanging impressions of the evening.

'The girl Helen is a beauty,' said Miss Drummond, unconsciously echoing Archibald's words. 'I should like to have the shaping of her. A season in Edinburgh would'——

But her sister interrupted her with unusual vehemence.

'If you take my advice you will let her go back to her manse,' she said, drawing her fleecy shawl more closely about her as she spoke—'at least, until Archie is safely engaged or married to Lady Jean Dalrymple. I don't say there is any danger from this girl—he is too fastidious, too cultured, to care permanently for any but a woman of his own world; but he is impulsive, and, as you say, Helen is good-looking.'

Miss Drummond's bright eyes rested on her sister's face thoughtfully as she was speaking.

'She has more than beauty, I believe,' she said slowly at last.

'So Archie has discovered,' retorted the other: 'a temperament. Mary had one, and look where it landed her, in a draughty manse with a dreadful minister, no comforts, no society.' She shuddered delicately.

'Yet she is happy,' persisted Miss Drummond. 'I am thinking of ordering a white satin dress for Helen for the reception at Holyrood on Thursday,' she continued with apparent irrelevance.

But a little shriek from Miss Effie interrupted her.

'Charlotte, I beg of you not to be so foolish,' she cried, leaning forward and laying her fingers spasmodically on her sister's arm. Then she broke off with a little, nerveless laugh of apology. A recollection of Archie's face earlier in the evening as he had conjured up a vision of Helen in white satin, without diamonds, had presented itself to her, and her sister's suggestion only seemed to confirm the fears that had assailed her then. Her worldly, ambitious mind was set on a marriage between the young man and Jean Dalrymple, daughter of the Lord High Commissioner, and she had looked to this week of the Assembly to further her hopes.

'Well, I suppose you are right,' said Miss Drummond at last, with a little sigh. She would fain have startled Edinburgh society with this beautiful importation of her own flesh and blood, daughter of the manse though she was. But the unconscious tyranny of years was too strong to be lightly overthrown.

'I think so. I think you will be glad some day,' purred Miss Effie in a tone of relief.

*(To be continued.)*

# LONDON'S UNWANTED WOMEN.

## THE AUTHOR OF 'THE SOUL MARKET'S' PHILANTHROPIC SCHEME.

By Basil Tozer.

THERE are few conversations more instructive to listen to in these days of colossal fortunes and of most abject poverty than the talk that we hear about the unemployed, about underpaid labour, and about the starving thousands in our great cities.

It is instructive, one may term it even illuminating, because eight-tenths at least of the men and the women who express views upon these subjects with so much of self-assurance have but scant actual knowledge of the topics of which they speak.

Recently the writer, whilst dining at one of those houses where, in the accepted slang of the day, 'they do you thoroughly well,' was afforded an object-lesson which bears upon this point.

Sipping, after dinner, some old brandy which our host had incidentally declared cannot now be obtained for less than five pounds a bottle, a guest whose rent-roll is almost fabulous remarked concerning a topic that had just been broached, 'This talk about people starving in London and other big towns is exaggerated—grossly exaggerated. There must be destitution in a great city with a teeming population. There always has been, and there always will be. But I don't believe, and no one will ever convince me, that any sensible proportion of our population has literally nothing to eat. Somebody or other provides food—philanthropists, and so on.'

His opinion was not received with unqualified assent, for among the guests were some who had probed social problems, and who knew the speaker to be mistaken in the view he held. What he had said, however, he did honestly believe. But moving, as he always had done, in circles where the word 'poverty' is so often taken to mean that the individual spoken about has but a few hundreds a year to live upon, he found it impossible to grasp the word in its true meaning. Most likely he knew that there are people hidden away in unpleasant slums who often find it difficult to get a good meal; but if so, he probably argued that such people must in most instances have themselves to blame, up to a certain point, for their poverty; that their condition would have been less pitiful had they not been improvident, or addicted to insobriety, or perhaps even too lazy to work.

As for the women reduced to penury, 'You may depend upon it,' the same speaker observed some moments later, 'that women of that kind have for the most part been thriftless, or they have married without making due provision (!). I don't think I am hard-hearted'—emphatically he is not—'but I consider that we make too much fuss about the poor; we are becoming weak and sentimental as a nation.'

He wound the old brandy at five pounds a bottle round in the bottom of the big glass that held it, 'nosed' it, as the wine-merchants say, held it up in front of his eyes for a moment, then took a luxurious sip or two, rolling it about upon his tongue before swallowing it.

'Too good to be drunk,' was his verdict as he set the glass down again, and the writer could not help wondering what would become of this nectar of the gods if it were to be put aside and not 'drunk.' Presently conversation drifted to topics more congenial than talk about poverty and the poor. Indeed, so far as the speaker was concerned, the last word upon that question had been uttered.

And there are hundreds—thousands of men like that. Many of them are kind-hearted to a degree. They will give a sixpence to a plausible beggar in the streets; a shilling or even half a crown to a woman selling matches in the gutter, with a baby at her breast, if they happen to notice her, and she is miserable-looking enough to excite their momentary compassion; or a five-pound note to a friend who appeals on behalf of some 'deserving case.' Perhaps some of them will contribute from time to time fifty or a hundred pounds to a hospital or much-advertised philanthropic institution in need of funds.

Yet these rich men and rich women go through life to all intents with their eyes shut. They have never seen true misery, and as they would much sooner believe that it does not exist or that all that they have been told about it has been greatly exaggerated, they try to think that such is the case, and generally they succeed. And, as a natural result, the section of the community that has actually witnessed the horrors of the suffering amongst the very poor deem these rich men and rich women to be wholly callous. In reality their supposed callousness often is nothing more than

ignorance. Yet it is not, for that reason, necessarily excusable.

The writer has occasion to mix perhaps as largely with the poor, the real poor, the men and the women who literally don't know in the morning if during the day they will get anything to eat, or whether when the night comes on they will have a shelter of any kind, as he has with the people who own country houses and have stables full of hunters. The letters soliciting contributions for philanthropic objects which most of the latter receive day after day and week after week are in many instances so numerous that it is hardly to be wondered at that the majority of such appeals go unheeded; often the letters are tossed unread into the wastepaper-basket.

Of the appeals that are attended to it is safe to say that two-thirds come from men on behalf of men, on behalf of old men, of men out of employment, of men who have been incapacitated through accident or illness, of men who have families to support, of men who have been soldiers or sailors, and so on; the list is almost without end. This is remarkable in face of the fact that, considered as a whole, the poverty-stricken women of our cities by comparison suffer greater hardships than the men.

Spend a night in roaming the streets in the poorer districts of any big town, of London more especially, or even the back streets of the prosperous neighbourhoods, and the truth of this assertion will quickly become obvious. There are parts of London where within a few hundred yards of palatial hotels women and children may be found on any night starving—not starving in the sense that they feel that food would be most acceptable, but enduring torments such as no reader of this article can, one feels sure, ever have had the misfortune to experience, and of which he can have but the vaguest conception. Yet we hear little said about London's starving women and children by comparison with all that we hear and read about its starving men. This is due probably to the fact that the men are more often 'in the limelight of public compassion,' as an Irishman lately put it, than the women and the children are.

And let it be clearly understood that the women to whom reference is made now are neither the old nor the unsuccessful women of the streets, nor necessarily women who lack work. A considerable proportion are women who, earning a daily pittance, just enough, perhaps, to 'support' themselves and a child or two, are none the less homeless because they cannot afford a home. Their hours of toil over, they set to work to seek food, also some place to sleep in. When, as is often the case, they cannot afford both bread and shelter, they generally choose the former, though often it is but a mouthful. And it is not a little remarkable that no matter how famished a woman of this derelict class may be, she will invariably feed her child before considering her own hunger.

Ingenuous readers may ask, 'Why don't they go to the casual wards or to one of the common "kip" houses?' Often the nearest casual ward would be closed before they could reach it, while all who know of the treatment that is meted out at many of the casual wards to the outcasts who apply for admission will understand why it is that even these poor wretches prefer to crouch under archways and in dark corners, no matter how bitter the night. Of the lodging-houses accessible to outcast women of the class now being dealt with it is impossible to write in a journal which circulates in respectable homes. Particulars about them are given in Mrs Mary Higg's book, *Glimpses into the Abyss*, in Miss M. Loane's *The Next Street but One*, in Miss Olive Christian Malvery's *The Soul Market*, *Thirteen Nights*, and *Baby Toilers*, and in other works of the same kind; but even those ordinarily fearless writers have not dared to say all that they could have said, or they have been prevented by their publishers from doing so.

According to a parliamentary White Paper on this very subject, no less than forty-eight human beings, upon whom, in a single year, London coroners' juries returned verdicts, were declared to have died of starvation either directly or indirectly, and a great proportion of these unfortunates were women. As a newspaper, in commenting upon the report, truly observed, if the number of these cases dealt with annually were to be multiplied by ten, the total would still fall short of the number of derelict persons who die in any single year in London alone of hunger and of misery. Significant also in the report referred to is the fact that out of the forty-eight names that are mentioned, only one is not a British name. Seven of the victims were under forty years of age; twenty were over fifty; twenty-one were over sixty.

Most of us metaphorically shrug our shoulders when we read of horrors such as these, and declare, occasionally with a sigh, that, after all, nothing can be done to better the condition of such people. But, on the contrary, a great deal can be done, and much can be done now, especially in so far as the rescue of homeless, outcast, and starving women and children is concerned. The Duchess of Albany, the Duchess of St Albans, the Countess of Wemyss, Lady Brassey, Lady Dorothy Nevill, Lady Evelyn Moreton, Lady Wright, the Countess of Randor, Mrs Herbert Gladstone, Lord Strathcona, Lord Mountstephen, Lord Curzon, Lord Reay, Lord Llangattock, Lord Lansdowne, Mr Thomas Dence, Sir William Wright, Sir Dyce Duckworth, Sir W. S. Gilbert, and other well-known men and women of influence, stimulated in the first instance by the revelations made by Mrs Archibald Mackirdy (Olive Christian Malvery) in her terrible indictment, *The Soul Market*, have each not merely contributed towards the formation of a fund to establish close to Charing Cross a night-shelter where homeless women will be able to obtain wholesome food and a clean bed at from twopence to fourpence a

night, but in addition are personally interesting themselves in the scheme and doing all in their power to advance it.

Already a suitable building has been found. An additional and important feature of the scheme is that every attempt possible will be made to give to such women as are driven to seek relief an opportunity to improve their condition. For this purpose an employment bureau for women only is contemplated, its head office to be in the building where the women are to be sheltered; and so practical are all the arrangements in connection with the general management of the shelter that not a shilling will be wasted through careless administration or otherwise. Also, the refuge will be entirely self-supporting. The nominal charge to be made for admission and for food will place it within reach of the extremely poor, yet at the same time this charge will have the effect of keeping away habitually idle and improvident women who endeavour always to get food and shelter free of cost even when they have money to pay for it.

A final feature of the movement is that when the shelter has been equipped and opened no further call for contributions will be made, a feature which in itself will distinguish the new night-shelter from homes and institutions which—and they are all too numerous—are in the habit of repeatedly taxing the purses of their original patrons.

The number of poor working women and working girls who nightly are unable to find accommodation in London is very great, and some among them are gentlewomen reduced to extreme poverty through no fault of their own. During the bitterly cold nights of the past winter many of these women, some with children at their breasts, were to be seen huddled together on stone steps and in doorways, and beneath the arches near Charing Cross, in the vain hope of obtaining a little warmth by close contact one with another. There is a touch of irony in the coincidence that recently the writer of this paper should have been instructed by a daily journal to supply a descriptive account of the private banquet which was served in a great hotel at a tariff of sixty pounds per guest, and, on the same night, to write a report of the actual condition of the human wreckage that an hour after the banquet had ended was to be seen in a serried mass almost at the hotel's threshold, awaiting, with ghastly faces, charitable doles of food at a Salvation Army shelter.

We shall be told again that such contrasts must exist. They need not if men and women blessed with the world's wealth will emulate the example that has just been set by the philanthropists whose names are mentioned. And it is safe to say that if the money needed to set in motion the admirable scheme outlined above is forthcoming, no other night-shelter for women in London will be needed. The need will be covered absolutely. A little money, comparatively speaking, plenty of energy and determination, and unbounded enthusiasm, combined with careful organisation, and with business capacity in those responsible for the management of such refuges, together constitute all that is essential to raise hundreds upon hundreds of our fellow-creatures out of the condition of misery into which they have sunk—not all through lack of self-control or even of ability to succeed—and to restore their long-lost self-respect.

Above all, it should be remembered that this movement to help the starving women and girls of London which Mrs Mackirdy has initiated is prompted neither by sentimentalism nor by any ordinary feeling of philanthropy, but solely by the knowledge that the voice of humanity cries out for the abolition of such horrors among the people of a nation claiming to be civilised. As all know who have read her condemnatory exposure of the way in which the struggling poor of our great cities are compelled to live, all that she describes so faithfully and so vividly she herself has voluntarily endured—endured largely that she might be able to record in her books facts, and facts only.

How graphic and how powerful her narratives are may perhaps be inferred by some who have not read them, when it is stated that an individual whom the author has never seen has just sent her a cheque for a thousand guineas as a contribution to the fund for her proposed night-shelter for homeless and friendless women and girls, with this message: 'It is the perusal of your book, *The Soul Market*, that has prompted me to forward the enclosed contribution.'*

Statisticians assure us that they can produce figures to show how vast the sum of money is that is contributed annually for charitable objects by kind-hearted but indiscriminating persons, only to be frittered away upon superfluous expenditure in connection with mismanaged administration. Even the casual observer can hardly have failed to notice that in some of the cases that have come within the scope of his observation a sensible proportion of the sums of money intended by donors to be disbursed for charitable purposes is wasted unconscionably.

It may be untrue—concerning the accuracy of the statement the writer disclaims responsibility—but it is common talk among persons in a position to speak with authority that the survivors from the Messina earthquake derived no appreciable benefit from the immense sum that was subscribed for their relief. Careless or faulty administration, indeed, of charitable funds constitutes the canker of modern philanthropy, and is in a measure responsible for the reluctance sometimes displayed to contribute to public subscriptions. The writer could name several charitable organisations that today have elaborate premises in expensive thoroughfares, when a small office in a side street at a third or fourth of the rent would fulfil all requirements,

* As these pages are passing through the press, a further sum of one thousand pounds is contributed by a reader of Mrs Mackirdy's last book, *Thirteen Nights*.—B. T.

and that employ a large staff to do work which half the number of men and lads could get through if thoroughly efficient.

Then the amount of stationery that is wasted, the thousands of penny stamps that are used where halfpenny cards would suit the purpose as well or better, the all-round leakage through the succouring of persons who do not need help, the money that is squandered on office furniture and 'accessories,' the reckless employment of messengers, and the unnecessary sending of telegrams, all help to dissipate money that with careful management would find its way into channels leading to the immediate relief of the sufferers catered for by such societies.

Mention has been made that in the administration of the fund for the relief and betterment of the homeless women and girls—friendless for the most part, and keenly anxious to work—the strictest vigilance is to be observed in order to prevent leakage. Though the total sum wanted is ten thousand pounds, of which some three thousand has already been subscribed, the work of relief and of assistance will, as stated, be begun when a sum of six thousand pounds has been guaranteed. The Bishop of London is doing all he can to help; so is the Salvation Army; and so are other persons and communities of weight and influence. Should readers of this article feel moved to help so excellent and practical a scheme, sums sent to Mrs Mackirdy, Orchard Way, Hayward's Heath, will be acknowledged and at once forwarded to the organisers.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXXII.—HOW THEY SUFFERED ON THE SEA.

AUNT CHARLOTTE would, as we have said, have liked nothing better than to travel in a coach-and-six; but as that was out of the question, even if English horses had been permitted to land in France, they all went by stage to Dover, were all (except Sir Charles) very sick while crossing the Channel, and found it agreeable to their varied states of mind and body to rest for a day at Calais before attempting the remainder of the journey.

On shipboard Mistress Honeybun bewailed the day she was born, cried aloud to be put ashore in mid-Channel, and vowed herself to more charitable treatment of her fellows if only she were spared to set foot on land again.

Aunt Charlotte bore her eight hours of mortal agony with as little renunciation of what appeared to her the correct behaviour of a Marquise of France as the untowardness of circumstances permitted. Between her own paroxysms she was goaded, by the unbecoming violence of Honeybun's despair, to tell that forlorn damsel that she was a fool, and ought to be ashamed of herself. Honeybun was, however, past hearing anything but her own outcries, and so occupied with her own emotions as to be far past caring what any one else might think about her.

Mavie suffered in silence, her large eyes rounded with novel agonies; but for days afterwards, when safe on solid, dry land, she laughed quietly to herself at the ludicrous self-abandonments of the voyage.

M. de Montessonne and Etienne retired into dark corners and wrestled with their woes unseen. They were still pea-green, with bloodshot eyes, when they staggered ashore at Calais.

Sir Charles was the only one who ate a hearty meal at the inn that night. The journey seemed to have an excellent effect on his mind and spirits. One could almost have imagined him a schoolboy released from his bonds, or, say, a captive freed for a time from his prison-house. The rest waved away all invitations to food with gestures of abhorrence and despair.

The morning, however, found them recovered sufficiently to continue their journey. Sir Charles hired a roomy carriage with three horses, and thirty-six hours later they were thankfully at rest in the old house in the Faubourg St Germain which had seen the beginnings and endings of generations of Montessonnes from time immemorial.

Chiefly as a matter of precaution from a business point of view, and perhaps not entirely without consideration of the fact that Lauriston the banker might not be considered an altogether acceptable visitor by the First Consul, Sir Charles had had his own and Mavie's passports made out in his wife's name of Hamilton.

Mavie was delighted. It added just the necessary touch of secrecy and mystery to their expedition, and to be travelling as 'Mary Hamilton' invested their journey with something of the fragrance of her mother's gracious personality.

Nevertheless, within an hour of their setting foot in the Hôtel Montessonne there came a messenger with a letter from M. de Talleyrand, addressed indeed to 'Mr Hamilton,' but inviting 'Sir Charles Lauriston' to a private interview that same evening.

M. de Montessonne smiled at Sir Charles's questioning look at him.

'No,' he said quietly, 'I have never opened my lips. There is not much they don't know.'

And when, presently, Sir Charles met M. de Talleyrand in his private cabinet in his great house in the Rue St Dominique, and inquired how he had come to hear so speedily of his arrival, the Minister only smiled and said, 'It is our business, my dear sir, to know everything. Sometimes we know more about people than they actually know themselves,'

with a twinkle reminiscent of some of Fouché's mares' nests.

Thereupon they plunged at once into matters of business and of State, and were closeted together for a considerable time. For M. de Talleyrand, whom no man trusted completely, knew well whom he himself might trust; and when he had found such a one, and had proved him, he was quite ready to exploit for their mutual account the vast inside knowledge of affairs which he himself possessed.

'One does not live for nothing in these days,' he said with a smile which, like his remark, was open to various interpretations.

But to all Sir Charles's pertinent and anxious questions as to the future, his only reply, with a frankly puzzled face, which yet defied his visitor's efforts at penetration, was, 'We need peace, both he and the country. But he is a law unto himself, and he has an evil temper and so is unaccountable. If I see any signs of rupture, however, I promise you shall know in good time, my dear Sir Charles; in which case'—— And they settled their plans either for peace or for war.

Their colloquy was terminated suddenly by an urgent summons from the First Consul for M. de Talleyrand to attend him at the Tuileries.

The Minister sat up on his couch with a grimace of annoyance, and lifted his discrepant leg and heavy boot to the ground. 'He spares no one,' he said, 'nor himself. I was with him last night till he fell asleep in his chair. If I had done likewise, and he had wakened first, he would have sworn he had never closed an eye.' And Sir Charles was shown out by the small side door by which he had entered—a door which led into the garden of another house, and so at last by devious ways into a street. 'For,' said the Minister, 'the good Fouché has as many eyes as a fly, and his solicitude is inconvenient at times, even to his—h'm—friends.'

## CHAPTER XXXIII.—HOW THE TIGER PUT OUT HIS CLAWS.

MADAME LA MARQUISE was, not unnaturally, desirous of tasting to the full the sweets of her new estate with as little delay as was possible. M. de Montessonne was, indeed, under orders to reside in Paris for the present; but that did not preclude him from paying a short visit on occasion to one or other of his former country seats, even though, for the moment, he might but view them from the point of view of an interested spectator.

So, after a whole week in Paris—of ecstatic wonder and shuddering enjoyment on Mavie's part, of no little disillusionment on the part of Madame la Marquise, and of much critical observation and pungent criticism on the part of Sir Charles and the marquis—they took carriage again, travelling post as before, in accordance with monsieur's conviction as to the suitability of things, and rolled away past Fontainebleau into Burgundy.

Mortaigne, with its great castellated rock, and the broad river flowing below in dignified leisure, its clustered red-roofed houses and wide-stretching fields and vineyards, brought unction to Aunt Charlotte's soul. She was, indeed, somewhat put out at not being permitted to roll up to the great gates of the castle and enter into immediate possession.

'But,' as M. le Marquis quietly observed across his second best snuff-box, 'since there are no gates at present, and as everything else is in much the same condition, it will perhaps be more comfortable at the inn;' and to the sign of the 'Petit Caporal'—formerly the 'Roi Dagobert'—and the warm welcome which had suffered nothing from its change of name, they went.

'Ah, monsieur, but it is good for the eyes to see you once more!' said the landlord, bowing in the style of the times before the deluge. 'You return, then? We shall all be glad.'

'All in good time, my friend,' said the marquis. 'At present we come simply to see how you are getting on. As for the rest'—— A shrug and a flicker of the white hands left mine host to make what he could of it.

Nevertheless, and although as yet they claimed to be no more than visitors to the halls of the Montessonnes, the idea was abroad that the marquis was coming back to his own, and his old tenants from far and near came flocking in to greet him; while mine host, in the hope of the better times to come, spared neither himself nor his goods in his efforts on their behalf.

'Yes, *ma foi!* we shall all rejoice to see you up there in the old house again, monsieur,' said he with feeling.

'Ah, you find Liberty, Equality, Fraternity not so good for business as the former times, my good Berthelot?'

'Good! *Mon Dieu*, monsieur! in the old times one did occasionally get paid for one's trouble; but now—*eh bien*, now that we are all brothers—there is overmuch liberty and equality for my liking, and not nearly enough cash.'

'Ah, well, you can't have it every way, you know,' said the marquis, snuffing quizzically.

'For me, I am satisfied to revert to the former days.'

'I also,' said the marquis.

The château had suffered, like its neighbours, in the evil times, but it was still standing, which was more than could be said of some of the others; and as to the actual damage, there was nothing that money could not restore. The Montessonnes had always stood well with their tenants and neighbours. When the marquis eventually followed the remnants of royalty into exile his estates had been declared the property of the nation, and after the first ebullitions of republican fervour the nation saw to it that its property should not run absolutely to rack and ruin.

After careful inspection, the marquis, over a

thoughtful pinch of snuff, expressed the opinion that complete rehabilitation would cost not far short of a couple of hundred thousand francs, and that each of his other places would probably be in much the same condition.

'They must be put into proper order, of course,' said the marquise, with a quick look at Sir Charles. 'That is very different from throwing money away on—er'——

'Bourbons!' said the marquis with a nod.

'Or anything like that.—Charles, you will have to send us all we need as soon as you get back.'

'Certainly,' said Sir Charles.

'*Doucement! doucement!*' from the marquis. 'My dear, you hasten too quickly. We will at all events wait until M. the First Consul has fulfilled all his good promises. It is much to be back in France with an easy head on one's shoulders.—When the rest follows we will call upon you, Sir Charles.'

'When you will, my dear sir.'

'What happiness it is to have a brother-in-law possessed of pockets bottomless and a heart so good!'

'The pockets, at all events, are your wife's, my friend, and she has a right to do what she likes with their contents.'

They spent delightful days rambling over the old house and grounds, planning improvements they would make when the time came. And meanwhile Maître Berthelot made them so comfortable in the little inn by the water-side that Mavie for one would have been content to linger on there far past the allotted time.

She never forgot the little arbour where they had their meals. It was so like one of Mother Goose's little green houses in the cherry-orchard at Harrow. It was built on piles at the bottom of the garden, and through the open sides and the holes in the wooden floor you could see the cool gleam of the water as it hung about and loitered slowly past. An ancient vine had found the trellises to its liking, and had climbed in and out and all about it, until now it was all a leafy bower, with tiny green tassels hanging through the roof, and peeps through the thick green leaves of radiant blue-and-white sky up above to match the blue-and-white sky in the water below.

Sitting there, Mavie could imagine herself sitting in a green cloud between two blue-and-white skies. And then there were companies of birds which came and played and quarrelled just above your head, all too busy to give you a thought; and washerwomen away along the bank who laughed and chattered and paddled all day long. Oh, a delightful place! In the first joyous flush of foreign travel Mavie was ready to protest that there was no place in the world to equal this beautiful France. Time came, however, when she would willingly have given the whole of France for a very small portion of her native country—say about as much as is covered by an ordinary-sized bedroom.

For, as they sat merrily at breakfast in the vine-covered arbour one midday, there came to them along the white road the quick beat of a horse's feet; and scarcely had they stopped at the inn-door when down the garden came the rider, in haste and looking very soiled and dusty against the fresh green of the grass and the vines, and behind him the landlord, futile remonstrance in his every movement.

'But no! But no!' cried M. Berthelot; 'it is not decent to disturb gentlefolk at their breakfast. Just wait, my good fellow.'

But the other paid no more attention to him than might a hawk to the twittering of a sparrow. He came straight for the arbour, looked keenly at the merry party, then addressed himself without hesitation to Sir Charles.

'Monsieur Hamilton!' he said, and handed him a letter superscribed simply, 'Without delay.'

With a word of apology, Sir Charles broke the seal and read: 'Follow bearer without a moment's delay.'

There was neither address nor signature, but the writing was signature enough. It was Talleyrand's, and he rose at once. The times and the man were such as demanded instant compliance with so imperative a request.

Sir Charles nodded to the messenger, who stood switching his dusty boot with his whip.

'When did you leave?' he asked.

'An hour before sunrise, monsieur.'

'You have not loitered.'

'One does not loiter on monsieur's errands, monsieur.'

'Maître Berthelot,' said Sir Charles, 'furnish monsieur with all he desires, and have your two best horses at the door in ten minutes.' And when they had disappeared into the inn he briefly explained to the others, 'Talleyrand wants me without delay. There is evidently something up.—Mavie, my dear, you will amuse yourself here till I return for you.'

'Yes, father,' said Mavie solemnly.

'We will take all care of her,' said M. de Montessonne.

'Dear! dear!' said Aunt Charlotte; 'what a world it is! You never know one moment what the next may bring! I suppose you must go, Charles?'

'Evidently, my dear. M. de Talleyrand does not send special messengers one hundred miles without reason. Go on with your breakfast, all of you, I beg. I will get one or two things I may need. There is no reason why you should spoil your meal.' And he went away into the inn, where he found M. de Talleyrand's messenger laying in provisions after the manner of one used to taking advantage of his opportunities.

'Where to—Paris?' he asked, as they set off at a smart trot along the high-road, after hurried farewells.

'No, monsieur. By Montargis and Étampes to Rambouillet. Monsieur expects us there before midnight.'

'You will be a weary man by the time we get there, my friend.'

'I am used to it, monsieur. I spend my life in the saddle.'

'Then I shall probably be the more weary of the two.'

'Without doubt, monsieur;' and then he relapsed into silence, and Sir Charles gave himself up to consideration of what he might be hastening to. There was business of moment afoot without doubt, and his mind ran rapidly along the lines of various possibilities and the best means of turning them to account.

Three times during the afternoon and evening they changed horses, and rode into the courtyard of the 'Lion d'Or,' on the outskirts of Rambouillet, soon after ten o'clock.

'Monsieur awaits you,' said the landlord, as Sir Charles got stiffly down, limp in the back and with legs that felt as though they had been amputated at the hips and badly joined on again.

M. de Talleyrand was lying on a couch before a well-spread table and a large fire, in a room upstairs. He stretched a welcoming white hand.

'This is well!' he said softly. 'The earlier you have arrived the sooner you can go. Eat, my friend; eat! Time is of consequence.'

'Ah, and where do I go next?' asked Sir Charles, chafing his hips tenderly as he sat down at the table.

'To England, my friend'——

'To England!'

'Without any more delay than will fit you for the saddle again.'

'My legs feel as though they belonged to some one else as it is. However! It is, then'——

'Yes, war,' nodded Talleyrand. 'And not only that, but if you don't get across within the next twelve hours the chances are you won't get across at all. Hence the urgency of my message, which, under the circumstances, I am sure you will pardon.'

'Oh, ho!'

'Yes, he has got a fit of the spleen, and is going to seize every Englishman he can lay hands on.'

'That is simply infamous!'

'That does not trouble him,' said the Minister with a shrug. 'Such of your countrymen as are well advised will benefit by the fact that it seemed to me that Sir Charles Lauriston would be more useful to himself—and incidentally to me—in London than in France during the next few months.'

'He is mad!'

'Splenetic,' smiled Talleyrand. 'The decree will be issued to-morrow, by which time I hope you will be well beyond reach.'

'What about my daughter? She is with the Montessonnes at Mortaigne.'

'She will be perfectly safe with them. We will see to her getting home all right. But the first thing is to get you there safely.'

Lauriston nodded, with a grim, fleeting thought of the havoc his detention would bring about should he not get safely home.

'I will write a few lines to her. Perhaps you will'——

'I will see it delivered.'

'How do I go?'

'By Dreux and Bernay and Lisieux to Honfleur. My trusty Jean-Marie, who brought you here, will put you into the hands of a man who will take you across—an excellent man, a most distinguished free-trader. If there should be any difficulty there—one never knows in the free-trading business—Jean-Marie will take you on to Coutances, and you will get across to Jersey. But that means delay, and we have not a minute to spare. The decree will be published in every port to-morrow, and the doors will be locked tight.'

'I am greatly indebted to you'——

'You will liquidate the debt.' And they fell to discussion of the immediate future and its mighty possibilities.

Before midnight the travellers were pounding away on the road to Honfleur and freedom; and M. de Talleyrand, rolling back to Paris in his comfortable berline, congratulated himself on the good stroke of business which, while repaying past courtesies, could not fail to bring grist to his mill.

And Charles Lauriston rode silently by the side of Jean-Marie, and brooded on the narrowness of the bounds within which human affairs are set, especially the affairs of those who have wilfully taken the irrevocable step across that inflexible line of honour which has set man in camps since the days of Cain.

It was bitterness to him—bitterness! bitterness! But he set his teeth and vowed himself to the sacrifice as he had done so often before. If only he could pull through and avert the catastrophe, how willingly he would pay the price—so long as the payment was confined to himself!

*(To be continued.)*

# THE MARSH.

By W. A. DUTT.

THERE is a Norman church on the verge of the uplands, and from the top of the massive church-tower many miles of wide-spreading marsh lie revealed. Through the midst of it the reed-fringed river winds sluggishly, and trending towards the river are innumerable clear-water or sedgy dikes; but the river, the dikes, and the rough trackways or 'walls' along which the cattle are driven scarcely relieve the apparent monotony of the far-reaching marish plain. A thousand years, in all probability, covers the period of its existence as a tract of fen and marsh, yet it has every appearance of being unaltered since those primitive times when many of the inhabitants of England were lake-dwellers, and the wolf, the elk, and the great wild ox roamed in English forests and over English moors. The scattered windmills, the reed-thatched cattle-sheds, the isolated, low-walled cottages of the marshmen, and even the two or three churches standing on the marsh level are, when seen from the church-tower, dwarfed to insignificance by its formal flatness, the impressiveness of which is emphasised by the vast expanse of aerial void beneath which it lies supine. In a thousand years man has been able to make little mark upon it, and such small signs of his handiwork as appear on its surface have become so blended with it as to be almost indistinguishable. Just as a level prairie by its vastness hides the pioneer's camp or settlement in its midst, so the marsh conceals its few human inhabitants and their lonesome homes. In the midst of its rush-beds, sallow carrs, and dwarf thickets of bog-myrtle, they are scarcely more noticeable than the otters and moorhens that skulk amid the river-side reeds. The marish wilderness seems to permit their presence with a serene indifference, and when floods transform the marsh into a waste of waters the tenure by which the marsh-folk hold their little settlements seems as insecure as that of a sand-castle threatened by the sea.

Yet from time immemorial the marsh has had its human inhabitants, and they have adapted themselves to the primitive life it compels them to lead. Like the otters and moorhens, they have become a part of it; the spell it casts upon them is so subtle that they do not feel it. As the heathman clings to the heath, and the woodman to the wood, so the marshman clings to the marsh, and cannot tell why he does so. Although he does not know it, the marsh is stronger than he; while he thinks it is his, it possesses him. Therefore it is useless to go to the marshman to learn the magic of the marsh and the secret of the charm it has for many men who go to it seeking some one thing and some another, and all finding more than they sought. That magic, that charm, pervades the whole wide level; but as to what goes to its making no two men are agreed. One thinks he finds it lurking in the sweet gale, where it takes the form of a little brown warbler that chuckles day and night; another, in the fleecy tufts of cotton-grass waving over the rush-marsh; and a third, in the sibilant voice of the reeds sighing forlornly in solitary places; but a hundred other things present themselves to the wanderer 'in reedy fens wide-spread and marshes drear,' and each has a share in creating a powerful yet indefinable fascination. The desolateness of the desert, the sterility of the snow-mantled steppe, or the sublimity of the sea makes upon a sensitive mind a like impression, mysterious and incommunicable.

The marsh has many moods, and to appreciate them one must go down into it by night as well as by day, and subject one's self to its influences. Throughout the winter there are scarcely two days on which it wears the same aspect, so easily does it adapt itself to elemental changes. Overshadowed by lowering clouds, it is sombre and dreary, its reeds sigh mournfully, and its sedges shiver in the chill wind; but when the sunlight breaks through the clouds the wide tracts of sapless reed and sedge seem to borrow the gold and amber of autumn corn-fields. Presently an almost transparent mist veils it, softening its hard outlines and blending land and water until they seem one vast mirage which at any moment may melt into thin air; and towards evening, perhaps, the mist is succeeded by a fog so dense that the wide level looks like a shoreless sea.

During the night a sea-wind sweeps across the marsh, driving the fog before it, and by the time the gray dawn has brightened into rose and gold the frost has worked wonders in reed-bed, rush-marsh, and dike by transforming every ruddy dock-leaf into a silver shield, and every sedge-blade and needle-pointed rush into a jewelled sword or lance fit for the armoury of a fairy king. By every shred of the wind-rent reed-tassels ice-beads are suspended which flash like diamonds in the light of the rising sun, and where in the night the wind sang a sibilant song or moaned in mournful monotone thousands of gleaming ice-crystals are tinkling like tiny bells. Bushes of sweet gale, thickets of sallow, and rows of rugged alders, which the frost found drenched with mist-drops, are now dusted with flawless gems; festoons of crystalline lacework are hung about the withered stems of the marsh-thistles; and every dead leaf is covered with the richest filigrane. In an hour or two the sombre marsh has been decked with magic beauty, clothed with a garment of exquisite loveliness, compared with which its ordinary winter vesture, rich though

it is in brilliant hues, seems dingy as a beggar's rags.

As time goes on, and the stagnation of winter is slowly succeeded by the pageant of spring, subtle changes take place in dike-bed, marsh, and reed-shoal, which gradually bring about a general renewal of vigorous life where for months there has been no sign of vitality. On the uplands the brown buds are turning green before the results of these changes are seen in the marsh; but by the time the first willow-warbler has come back to the sallow thicket, and the first grasshopper-warbler has trilled its metallic song among the bog-myrtles, pale-green sprays of bog-pimpernel have begun to spread over the richly coloured mosses of the rush-marsh, a few marsh-violets have bloomed on the sunny side of an alder carr, and the golden blossoms of the marsh-marigold have brightened the banks of the dikes.

When the chattering songs of the sedge and reed warblers are heard again, a slowly widening band of green along the bottom of the amber reed-bed means that the 'colts,' as the marshmen call the young reeds, are springing up amid last year's dry and brittle culms; while the drumming of the snipe, the piping of the redshank, and the return of the wailing lapwing to its nesting-place are signs that the marsh will soon be dry enough for the cattle to be driven down to it again. All day long the kestrel — the marshman's 'wind-fanner' — circles and hovers over the lush grass amid which innumerable field-mice are beginning to creep; and in the dusk of evening the bat, 'that is the slave of dim Persephone,' wheels 'through the sombre air on wandering wing,' and the nightjar comes out of the marsh-bordering wood and glides up and down above the dikes, seeking the white moths amid the waving reeds. After the long winter sleep the wild life of the marsh seems to need no night rest; for all night long the sedge and reed warblers keep on singing and the plovers crying, while the trilling of the little natterjack toads makes the air tremulously vibrant, as though a faun had strung a harp with the stems of the quivering reeds.

Imperceptibly the seedling spring attains the lusty maturity of summer, and the marsh, decked with the rich purple of wild orchis and the shimmering gold of crowfoot and spearwort, lies bathed in warm sunshine, while red, blue, and yellow-banded dragon-flies, brilliant as tropical hummingbirds, flash to and fro over sedgy swamp and marish pool. In the early morning the grass and creamy masses of almond-scented meadow-sweet are so wet with dew that the men who mow the lush marsh-crop are drenched with it long before breakfast-time; but at midday a translucent heat-haze hangs over the whole level and flows above it like an aerial stream. Just such a diaphanous veil might a beautiful woman wear who knew that it made her beauty more alluring; and the wild marsh, flaunting a floral wealth with which not even the heather-empurpled moorland can compare, shows an alluring face through the 'ethereal gauze.' At daybreak the lark and the meadow-pipit soar and sing high above the rolling waves of gray-green grass; but at drowsy noon the marsh-birds are silent, save for the occasional feeble twitter of a reed-bunting or the harsh cry of a heron flying lazily towards some distant dike.

When a breeze blows coolly from the sea the lisping willow-leaves show their silvery undersides, and the downy tufts of cotton-grass float to and fro on the surface of the quaking swamp. During the sunniest hours swallow-tail butterflies flutter hither and thither, looking like wind-blown autumn leaves, day-flying burnet moths wrap themselves round with a film of invisibly beating wings, and the vampire marsh-flies hover everywhere, bent on tormenting man and beast. Amid the rank-growing willow-herbs, purple and yellow loosestrife, and towering valerians one walks as through a jungle, and the air is sickly-sweet with the overpowering fragrance of meadow-sweet and mint.

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# A ROMANCE OF THE READING-ROOM.

By F. G. Aflalo.

KENDAL TRELEVAN loved books for what was in them. They were at once his livelihood and his joy. He was no connoisseur of rare editions. He was no thrall to the Elzevir. He did not like poor stuff the better for trappings of tooled morocco. His true home was the Reading-Room of the British Museum, where he felt himself the possessor of as fine a library as the heart could desire. True, there were only a few thousand volumes that he could take down from the shelves; but there were stacks of books within reach, and with only the formality of scribbling his behests on slips of paper, putting these in a basket, and waiting until willing minions did his bidding. And then he shared with Thackeray the glorious birthright of picking the brains crystallised on those shelves. These roseate thoughts, it is true, only came to him now, in the days of his success, with a steadily increasing income and the friendship of august editors, with his name in men's mouths and their gold in his pockets. Time had been when, just down from Cambridge, the round room had looked unfriendly to his nervous eye.

Five years ago, having taken a respectable but not brilliant degree at Trinity, he had journeyed to London and set his foot on a low rung of the

literary ladder, setting out for such adventure as might befall on the main of journalism, that Sargasso Sea of intelligent flotsam. Journalism is not, like plumbing or tailoring, a trade that can be taught. Trelevan brought to it a little scholarship, a passion for observing, a sunny temperament that could smile under disappointments that might well have depressed Ariel, and a letter from a Fellow of his college to the editor of a serious review. There is a cant that introductions are worthless nowadays, and that the prizes go to merit, irrespective of influence. Pish! The don's letter, just at the start of his career, was worth more to Kendal than his degree. Not his first effort—not, for the matter of that, his second—pleased the great man, for the review was run not for profit but as the hobby of a dilettante millionaire, and the editor could afford to be fastidious. But it may safely be asserted that without that letter on the familiar old college paper, written by a man of his own year in whose judgment the editor had nearly as blind a faith as in his own, the second would not even have been read, and the third would as surely not have been published. It was on a somewhat recondite subject—to wit, 'Phœnician Evidences in Cornish Folklore,' and it enriched the author by a cheque for fifteen guineas and a copy of the review. Seeing that it had taken him a month at the Reading-Room to collect the material, and two journeys down to Cambridge to consult with his tutor on obscure points in the argument, it could hardly be regarded as a gold-mine. But it was the first; and, as he sent the review straightway to his widowed mother in the duchy (and bought another), he knew that that article would always mean more to him than any other until he crossed the Ferry.

Kendal Trelevan, who was free from the fudge of art for art's sake, giving only of his best, but thinking himself worthy of his hire, was not long in realising that the world does not want to read very much or very often about the part played by the Carthaginian adventurers in the stories of giants and pixies that were among the earliest memories of his childhood. So he began to send forth lighter and shorter essays to more ephemeral prints. At first they came back so uniformly, indeed, that he was glad that he had adopted the fictitious name of 'J. Menheniot,' even though it temporarily discredited him with his landlady, whose suspicions of a lodger with 'them alibis,' had to be allayed by consultation with a newsvendor in the neighbouring court, who set her fears at rest, having fortunately some knowledge of these matters.

Suddenly, and, as it seemed, for no particular reason, the tide turned. A turnover, descriptive of the little harbour near his home, was accepted by an evening paper which has long made a feature of such essays. A letter to an august morning paper on a popular error with regard to undergraduate life at Cambridge brought him, in his own name, a letter from the editor of another daily with a mammoth circulation, which had results. So far he had obtained work only by the recognised process of pelting editors broadcast with contributions and enclosing a stamped envelope, of which few omitted to avail themselves, his only originality consisting in never sending an accompanying letter, since, he argued, if the articles did not speak for themselves it was not likely that recommendation from their author could do any good. Then he had tried an experiment, and it met with quite unexpected success at the hands of the most original editor in London. He purchased one or two books on the day of publication, and sent in short reviews of them in his best style, just as he sent other articles. For a fortnight there was no response to this daring bid for admission to the closed borough of reviewers; then came a parcel of books from a daily, and almost ever since he had had as many for review as he could do with.

Here, then, with this somewhat lengthy introduction, necessary to understand how he fitted his environment, we have Kendal Trelevan, aged six-and-twenty, earning a comfortable income for a bachelor of booky tastes, and living in a south-eastern suburb within an hour's rail of town. The suburb irked him, but he preferred it to the smirch of London lodgings, which he had thrown off at the first opportunity. Above all, he would have liked to live away in the country, for choice in an old farmhouse of his memories, with the roar of the Atlantic in his ears. Over his discoloured old pipe he would dream in the evenings of a luxurious future in which he should be free from the trammels of daily journalism, and able to write his books two hundred miles from Paddington. But he realised the need of 'keeping in touch' for a long time yet, and he was happy enough in the tiny garden attached to the little house of the naval pensioner's widow with whom he lodged. It was a common enough little garden, with the pink blossom straggling over the low wall to mingle with the white blossom next door; but he was not discontented as he sprawled this warm May evening over its little patch of grass, his attention distracted by the screaming swifts from the pages of a little volume that he had to appraise by that night's post.

In his heart he hated Suburbia as neither fish nor flesh nor good red herring. He knew that it lacked the privacy that had been his amid the five million souls of London, and that it also missed the glorious space of the country. The walls of its terrace-houses are too thin, and the walls of their gardens are too low. Every one is interested in every one else; and he reflected with amusement that the suburban definition of hell would probably be a place in which every woman had to mind her own business. He was at a loss to know whether there was more pathos in the terraces of red-brick houses, each with its little white porch, or in the

select 'villa residences,' each enisled in its planted jungle of three acres (leasehold), where it could shrink from the vulgar gaze of the semi-detached. Kendal shuddered whenever his surroundings struck him in this light.

Meanwhile he shut his eyes to the worst side of Philistia, breathed the pure air of the Surrey hills, paid his landlady regularly, and gave packets of chocolate to her little daughter, who occasionally fetched him matches or came into the garden to announce a meal. He had no friends in the neighbourhood. His only social distraction was an occasional dinner or lawn-tennis party at the house of one of his editors, who lived in Holland Park. The lady of the house affected Browning and green velvet dinner-gowns cut square at the throat. The daughter, brutally scornful of literature, was a notable swimmer and fencer, and a pillar of the Bath Club. She had at first been attracted by the good-looking young Cornishman, and had not taken the trouble to conceal her opinion. He had the black hair and olive complexion not uncommon in the duchy, and referred by those who are fond of making zoological catalogues of their kind to the influence of the Spanish Armada. Frankly, the Amazon did not find him receptive, though he was careful to stand well with the only child of one who just then swayed his destinies; but she fortunately transferred her preference to a man in the Colonial Office, a red-necked giant who had rowed in the Oxford boat, so that he was spared repelling advances which had at one time threatened embarrassment.

He was thinking this May evening of many things, for he had to think of something till the last post came. That last post meant so much to-night. He was thinking, not inappropriately, how very little the *ewig weibliche* had counted for in his life. He was no woman-hater; but, on the one hand, he had lacked opportunity of meeting many women of his own class, so that 'her infinite variety' had never tried his judgment, and from the lighter women of the town a certain fastidiousness had always kept him aloof. There had been one promise of episode, soon after he arrived in London; but it was years ago, and it had left him cold. In those early days he had satisfied his midday appetite with a frugal lunch of tea and a poached egg, or scones and cocoa, at one of those A.B.C. establishments which, for a more anæmic generation, now replace the dim old taverns loved by Dr Johnson and the men who were men indeed. It was at one of these eating-houses in Oxford Street that a little, blue-eyed, fair-haired waitress, to one of whose tables he had by chance gone on the occasion of his first visit, had mothered him, day after day, for nearly two months, seeing that his modest requirements were satisfied with the least possible delay, bringing him the day's paper, and even, in flagrant defiance of regulations framed to frustrate such essays in natural selection, lingering at his table for a chat until the impatient summons of some neglected patron broke in on their intercourse. Each learnt the other's name. Hers was Trissie Butler. He recalled it this evening, with quaint memory of Swinburne's lines:

> And the best and the worst of this is,
> That neither is most to blame
> If you've forgotten my kisses,
> And I've forgotten your name.

There had been no kisses. That was the curious part of it. Miss Butler was probably the prettiest waitress in the employ of the A.B.C.—which is saying a good deal for her. She did not drop her aspirates; on the contrary, she laid a stress on them which suggested ownership. The affair promised to develop into the ordinary flirtation between a man newly down from Cambridge and the young lady who served his meals. Then, one fatal day in May, he had offered to take her down to Richmond the following Sunday, and she duly turned up on the platform at Waterloo in a bewitching up-river costume that had cost her a night's rest in the stitching. His intentions towards this most attractive Hebe were not particularly clear to himself; but they could only have been—well, what they could only have been! But a word from her, which, had she known the cold douche it sent over him, she had rather bitten out her tongue than uttered, saved both of them. They had wandered in the park, and they were drifting on the river; and, just as the little boat pushed its pointed, varnished nose into a clump of reeds and came to rest, she had suddenly leant forward and stroked his dark, curly hair, and called him 'Kid'! Kid! It jarred on some queer artistic instinct in him, and he drew back as if he had been struck. They got through the rest of the evening as best they could, and by eleven he was back in his Edgware Road lodging, reading Marcus Aurelius; and she, poor commonplace little soul, who knew that things had gone wrong, and could not understand why, was sobbing on her hard little bed a mile away. He never went to that A.B.C. shop again; for two months he never even passed the door. Yet it pleased him to remember that the adventure had left her unscathed; and the next, and last, time he had seen her, at one of the Exhibitions, she was tripping merrily between rival swains of her own class.

And now, after four years, the One Woman had come into his Eden, and the days of Kendal Trelevan, bachelor, would be numbered if only the postman—— It had all been so simple, so unavoidable, so compelling. For several weeks he had employed a 'ghost' in connection with those portions of a county history of Cornwall for which he was responsible. Graham Baily was a delicate-looking enthusiast, a man of something short of fifty, recommended to him by one of the Reading-Room assistants, who are, as well they should be, perfect mines of information on the highways and byways of research-work. Graham Baily was one of

life's failures; why, he did not even know himself. He had taken his degree in prehistoric times; he had average intelligence and more than average application. He did not drink and he did not gamble. But he had two enemies: a lack of initiative and a sympathetic heart; and so, unable to make work for himself, unwilling to take bread from the mouths of others, he stood for a pathetic failure. Years of devilling, giving him the continuous impression that he was really some one else, had endowed him with a ghost-like tread and silent manner, and he had been one of the set-pieces of the Reading-Room for a quarter of a century. Of his domestic affairs no one knew anything. He came each morning at nine; he left each evening at six; and his address, known to the friendly official who got him many a job, was somewhere Brixton way.

The manorial and parochial notes for the county history were nearing completion, and Kendal, who had taken a great fancy to this sad ally of his, who did so much work and reaped so little reward, was already planning another book on which to employ him. Every day, just before lunch, he went round to the Museum, and always the thin, bent figure was there at I 16 or 17, with the two piles of books and the scattered sheets covered with the small, neat writing. Occasionally he would carry the man off to lunch, almost against his will; but more than once he had point-blank refused, held by an unusually interesting piece of copying that nothing would induce him to leave.

One morning, nearly two months ago, Kendal had gone, as usual, to the Reading-Room, and even as he pushed open the swing-doors he was aware of a difference. A glance at I 16 explained the reason of his curious sensation of something amiss. For the seat was occupied by a slip of a girl with a tilted hat and a goose-feather stuck askew in it; the next seat was empty, and at the next sat a youth in a check suit, who seemed to find a side-long view of the girl more interesting than the open book on his desk. So Baily evidently hadn't turned up! He hoped the poor chap was all right, though he had been looking confoundedly ill the last few days. So Kendal strolled towards the middle of the room, hesitating whether to have the books out—no doubt they would be waiting at Bar A—for an hour, and work at them himself, as the day for going to press was getting near; and as he passed behind I 16 his eyes fell mechanically on the books at which this industrious maiden was at work. He rubbed his eyes to make sure that he was not dreaming. No, they were the same Cornish archives from which Baily should have been extracting the material for the last of his chapters. Then he sat down in the vacant chair, to the intense annoyance of the round-faced youth on the farther side, who, his view of beauty thus rudely intercepted by this boorish intruder, had now no choice but to apply himself to Yves Guyot's *Comédie Protectionniste*, from which he hoped to 'borrow' ideas for an inflammatory article to appear in a Radical paper which was just then making hash of Tariff Reform and throwing dukes wholesale to the lions. Then Kendal looked furtively at the fair usurper of poor Baily's chair, and saw that, in profile at any rate, she was very good to look upon. Then he coughed so loudly and so artificially that she looked round, and as their eyes met he saw that she was even better to look upon than at the first inspection. But he saw something else. Baily had always struck him, with his high white forehead and ascetic expression, as the remains of what must have been a handsome youth; here was the same beauty, its severity softened; and in a flash Kendal saw it all.

'I beg your pardon,' he said in the decorous whisper enjoined under that august dome; 'but I think that you must be here for Mr Baily. I—my name is Trelevan.'

She smiled charmingly.

'Yes,' she said. 'I am Mr Baily's daughter. He—here is a note for you, which will explain. I am sorry to say he was too ill to come this morning, and I am quite used to this sort of work, and—— Oh, I hope I am getting on with it all right!'

The note remained unopened. Trelevan, the austere, the fastidious, preferred to read the message flashed by those gray eyes.

'Shall we go outside and talk?' he suggested, as one or two angry hisses, uttered by literary ladies with whom no man could have desired to talk these forty years, interrupted their conversation. 'You needn't be afraid,' he added, seeing her hesitate; 'the books will be all right here. Yes, I shouldn't leave the muff.'

And she had taken up the little sable muff, stuffing a tiny handkerchief away into some mysterious recess in its side, and had walked with him through the glass doors, where they would have no further need to talk like frightened children.

'I hope that your father isn't very bad?' he asked kindly.

'Well, I'm afraid'—— There was a little catch in her voice. 'He was coughing dreadfully in the night, and the doctor said that he must not leave the house again this week anyway. But won't you read the letter?'

He did. It was written in pencil, painfully, in bed, the message of a sick man and a brave, apologising for his weakness, and hoping that his daughter, who was used to secretarial work and punctilious accuracy, would be able to take his place for a few days.

'That's all right,' he said when he had put the letter in his pocket. 'And he is quite cheerful, and we'll have him about again in no time. And now, Miss Baily, as I am quite an old friend of your father's—at least, I hope he regards me as one—will you do me the favour of coming out to

lunch with me? And then you shall go back to your work.'

Clarice Baily was no prude, though even a prude would have trusted herself with this gentlemanly boy.

They lunched at the Holborn Restaurant, and she told him of her last employment as secretary to a lady engaged in charitable work; but skimmed lightly over the manner of her losing it, only suggesting enough to show Kendal that the lady's brother, home on leave from India, had indulged chiefly in the charity which begins and ends at home, and had attempted to take charge of Miss Baily's leisure in a manner that she could not but resent.

Lunch over, they returned to the Museum, but not, alas! to work, for they wandered in the echoing halls amid the grim old statues that have looked down on many an idyl in the making; and the time passed so quickly that the books had to be put away for the next day, and they went together as far as Victoria, where separate trains were waiting for them.

Next morning, and for several mornings after, as the invalid did not mend so rapidly as he had hoped, he found her at her post, sometimes getting her to come out to lunch, once or twice excusing her, as she was anxious to finish a section and get back to relieve her mother in the sickroom. Then he had made her promise not to come the next day at all, and—unselfish fellow!—had even asked whether she thought that her father would care to see him. So he had gone down to the little house in Brixton, and sat with the convalescent, and again on the Sunday, and then he stayed to supper. The next time he met her at the Museum she told him, not without regret in her voice, that she would be coming no more, as her father was out for the first time that morning, and would resume his duties with what little remained of the work. Then, metaphorically digging himself in the ribs over his diplomacy, Kendal had asked whether, since she was so good at the work, she would not like regular employment of the kind for herself as well, as he could easily find it for her straightway. And the glorious gray eyes had shone with gratitude. It had, as he said, been easy to provide research-work for her, and he was sensible enough not to offer excessive remuneration, lest she might be offended as by charity.

This May evening, as he sat in his little, common suburban garden, he knew that the postman, surely due by now, might make of it an Eden in which the sparrows would be humming-birds and the starlings birds of Paradise, for he had sent a manuscript that day which meant more to him than all he had ever written or would ever write. This singular fellow had written to Clarice asking her to be his wife. Had he mixed with women like any normal man he would have asked point-blank for what he wanted, or rather he would have trifled longer with the delicious uncertainty of desires unsatisfied. But he could not wait, and he disliked giving her the pain of refusing him in so many words. So he had written a straightforward letter, and had sent his prayer to the Reading-Room. It seemed fitting that she should give her answer there, and he had a vague hope that the scene of their first meeting might somehow plead for him.

The postman's knock sounded up the little street, and Kendal met him at the gate. There were four letters for him, three from editors whose goodwill would once on a time have made him delirious. He thrust these carelessly into his pocket, and tore open the little white envelope addressed in the spidery characters of the modern girl armed with a J nib. There was only a little scrap of paper torn from her foolscap, and the writing was on both sides. And this was the writing:

'DEAR KENDAL,—I have just read your letter six times, and I am going to read it six times more. No, sir'——

Here he had to turn the page, and the whole world seemed to go dark. Then all was light again, for the letter went on:

—'you are *not* the happiest person on earth at all. Of course it is YES!—Your own

'CLARICE.

'*P.S.*—You old coward!'

## UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

HERE, where the moonflower scents the midnight air,
And alien stars set all the world aflame,
Voices from oversea call to our hearts
That exile cannot tame.

For we have other memories—you and I—
All unforgotten in this southern blaze,
That tell of nesting birds and hawthorn-buds,
And England's cloudy days.

They haunt us still, those dreams from oversea—
The talk of rooks among the wind-swept trees,
The flushing white of loosened apple-bloom,
On a light April breeze.

The fading woods, and silent, late-reaped fields,
The wild, wet winds chasing the light-winged leaves,
The twilight gathering slowly into gloom
About the ripened sheaves.

Wide, unforgotten moorland stretches spread
Where purple heather fades to golden brown,
And silence broods about the lonely loch
Under the mountain's frown.

Then slowly rises 'mid these southern stars
The harvest moon—a reddening globe of flame—
And on the scented air an echo falls
Of some sad, haunting name.

BEATRICE ALLHUSEN.

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# MY WILD-FLOWER WALKS.

By COULSON KERNAHAN.

I.

THERE are few lovelier sights on a breezy summer morning than isolated and closely set clusters of dandelions—tiny 'Canary Islands' rising out of great seas of grass that roll and break in mimic waves upon a yellow beach. Or, to change the metaphor, what is gayer to look upon—when the golden flower-heads grow apart and not in clusters—than on such a morning to see them swinging and swaying upon their tall tubular stalks, and preening their canary plumage, for all the world as if a thousand of these joyous song-birds had suddenly broken cage, and, after the first wild, delirious burst of freedom, had perched upon the rocking reed-stalks of river-margining meadows, there to play at see-saw with the wind, and to pour out their hearts in pulsating pæans of praise? Yet, for all its loveliness, the dandelion is so despised a flower that the milk of its kindness may well have turned bitter and acrid in despair. Rejected here in England from its rightful place in the salad-bowl, and ruthlessly rooted out when it dares to set foot in garden or on lawn, the dandelion comes into the world with a grievance ready-made against us. How is a flower handicapped by a name with so harsh a meaning as 'lion's tooth' to hold its own against rivals upon which such endearing and caressing love-names have been bestowed as forget-me-not, ivy, lily of the valley, daffodowndilly, heart's-ease, grass of Parnassus, star of Bethlehem, traveller's joy, honeysuckle, or meadow-sweet?

Moreover, the daisy, buttercup, bindweed, violet, foxglove—some of them less lovely than the dandelion—can boast that they have been counted worthy of cultivation, and can point, in garden and conservatory, to aristocratic relations, fed, watered, and waited on by that lord of creation man, who has voluntarily constituted himself their servant, and either himself fetches and carries at their bidding or else pays other men to do so. But the dandelion no one counts worthy of being cultivated or considered. It cannot be because of the dandelion's commonness, for even daisies and buttercups—commonest, I suppose, of all flowers—esteem themselves his superior in the social scale, and possibly patronise the dandelion by lisping allusions to 'my garden cousins the bachelor-buttons' or 'my distinguished relative the globe-flower.' The very children at play in the meadows, weaving daisy-chains and gathering big bunches of buttercups, rarely think the equally beautiful and more fragrant dandelion worth carrying home to stand in a tumbler of water; and when he is old and gray they make mock of him by pretending he is a clock, and pluck his be-flowered pate bald as a mushroom or a mahl-stick, to watch each silver thread borne aloft and away like a fairy parachute.

About the poppy one has many fancies. Never was fine lady gowned more gorgeously than she, and never did fine lady pack so gay a gown into so small a space. She comes to town clad in plain green travelling-dress, and with no luggage other than a green reticule in her hand.

'Dowdy, I call it, my dear!' says one overdressed town geranium to another. 'Fancy coming to London, and in the season, without so much as a change of frocks! What's that green rolled-up thing she's carrying—a nightdress-case?'

'Oh, don't bother me about the fright!' snaps the other geranium. 'London's too exhausting in the season for one to be able to think of anything more than one's figure and one's complexion. Mine's hopelessly ruined, I'm sure, and my temper's worse. One has to fulfil one's engagements and keep in evidence in the social world, I know; but the gravel in this garden is as dry and arid as the desert sand, and we geraniums always get put near the gravel and in the glare. I'm simply gasping and panting with the heat. If only one of those sprawly country nasturtiums—common creatures, aren't they? with no idea of "holding themselves,"


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and quite out of place outside a cottager's garden—would lend me that Japanese sunshade that she calls a leaf!'

By-and-by the country poppy, that the geranium had called a 'fright,' opens what the other geranium had taken to be a green nightdress-case, and shakes out the loveliest, lightest crimson court-gown of shimmering spun-silk that ever was seen away from fairyland; and the two geraniums turn white with envy, and the despised and dowdy poppy queens it regally in the garden.

It is only a single poppy that makes me think of a fine lady in her silken gown. Sometimes one sees a field of ripe and waving corn as patiently and peacefully awaiting the coming of the reaper as full-uddered kine await their milking, or as good Christians whose years are overripe, whose race is run, and whose peace is made with heaven, await the calm coming of death. The scene is so idyllically peaceful that no one would suspect the presence of hidden foes. But as one approaches and skirts the corn-field's flank one is alarmed to detect sudden stains and patches of red; and, looking closer, one sees whole regiments of poppies, crouching low, like scarlet-coated soldiers, and 'taking cover' among the corn, that they may steal stealthily upon and surprise some unsuspecting defenders. At other times when I see a poppy lifting the crimsoned cup of its chalice high above the heads of the growing corn that one day will be made into bread, I think of the white and red of the wine-cup and the bread in the hand of our Lord at the Last Supper, and bow my own head in a silent prayer.

Then there is the bluebell, azuring our English glades as the heather purples the heaths of Scotland. Here in Sussex I have seen the bluebells lie so closely together in the hollows that one might think our Sussex sea had broken bounds and overflowed the land in blue lagoons of loveliness.

But more even than the bluebell I love the wood-anemone. Every painter dislikes to show his masterpiece merely as a square of canvas, knowing that it is not seen to advantage lacking the finish and the setting of a frame; and I sometimes think that God, the Great Artist, is so justly and supremely proud of His loveliest miracle and masterpiece of wild-flower perfection—the wood-anemone—that He does not wish it to be seen away from its framing of exquisite green.

Plucked primroses, bluebells, and violets, apart from their leaves, look to me like pictures seen without a frame, or like loose jewels and detached gems that have lost something of sparkle and splendour by being taken out of their setting—for primroses, bluebells, and violets have one stalk for the blossoms and another for the leaf. In making a posy we must first gather our flowers, and then, if we wish our woodland gems, hillside jewels, or meadow pearls to be seen in Nature's setting, we must pick or add a framework of green. It is not so with the wood-anemone. Flower and leaf grow upon one stalk. Pluck a wood-anemone, and you have your wild-flower jewel set and complete. Half-way up the 'gracile' stalk—it was Rossetti who enriched our language by that flower-like and flower-lovely adjective, so suggestive of exquisite grace and lightness of line and curve—there branch out three delicately fronded leaves falling away from what I may call the flower's waist and lower limbs, and leaving the flower-bust and flower-shoulders bare, just as the bust and shoulders of the Venus de Milo are left bare by the drapery which falls away from the statue's waist. It is for this reason perhaps that I never see a rose-flushed cluster of wood-anemones hastily gathering, as it were, with one hand their green drapery around them, without thinking of wood-nymphs surprised by an intruder just as they had prepared for a bath, and were standing hesitating and trembling before taking a plunge into the cool depths of some still and shaded pool.

II.

I remember once telling a small but precocious girl-child of my acquaintance that I liked to think of butterflies as the angels or souls of flowers. 'The flowers,' I said, 'are like the sleeping princess of the fairy story. We know that they are alive, for they open during the day and shut at night; but, like the princess, they make no sign, and never leave their sleeping-place of green grass, garden-bed, or good brown earth until Prince Death comes to kiss them and awaken them to warm life. Then they spread wings of their own white, crimson, or cornflower-blue, and soar away, flower-souls afloat in the heaven of this wonderful world.' To illustrate my fancy I showed her how like the wood-anemone, frail-poised upon its fragile stalk, and bending with every wind that blows, is to the slim and dainty 'orange-tip' or 'wood-lady' that is borne along with, and cannot fly against, the breeze; how the tiny 'speedwell' seems petaled with wings of butterfly-blue; how the hardy 'brimstone' that dances by on a sunny day in winter, or is buffeted past upon the winds of March, is like an early daffodil.

But the small child in question was one who thinks for herself, and had apparently profited by what in these days of controversy about education is, I believe, known as 'simple Bible teaching.' She evidently was not to be put off with fairy stories or fancies of my devising. 'I think it much more likely,' she said with an insufferably grown-up and superior air, 'that the explanation of the relationship between flowers and butterflies is to be found in the Book of Genesis. We read that God made Adam first, and then took a rib out of him to make Eve, his wife. I expect that God made butterflies first, and then, thinking, as He did about Adam, that it wasn't good for them to be alone, He made flowers, not out of a butterfly's rib—for I don't suppose a butterfly has one—but out of a bit of his wing, which I dare say did equally well; and that the flower is the butterfly's wife, and has to stay at home and keep house for him, while he goes

gadding about and enjoying himself, just like a man.'

I was abashed to find that I had been trying to please with my foolish and unappreciated fancies a young person who, if she had only been born a few years earlier, would probably have been dressed in green and purple and white. But her reference to the Book of Genesis reminded me of a curious fact which appears to have escaped the notice of biblical commentators. It is that not once in the biblical record of creation, not once in the whole of Genesis —though we read of 'grass,' 'herb,' 'seed,' 'fruit,' and 'tree'—does the word 'flower' appear.

An equally striking fact, which also appears to have been overlooked by commentators, is that there is no mention of 'love' between Adam and Eve or between any of the creatures which God had made. We read that male and female created He them; that Eve conceived and bare a son and called his name Cain, saying, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord;' but of the sacred passion of love, as existing between man and woman, we read never a word. It would seem as if, thus early in the world's history, God's one thought was for the 'fruit' and the 'seed,' His one wish to see appear upon the scene the generation that was to come after; and as if the calling into being of flower-glory and flower-beauty, and of the sacredness and beauty of the ennobling passion which we speak of as love, had been—like woman herself—an exquisite afterthought, in which God surpassed Himself in one of the supremest and divinest conceptions that ever entered even into the mind of God.

III.

As a very young child I firmly believed that lightning was the writing of God's own name, by God's own hand, across the scroll of the sky. I remember, too, that I accounted for the lightning being seen only as it vanished on the assumption that upon sight so awful as the name of the Infinite One, in His own handwriting, mortal eyes must not for more than a moment be permitted to look. In those child-days I had never so much as heard of the terrors associated in the Hindu mind with the mystic name Om—a name of such awful import and sacredness that to write it, or to read it when written, or even to whisper it under one's breath were blasphemy unthinkable; so possibly this idea of mine about the lightning was not of my own imagining, but was put into my head by some devout person who wished to instruct me in due reverence for things sacred.

Later on, as a boy of ten, being interested in what I heard about the Pyramids, and about the star-watchers and astrologers of old, who by reason of knowledge lost to us moderns could (so I was informed) read the signs of the sky, I was ready as implicitly to believe that the heavenly constellations are messages for us mortals, written in hieroglyphic characters by an almighty hand, and set there for our deciphering and to stimulate us to study God's ways. Fired by the success which I heard had attended the efforts of Egyptologists in interpreting the inscriptions upon ancient monuments, and by having myself achieved some reputation among my fellows by the ease with which I had discovered the key to a much-admired cipher invented by the genius of the school, and popularly believed to be beyond all human detection, I undertook, with presumption not unworthy of the builders of the Tower of Babel and of certain exponents of religion in our own time, to unravel these mysteries and to make known authoritatively the will and the purposes of the Most High. The Great Secret, the secret of life and death, of birth and the beyond, of man's destiny and God's being, is still to seek—my boyish star-searching notwithstanding; but now when I am no longer a boy I never seem so near the hiding-place of the secret as when I look into the heart of a flower.

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower; but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

As in my boyhood, I still think of the starry constellations as hieroglyphics written on the scroll of the heavens for universes to seek to decipher; but flowers are to me like dear and intimate letters addressed personally by God to each of us, and delivered directly from Him, almost at our very doors, by some angelic messenger.

It is true that they are not written out for us in words, for at God's thoughts the cramped confines of our halting human speech can only hope to hint. God speaks to us, as Christ spoke to His disciples, by the poetry of signs and symbols; and even as Christ, when most anxious to make clear His meaning, and compelled to fall back upon mortal utterance, spoke to the imagination rather than to the ear of His hearers by delivering Himself in parable, so it is by parable and picture that God utters Himself most directly to us to-day. We see God's thoughts expressed in a sunset, in a rainbow, in the small bird beating herself against the hawk to defend her brood, in a love-kiss, in a young mother's first sight of her babe, in a flower in the field, a face in the street, and in the trustful purity of child-eyes; and the sight of these thoughts of God, thus pictured for us, means infinitely more to us than could ever be put into words.

> Canst thou copy in verse one chime
> Of the woodbell's peal and cry,
> Write in a book the morning's prime,
> Or match with words that tender sky?

God's simplest, greatest, and most directly intelligible word of utterance to man was the Incarnation of His Eternal Son. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' And even as 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,' so to me every flower that blooms is in a sense a Word of God; for in every

clump of flowers on hillside, in the hedge-bank, or in my garden I seem to see a tiny handspace of heaven visible here upon earth. 'I know there is a heaven because the flowers came from there!' said a little child once, and I am not sure that her child-logic was not a surer guide than all our science.

Yet the secret of the flowers God never lets us make our own. Every year, with the coming of the snowdrops, I say to myself, 'Ah, 'twas but because in other years I was less grateful than I ought to have been for this gift of flowers; because, after the first glad rapture of surprise was over, I too often forgot them in other and meaner gladnesses, too often allowed them to bloom and to die unheeded; 'tis for this reason that the snowdrops have come and gone and left their secret untold.' And every year I take heart of hope, and tell myself that I will search and listen for that secret anew. Yet every year I awake one morning to find that the snowdrops have come and gone—gone as irrevocably as our loved dead—and taken their secret with them. And even as we shed scalding tears at the sight of the still face of the dead, and kneeling beside the bier, entreat them, if only for a few moments, to give ear and listen that we may beg their dear forgiveness for cruel words spoken and loving deeds left undone, even so I cry out to the snowdrops to come back to me that I may speak my love and may hearken for their secrets. And when the wilted flower-heads that once were so glorious in silver and green hang limply on their stalks, or seem to shake their dry and withered bells as if to toll, 'Too late! too late! We would have spoken had you listened, but we cannot tell you now,' I am as sad and as heavy at heart as if some dear friend, whom haply I may never see again, had gone forth to journey in a far and unknown country with my farewell words of love unspoken, and my wishes for his safe return unsaid. And so it is with other flowers. Each year I tell myself that *this* spring, *this* summer, *this* autumn, at least, the lily and the rose, the heart's-ease and the honeysuckle, the sweetbriar and the wood-anemone, shall come assured of such love and welcome, shall creep so close to my heart, and I so close to theirs, that at last they shall bid me bend low while they whisper that secret which the soul of every flower enfolds, and yet withholds from mortals. And each year the flower-pageant and flower-procession come and pass, and the white winter snows hide them away until spring returns, and once more I listen for that whisper in vain. The secret of the flowers God never lets us make our own.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXXIV.—HOW ONE ESCAPED AND ONE REMAINED IN THE CAGE.

THAT distinguished free-trader Paul Lebon was fortunately still above water, and still more fortunately in harbour at Honfleur when the travellers arrived there, and within an hour Sir Charles was sleeping like a top in the musty cabin of the *chasse-marée La Mouche* as she plunged up-Channel for Newhaven.

He was awakened by a heavy hand on his shoulder and a hearty voice in his ear, '*V'là, m'sieur!* we have arrived!' And that was all he remembered of the voyage.

'If ever monsieur wishes to return,' said M. Paul, as he stowed away his honestly earned reward, 'I shall be happy to oblige him. A word to the host of the "King George" at Newhaven will suffice. I am frequently in these parts.'

Then into a small boat in the dark, and Sir Charles was set ashore with instructions to strike up to the road and keep straight on to the left. At Newhaven he procured conveyance to Brighton, and was at Grosvenor Place before the household was astir.

'Oh, my dear, how glad I am to see you safe home again!' said Lady Charles as he sat on her bedside. 'I was in great fear for you. Where is Mavie?'

'She is at Mortaigne with Charlotte and the marquis.'

'Not with you? Oh Charles!'

'She will be quite safe, Mary;' and he detailed the circumstances of his own escape across country.

'But for Talleyrand I might be prisoner there myself. He promises to see to Mavie.'

'I would sooner have Mavie's hand in mine than all M. Talleyrand's promises. If there is to be war again he will be too busy to think about a girl. Oh, I wish you had brought her, Charles!' forlornly, in spite of herself, as though foreseeing what might come.

'If it had been at all possible I would have done so, dear. But, you see, we knew nothing out there in the country. And when I reached Rambouillet, and learned what was towards, it was a case of leaving at once for the coast or stopping in France at Bonaparte's pleasure; and that I could not afford to do,' he said, with something of the weariness of his journey still upon him.

Her tense perception caught the undercurrent in his tones. It started all her old fears for him.

'Charles dear,' she asked anxiously, 'is there anything wrong? You are troubled. You are overburdened.'

Would it have done any good to tell her? Would the sharing of his burden have lightened it in any degree? Why lay so grievous a load on a heart that was never meant to bear it?

He could not! He could not! It would crush her to the ground—into it maybe. If it had been only trouble and loss. But the shame of it! No, it was impossible! Often, afterwards, he doubted and regretted, but then it was too late; the path he

had chosen he must travel alone, or at all events with no other companion than John Sax.

And so, following his own lonely road, he said gently, 'Yes, I am burdened, dear. This new outbreak of the war is a bad business. The world is sick of war, and we are all more or less exhausted.'

Her sweet, truthful eyes held him for a moment with a great yearning in them. He was hard put to withstand that most pathetic gaze. The lovely face looked a little thinner, he thought, the great dark eyes a little larger, than when he left her. His troubled soul came near to falling headlong into those wells of truth in full and absolute surrender. But he must not! he must not!

He took grip of himself, and said more lightly, 'But, as to Mavie, I am sure you need have no fears, dear. Talleyrand will keep his promises to me, and meanwhile she is quite safe and happy over there.'

'We will hope for the best all round,' said Lady Charles, sinking back among her pillows with a not very hopeful little sigh. She had done her best to open a closed door in his heart, and knew that she had failed. And thereafter—though she knew there was some hidden thing between them, and though he dimly feared she knew it, and though that knowledge was never absent from them, and raised a tiny shadow between them—she on her part never for one moment doubted that in keeping the matter to himself he was acting for what he believed to be her good, and she gave him her whole heart's love, although she might not share his burden, as she would have liked to do.

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### CHAPTER XXXV.—HOW JACK LIVED ON GOLDEN MEMORIES AND GREW HIS MUSCLES.

'THANK God!' said John Sax fervently when Sir Charles came into the private room in the bank. 'I was in mortal fear he had got you; and if he had'——

'Talleyrand helped me through. If it hadn't been for him'——

'Monsieur Talleyrand has done better than he knew. Lord Whitworth arrived yesterday; but some of his staff were intercepted at Calais, and there are hundreds of others caught in the net. It is infamous!'

'Just what I said to Talleyrand, and he shrugged his shoulders and said, "Spleen." How have things gone on?'

'All safely, sir; but in another day or two I should have been needing you, and if you had been locked up there'——

'I came at a moment's notice, and left Mavie behind. Talleyrand sent a messenger after me to Mortaigne, simply bidding me come to him, and when I got to him he sped me on to the coast.'

'My lady won't like Miss Mavie being left over there; but she will be safe with the marquis, I should say.'

'She will be all right, and Talleyrand promised to get her across as speedily as possible. Now, let us see how things stand.' And they settled their necks to the yoke.

Young Jack did not get the chance of any conversation with his grandfather till they met at supper that night.

The moment he was free from his high stool he had set off for the river at Westminster, where—on ocular demonstration to his grandfather of his capability of taking care of himself both in and on the water—he was permitted to keep a small boat of his own, in charge of one of the watermen, who unbeknown to him let it out during the day whenever chance offered, but always took good care that it was available when its owner hove into sight of an evening. It had never been a very elegant boat even in its best days, and it had not cost very much in its last; but Jack found mighty satisfaction in it as an outlet for the pent-up activities which found the hours on the office-stool creep so slowly and heavily.

The office-stool and its concomitant drudgeries tended towards ruts and grooves. The grip of his oars in the swirling brown water and the swish of the wind in his ears lifted him into a wider world of freedom and the grace of easy motion. If all day long his mind was set to his work as closely as his body to his stool, the evening found him his own man anywhere between Fulham and Westminster, and on occasion down the other way among the docks and shipping, which gave a foreign flavour to the expedition; and there his head shook free of its tangles, and his chest expanded, and his arms and legs grew mighty muscles, and the sudden little emergencies incidental to this nautical career were not without their effect upon him. The faculty of quiet, calm-eyed views, and quick decision, and prompt action grew in him, and applied themselves to the things that lay beyond the circumscribed rim of his boat. And the thoughts he thought as he pulled steadily up on the flood or drifted lazily back on the ebb! Ah, the thoughts of a boy are long, long thoughts, and happy the boy who has such a sun and centre for them all as young Jack had. Even though the sun be a very long way above us, and unattainable as an actual possession, still its smile may warm our heart; and when it is obscured we think of it as we have known it, and long for another sight of it. The sun is, of course, the sun, and we are but a very insignificant person occupying a stool, whose dignity is in inverse ratio to its height in the sublunary banking-house of our sun's father.

It was, of course, an age that set men to think on the essential slenderness and easy breach of the lines of division between man and man. Robert Burns—whose words were dear to Hepsy MacClootie's heart, though she looked somewhat askance at his character generally—had sung that rank was but the guinea-stamp, and the man was the gowd for a' that; France had worked out the same mighty

sum for herself in figures of blood, and these things had their large and deep effects on the hearts of all.

But as to young Jack Sax, coming down from Parson's Green way with a rush lest he should be late again for supper, all that he, confessedly to himself, permitted himself to hope was that he might be deemed worthy, when the time came, to occupy to his old chum Charlie the position which his grandfather occupied to Sir Charles; and at times he was amazed at himself for thinking such a thing possible, so vast was his grandfather's knowledge of men and things. And then he said to himself, 'All the same, I know more about banking than Charlie does yet, and I suppose the rest will come. I just hope he won't go and get himself killed beforehand.' And as to Mavie, she was chiefly of the nature of a seedling rainbow, and his remembrances and thoughts of her did no one any harm and himself nothing but good.

'Miss Mavie got home all right?' he inquired, as he sat down to his supper with a livelier appetite than bank-stools breed.

'She's in France,' said his grandfather.

'In France!' for he had heard rumours of the closing of the doors.

'They were all away in the country at one of the marquis's houses, and knew nothing. A friend of Sir Charles's sent for him in haste, without telling him why, and then sent him riding night and day for the coast.'

'Leaving Miss Mavie behind!'

'If he hadn't he'd be there yet, and might be kept there for weeks. She'll be all right. She'll get a little longer holiday than she looked for, that's all.'

'Her mamma won't like her being away so long,' said Mrs Sax, with a knowing nod; 'with Master Charlie away all the time too. She'll feel lonesome in yon big house with no one but Mrs MacClootie for company.'

'Yes, it'll feel empty with Miss Mavie and the marquis and madame and Etienne all away.'

'How's Etienne getting on, I wonder? I'd like to have seen him on the boat. I'll wager you he went green,' growled Jack, with just a touch of the feeling that would come over him at times that the turn of the wheel had carried the forlorn and despised one into perpetual sunshine, and left himself but sunny memories to live on.

'He'll go into the army, I should say,' said Mr Sax. 'They seem to be settling down to the new order of things over there, and I doubt if the Bourbons will ever get back, and I'm not at all sure it would be good for the country if they did. From all accounts, General Bonaparte is the right man for them. He is a strong man, and knows what he wants and what they want.'

'Did Sir Charles see him?'

'Only at a distance—and a good thing, too. If Bonaparte had laid hands on *him* there'd have been something to pay. General Lauriston told us that Bonaparte had said to him more than once that the only thing he had against him was his name.'

'Suppose he lays hands on Mavie?'

'Miss Mavie,' said the old man with emphasis, 'is in safe hands. The friend who got Sir Charles out will see to her.'

'And it's to be fighting with Boney again, John?'

'Yes, my dear; we can't let him have everything his own way, you know.'

'He seems a troublesome kind of man—never satisfied, it seems to me.'

'That kind of man never is until he's in his grave. Sir Charles says they all want peace as much as we do.'

'Well, then?'

'Well, they'll get it maybe when he's dead, not before.'

'It would be a queer thing if Charlie and Etienne met on opposite sides!' said Jack.

'Queerer things have happened in war-times. I don't suppose either would wish it, but soldiers must do as they're bid.'

'I know some old Etienne wouldn't mind meeting,' laughed Jack, reminiscent of fagging days at Westminster. 'How will matters go this time, do you think, sir?'

'Austria and Russia will join us, of course,' said Mr Sax, and went on to unfold to Jack his views of the probable course of events abroad, and discoursed thereon with such sagacity as the then but partial understanding of Bonaparte's genius for war permitted.

It was his regular custom to discuss thus with his grandson all matters of moment, public and political, and their bearing on matters financial; a part of the plan and hope of his heart, also, that some time, if by the mercy of God they were permitted to pull through, the boy should take his place in the house, and be to Sir Charles—after he himself had gone, or to the next Sir Charles if they both must go—what he had been so long himself: the second head and trusted right hand, the confidential friend and adviser; if needs be (which God forbid!) the faithful abettor in all that might be necessary for the buttressing of the great house against disaster.

And Jack understood—as far as it was good for him to understand—and had made up his mind that since he had to be in a bank he would be a banker, and not simply a banker's clerk. And so he sought knowledge on every hand and made it his own; and to counteract the effect of too much shoppiness he rowed and read, and spent hours of his winter evenings at Monsieur Billoti's fencing-school in Dacre Street, and at Tom Cribb's academy in Pye Street, where gentlemen were politely instructed in the use of their fists with or without gloves, but generally with.

So were our young comrades of the warpath sifted out and scattered, and of them all young Jack Sax alone within bounds, since he was more or less tied by the leg to his bank-stool; Charlie fitting himself for the defence of his country at his army tutor's at Newbury, where the hunting was good and the

discipline the reverse of severe; Etienne heading for St Cyr and whatever that might lead to; Mavie, unwilling *détenue* in foreign parts, earnestly desirous now to be done with France and to get back home, but forbidden thereto by the caprice of the tyrant whom Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity had seated in the saddle, and whose strong hands gripped the reins with ever-growing purpose.

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### CHAPTER XXXVI.—HOW THE TIGER TRAPPED MAVIE.

OR it had come to that. Before M. de Talleyrand had been able to fulfil his promise to smuggle Mavie out of the country, Bonaparte had learned all about her and promptly double-locked the doors. Possibly he had learned too late of Sir Charles's visit and narrow escape, and determined to hold on to her for mere purposes of aggravation. The great man was by no means above such littleness as that.

This was how it came about. On receiving Sir Charles's letter to Mavie—which gave them the first news of the rupture and the closing of the ports, and at the same time bade her keep her mind quite easy, as M. de Talleyrand had promised to see that she got safely home—monsieur and madame decided to return to Paris forthwith, since the call from M. de Talleyrand might come at any moment.

A day or two after their return monsieur and madame were bidden to a reception at the Tuileries, and Mavie was filled with a very natural desire to see not only all that was possible, but above all the wonderful First Consul, of whom all the world was talking. And the way was easy, for the invitation was vaguely worded 'and family,' as though the secretary who made it out was in the dark as to the extent of monsieur's family, or was so much in the habit of adding the words that they had slipped in without any express instructions thereto.

So it was decided that both Etienne and Mavie should accompany the marquis and marquise, on the clear understanding that mademoiselle should keep herself discreetly in the background and see all she could without attracting observation.

But there were two elements in this arrangement which made for its upsetting: Mavie's own wild excitement and eagerness to make the very most of so unique an opportunity, and the First Consul's equal desire for knowledge.

They drove through a courtyard resonant and dazzling with magnificent cuirassiers, climbed a long flight of stairs lined with courteous lackeys, and entered a great room already filled to overflowing with gorgeously dressed women and brilliantly uniformed officers, and a murmurous buzz of talk as though all the bees of the Napoleonic hive had come prematurely to life and were giving their opinions on things in general.

Discomfort of great heat and pressure inside, lively music from the bands in the courtyard, then the opening of a distant door, and a sudden hush and a tightening of the pressure as the crowd parted to make room for the First Consul.

He was a long time coming, chatting here and there with one and another. But at last, through the jungle of Aunt Charlotte's drooping plumes, Mavie caught a glimpse of a sallow, oval face and a pair of keen, light-gray eyes—face and eyes alike aglow with self-satisfied good-humour at the moment, and she felt a sudden thrill at finding herself so close to the most wonderful man of his time.

She was staring through the feathery jungle with something of fascination in her blue eyes, and feeling much as a baby-rabbit does when the great snake is considering it, when Bonaparte recognised the marquis and came straight towards him.

'Ah, M. de Montessonne, I am glad to see you here! You suggest something we have somewhat lacked. This is madame?' and Aunt Charlotte swept him a curtsy which left her the envy of all beholders, zealous pupils though they all were of Madame Campan and M. Despréaux, who were doing their very best to teach them how people comported themselves in the days before the deluge.

'And this?' he said, catching Etienne by the top button of his coat.

'My grandson.' And Etienne produced the De Montessonne bow, rather awkwardly under the circumstances, but still sufficiently well.

'You are sending him to St Cyr?'

'That is his wish.'

'That is right. St Cyr is the doorway to glory.'

And suddenly the plump, shapely hand shot through Aunt Charlotte's feathery screen, and the fascinated baby-rabbit behind—the astonished Mavie—found her ear caught firmly and held between a strong thumb and finger.

'And this?' asked Bonaparte, delighted at his capture; while Aunt Charlotte ducked herself away with a movement that was in itself a perfect lesson in deportment, and Mavie stood captive, rosy-cheeked, wide blue eyes, parted lips—a picture of startled maidenly beauty.

'My niece—by marriage,' said the marquis, just a little disturbed at possible consequences, but showing no slightest sign of it.

'Ah, ha! and a very charming acquisition to any man's family.—Your name, mademoiselle?'

'Mary Lauriston, monsieur.'

'Lauriston!' and the smooth olive brows knitted for a moment over it. 'Of course, madame belongs to the great family. I too have a Lauriston, but he is not nearly so good-looking;' and he gave Mavie's rosy ear a pinch and a pull and passed on.

They were inclined as they drove home to make merry over the great man's brusquerie, all except the marquis, who seemed thoughtful. And, indeed, the very next day he received word from M. de Talleyrand that the First Consul had given the most stringent instructions that Mademoiselle Lauriston was upon no account to be permitted to leave Paris. So small can even great men be, to such apparently

trivial matters can great minds give themselves, and to such below-belt blows could the might that was paralysing Europe condescend! But that was Bonaparte. Nothing seemed too great for him to attempt, nothing too small to attend to.

So Mavie became to all intents and purposes a prisoner at large, and found herself just that much better off than the hundreds of her fellow countrymen and women similarly detained in that she was permitted to reside with her kinsfolk in Paris, whereas the others were sent towards the eastern frontier, and interned in Verdun and Sarrelouis and Metz.

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### CHAPTER XXXVII.—HOW MRS MACCLOOTIE URGED DESPERATE MEASURES.

ALL correspondence between England and France was stopped, but still letters did at times get through by incredibly roundabout methods and by means of the free-traders, who cheerfully went about their business without regard to politics, and were at the disposal, to the extent of their limited powers, of any who chose to employ them. So the weeks dragged heavily into months, and Lady Lauriston's heart was heavy with anxiety on her daughter's account.

The sudden and unexpected rupture of the much-desired peace had paralysed business, and there was a certain stringency in money matters. It was something of a relief to Sir Charles that, no matter how much the marquise might desire to get on with her rehabilitation of the wasted De Montessonne estates, it was quite beyond his power to transmit to her the thirty or forty thousand pounds which she might require for the purpose, and which, at the moment, they could have spared only with difficulty.

Charlie, gazetted to a cornetcy in his father's old regiment, was in the very highest of spirits, with only one fear: that all the fun, as he called it, would be over there, and that England would sit quietly behind her rolling barriers, watching and waiting as before, subsidising her changeful allies to their hearts' content, but leaving the game entirely in their hands.

But the most hopeful of assurances, lacking any slightest fruition of accomplishment, lost their force in time. And hope deferred, if only deferred long enough, may make the stoutest heart sick unto death. It was only strength of will and a most valiant spirit that had kept Lady Lauriston's frail lamp alight. This violent deprivation of one of her greatest joys in life bore terribly upon her. Mavie, with her manifold and joyous activities, her impetuous cheerfulness, and wholesome delight in life, had ministered to her mother's troubled soul in ways she never dreamed of. And to have the child suddenly snatched from her by the ruthless act of a tyrant who spared none; to think of her there in a foreign land at the mercy of such a man! Yes, it was hard to bear, and its effects soon became visible.

In the first twelve months of Mavie's captivity one letter only reached them, many months after it was written, and that—describing in gleeful fashion the amusing side of her first meeting with Bonaparte, and with no slightest idea of all that was to come of it—almost jarred upon them by the contrast of its light-hearted gaiety with the sombre screen of the intervening months of slowly waning hope and growing heart-sickness. Then followed a long, blank silence, a silence full of heart-racking disturbance to the anxious ones at home; for when a single day—or for that matter any single moment of the day—may hold all possibilities of ill to the distant loved one, how shall one estimate the cumulative effect of the passage of the blank days as they dragged slowly on into weeks, and the weeks became months, and the months became a year?

Sir Charles and Hepsy MacClootie, sadly conscious of the havoc wrought by this long-drawn anxiety, did their utmost to comfort the aching mother-heart. But words are poor and empty and of the outside only, and heart-sickness is beyond their healing.

The brave, frail heart bore its new burden heroically for longer than had seemed to them possible, but heroic endurance has its limits. Sir Charles had left no stone unturned to procure his daughter's release. But as matters were between France and England, his efforts were fruitless. One belated despatch he received from Talleyrand to the effect that, in spite of all his attempts and most urgent representations, Bonaparte simply and flatly refused to let her go. 'I have suffered from Lauriston's operations; now it is my turn. Let him suffer!' That, according to Talleyrand, was the great small man's final word on the subject. Meanwhile M. de Talleyrand had pleasure in assuring them that Miss Lauriston was in good health, though visibly *ennuyée* of her stay in Paris.

It was well on in the second year that Mrs MacClootie, with a face full of concern and purpose, came down to Queen Street one night for a confidential talk with Mr and Mrs Sax. Jack was out on the river, and could be counted upon not to put in an appearance before nine o'clock.

'And how is my lady, Mrs MacClootie?' asked Mrs Sax.

'She is dying, Mrs Sax.'

'Dying!' echoed her hearers in dismay.

'Just dying for want of Miss Mavie. And it's that I've come to talk to you about, Mr Sax. We—must—get—Miss—Mavie—home.'

'If wanting to do it could have done it she'd have been home long since, Mrs MacClootie.'

'Well, we've got to get her. And I want you to propose to Sir Charles that we should steal her out of that wicked man's hands. My only surprise is that we haven't thought of it before.'

'We have,' said old John quietly. 'There have been many tried it—not with Miss Mavie, but with others; but they're too sharp over there, and the only results have been a few more in their prisons.'

'Well, try again and again. You might manage it

at last. If you don't my lady will surely die. Why doesn't Master Charlie try to get his sister home? If he knew all that his mother is suffering'——

'Master Charlie can't help himself. But you're not to speak of it to my lady. We only got word to-day.'

'He's ordered abroad?' gasped Hepsy, for she knew how heavy lay the fear of this on her mistress's heart. It might be the last straw.

'No. He's had a nasty fall out hunting, and he's broken his collar-bone and his right leg and three or four ribs.'

'Mercy me! Will he get over it, Mr Sax?'

'Oh, he'll get over it all right, but it means lying stiff and straight for many a day.'

'Very well, then,' said Hepsy, much relieved that things were no worse. 'Then it's your boy must go across there and bring Miss Mavie home.'

'Our John?' It was Mrs Sax's turn to gasp now.

'Just that! And there's not another in the world I would sooner trust her with.'

'Well, well!' said Mr Sax musingly. And after a pause, 'It's not the risks will stop him where Miss Mavie is concerned, though they're not small ones. At the worst it might mean his life; at the best, if he fails, it would mean imprisonment.'

'And if he gets her safely out it means new life to my lady,' said Hepsy earnestly.

'You want me to speak to Sir Charles?' asked Mr Sax after another silence.

'You must. I cannot. He might take it presumptuous in me. But you can tell him what I say, Mr Sax. If Miss Mavie doesna come back my lady will surely slip through our hands.'

'I will speak to him,' said John Sax.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE BRENNAN MONO-RAIL CAR.

By Perceval Gibbon.

IT was November 10, 1909—a day that shall surely have its place in history beside that other day, eighty-five years ago, when George Stephenson drove the first railway locomotive between Stockton and Darlington. In the great square of the Brennan torpedo factory at Gillingham, in Kent, where the fighting-tops of battleships in the adjacent dockyard poise above the stone coping of the wall, there was a line of railway laid down in a circle of a quarter of a mile. Switches linked it up with other lengths of line, a straight stretch down to a muddy cape of the Medway estuary and a string of curves and loops coiling among the stone and iron factory sheds. What was strange about it was that it was single—just one line of rails on sleepers tamped into the unstable 'made' ground of the place. And there was Louis Brennan, his face red with the chill wind sweeping in from the Nore, his voice plaintive and Irish, discoursing at slow length of revolutions per minute, of 'precession,' and the like. The journalists from London who had come down at his invitation fidgeted and shivered in the bitter morning air; the affair did not look in the least like an epoch in the history of transportation and civilisation, till—

'Now, gentlemen,' said Brennan, and led the way across the circle of track.

And then, from its home behind the low, powder-magazine-like sheds, there rode forth a strange car the like of which was never seen before. It was painted the business-like slaty-blue gray of the War Office; it was merely a flat platform, ten feet wide by thirty feet long, a steel cab mounted on its forward end, through the windows of which one could see a young engineer in tweeds standing against the blur of moving machine-parts. It ran on the single rail; its four wheels revolved in a line, one behind another, and it travelled with the level, flexible equilibrium of a ship moving across a dock. It swung over the sharp curves without faltering, crossed the switch, and floated—floated is the only word for the serene and equable quality of its movement—round and round the quarter-mile circle. A workman boarded it as it passed him and sat on the edge with his legs swinging, and its level was unaltered. It was wonderful beyond words to see; it seemed to abolish the very principle of gravitation; it contradicted calmly one's most familiar instincts. Every one knows the sense one gains at times while watching an ingenious machine at its work—a sense of being in the presence of a living and conscious thing, with more than the industry, the pertinacity, the dexterity, of a man. There was a moment, while watching Brennan's car, when one had to summon an effort of reason to do away with this sense of life; it answered each movement of the men on board and each inequality in the make-shift track with an adjustment of balance irresistibly suggestive of consciousness. It was an illustration of that troublous theorem which advances that consciousness is no more than the co-relation of the parts of the brain, and that a machine adapted to its work is as conscious in its own sphere as a mind is in *its* sphere.

The car backed round the track, crossed to the straight line, and halted to take us aboard. There were not less than forty of us, and it took up our inequably distributed weight without disturbance. The young engineer threw his lever over and we ran down the line. The movement was as 'sweet' and smooth as the movement of a powerful motor-car running slowly on a smooth road; there was an utter absence of those jars and small lateral shocks which are inseparable from a car running

on a double line of rails. We passed beyond the sheds and slid along a narrow spit of land thrusting out into the mud-flanked estuary; men on lighters and a working-party of bluejackets turned to stare at the incredible machine with its load. Then back again, three times round the circle, and in and out among the curves, always with that unchanging stateliness of gait. As we spun round the circle, she leaned inwards like a cyclist against the centrifugal pull; she needs no banking of the track to keep her on the rail. A line of rails to travel on, and ground that will carry her weight—she asks no more. With these and a clear road ahead, she is to abolish distance and revise the world's schedules of time.

'A hundred and twenty miles an hour,' I hear Brennan saying in that sad voice of his. 'Or maybe two hundred. That's a detail.'

In the back of the cab were broad, unglazed windows, through which one could watch the tangle of machinery. Dynamos are bolted to the floor, purring under their shields like comfortable cats; abaft of them a twenty-horse-power Wolseley petrol engine supplies motive-power for everything. And above the dynamos, cased in studded leather, swinging a little in their ordered precession, are the two gyroscopes, the soul of the machine. To them she owes her equilibrium. Of all machines in the world the gyroscope is the simplest, for in its essential form it is no more than a wheel revolving. But a wheel revolving is the vehicle of many physical principles, and the sum of them is that which is known as gyroscopic action. It is seen in the ordinary spinning-top, which stands erect in its capacity of a gyroscope revolving horizontally; the apparatus which holds Brennan's car upright and promises to revolutionise transportation is a top adapted to a new purpose. It is a gyroscope revolving in a perpendicular plane, a steel wheel weighing three-quarters of a ton and spinning at the rate of three thousand revolutions to the minute. Now, the effect of gyroscopic action is to resist any impulse which tends to move the revolving wheel out of the plane in which it revolves. This resistance can be felt in a top; it can be felt much more strongly in the beautiful little gyroscopes of brass and steel which are sold for the scientific demonstration of the laws governing revolving bodies. Such a one, only a few inches in size, will develop a surprising resistance. This resistance increases with the weight of the wheel and the speed at which it moves, till with Brennan's gyroscopes of three-quarters of a ton each, whirling in a vacuum at three thousand revolutions per minute, it would need a weight which would crush the car into the ground to throw them from their upright plane.

The working of Brennan's gyroscope was described at length in the Press on the occasion of the exhibition of his model mono-rail car before the Royal Society and in the grounds of his residence at Gillingham; for a clear understanding of the first full-sized car, it will be well to recapitulate a few of the characteristics of the gyroscope. When Brennan made his early models, he found that while the little cars would remain upright and run along a straight rail, they left the track at the first curve. The gyroscope governed their direction as well as their equilibrium. It was the first check in the evolution of the perfect machine; it lasted over ten years before he found the answer to the problem, ten years of making experimental machines and scrapping them, of filing useless patents, of doubt and persistence. But the answer was found—in the spinning-top. A top set spinning and put down so that it stands at an angle to the floor will right itself; it will rise till it stands upright on the point of equal friction. Brennan's resource, therefore, was to treat his gyroscope as a top. He enclosed it in a case, through which its axles projected, and at each side of the car he built stout brackets reaching forth a few inches below each end of the axle. The result is not difficult to deduce. When the car came to a curve, the centrifugal action tended to throw it outwards; the side of the car that was on the inside of the curve swung up and the bracket touched the axle of the gyroscope. Forthwith, in the manner of its father, the top, the gyroscope tried to stand upright on the bracket; all the weight of it and all its wonderful force was pressed on that side of the car, holding it down against the tendency to rise and capsize. The thing was done; the spinning-top had come to the rescue of its posterity. It only remained to fit a double gyroscope, with the wheels revolving in opposite directions, and, save for engineering details, the mono-rail car was evolved.

Through the window in the back of the cab I was able to watch them at their work. Not the actual gyroscopes, but their cases, quivering with the unimaginable velocity of the great wheels within, turning and tilting accurately to each shifting weight as the men on board moved here and there. Over them were the glass oil-cups, with the opal-green engine-oil flushing through them to feed the bearings. The lubrication is a vital part of the machine; let that fail, and the axles, grinding and red-hot, would eat through the white metal of the bearings as a knife goes through butter. It is a thing that has been foreseen by the inventor; to the lubricating apparatus is affixed a danger-signal that would instantly warn the engineer.

'But,' says Brennan, 'if one broke down, the other gyroscope would hold her up—till ye could run her to a siding, anyway.'

'But supposing the electric apparatus failed?' suggests a reporter, with visions of headlines perhaps. 'Supposing the motor driving the gyroscopes broke down; what then?'

'They'd run for a couple of days with the momentum they've got,' answers the inventor. 'And for two or three hours that 'ud keep her upright by itself.'

On the short track at Gillingham there are no

gradients to show what the car can do in the way of climbing, but here again the inventor is positive. She will run up a slope as steep as one in six, he says. There is no reason to doubt him; the five-foot model which he used to exhibit could climb much steeper inclines, run along a rope stretched six feet above the ground, or remain at rest upon it while the rope was swung to and fro. It would do all these things while carrying a man; and, for my part, I am willing to take Brennan's word.

He, Louis Brennan, was by no means the least interesting feature of the demonstration. He has none of the look of a visionary, this man who has gone to war with time and space; neither had George Stephenson. He is short and thick-set, with a full face and a heavy moustache hiding his mouth, and heavy eyebrows. He is troubled a little with asthma, which makes him somewhat staccato and breathless in speech, and perhaps also accentuates the peculiar plaintive quality of his Irish voice. There is nothing in his appearance to indicate whether he is thirty-five or fifty-five. As a matter of fact, he is two years over the latter age, but a man ripe in life, with that persistence and belief in his work which is to engineers what passion is to a poet. The technicalities of steel and iron come easily off his tongue; they are his native speech, in which he expresses himself most intimately. All his life he has been concerned with machines. He is the inventor of the Brennan steerable torpedo, whose adoption by the Admiralty made him rich and rendered possible the long years of study and experiment which went to the making of the mono-rail car. He has a touch of the rich man's complacency; it does not go ill with his kindly good-humour and his single-hearted pride in his life-work.

It is characteristic, I think, of his honesty of purpose and of the genius which is his driving force that hitherto he has concerned himself with scientific invention somewhat to the exclusion of the commercial aspects of his contrivance. He has had help in money and men from the Government, which likewise placed the torpedo factory at his disposal; and the Governments of India and, of all places, Kashmir have granted him subsidies. Railroad men from all parts of the world have seen his model; but he has not been ardent in the hunt for customers. Perhaps that will not be necessary; the mono-rail car should be its own salesman; but in the meantime it is not amiss that a great inventor should stand aloof from commerce.

But for all the cheerful matter-of-factness of the man, he too has seen visions. There are times when he talks of the future as he hopes it will be, as he means it to be, when 'transportation is civilisation.' Men are to travel then on a single rail in great cars like public halls, two hundred feet long, thirty to forty feet wide, whirling across continents at two hundred miles an hour—from New York to San Francisco between dawn and dawn. Travel is to be no longer uncomfortable; these cars will sweep along with the motion of an ice-yacht, and be equipped like an hotel. They will not jolt over points or strain to mount the track at curves; in each one the weariless gyroscopes will govern an unchanging equilibrium. Trustful Kashmir will advance from its remoteness to a place accessible from anywhere. Tramway lines will no longer be a perplexity to paving authorities and anathema to other traffic; a single rail will be flush with the ground, out of the way of hoofs and tires. Motor-cars will run on two wheels like a bicycle; it is to be a mono-rail world, soothed and assured by the drone of gyroscopes. By that time the patient ingenuity of inventors and engineers will have found the means to run the gyroscopes at a greater speed than is now possible, thus rendering it feasible to use a smaller wheel. It is a dream based on good, solid reasoning, backed by a great inventor's careful calculations. H. G. Wells has given a picture of it in the last of his stories of the future.

Practical railroad men have given to the mono-rail car a sufficiently warm welcome. They have been impressed chiefly by its suitability to the conditions of transportation in the great new countries, as, for instance, on that line of railway which is creeping north from the Zambesi to open up the copper deposits of North-Western Rhodesia, and on through Central Africa to the terminus at Cairo. Just such land as this helped to inspire Brennan. He was a boy when he first saw the endless plains of Australia, and out of that experience grew his first speculations about the future of railway travel. Such lands make positive and clear demands, if ever they are to be exploited for their full value to humanity; they need railways quickly laid and cheaply constructed, lines not too exacting in point of curves and gradients, and, finally, fast travel. It is not difficult to see how valuable the mono-rail would have been in such an emergency as the last Soudan war, when the army dragged a line of railway with it down towards Omdurman. Petrol-driven cars to replace the expensive steam-locomotives, easy rapid transit instead of the laborious crawl through the stifling desert heat—a complete railway installation, swiftly and cheaply called into being, instead of a costly and cumbersome make-shift.

The car went back to her garage, or engine-shed, or stable, or whatever the railway man of the future shall decide to call it. Struts were pulled into position to hold her up, the motors were switched off, and the gyroscopes left to run themselves down in forty-eight hours or so. When the mono-rail comes into general use, explained Brennan, there will be docks for the cars, with low brick walls built to slide under the platforms and take their weight. And while his guests assembled in a store-shed to drink champagne and eat sandwiches, he produced a big, flat book, sumptuously bound, and told us how his patents were being infringed in Germany. On that same day there was an exhibition

of a mono-rail car on the Brennan principle taking place at the Zoological Gardens in Berlin; the book was its catalogue. It was full of imaginative pictures of trains fifty years hence, and thereto was appended sanguine letterpress. While there sounded in our ears the hum of the gyroscopes from the car housed in the rear, I translated one paragraph for him. It was to the effect that one Brennan, an Englishman, had conducted experiments with gyroscopes ten years ago, but the matter had gone no further.

'There, now,' said Brennan.

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# ONE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—AND AFTER.

## CHAMBERS'S II.

FOUR days of the precious week had gone by—days of bewildering enjoyment to Helen Campbell—each a miniature lifetime in its rich store of experiences.

She had watched from her aunt's carriage the historic procession of the Lord High Commissioner passing through the crowded streets of the gray old town to the Palace of Holyrood, and if her interest had been more concentrated upon one gallant figure on horseback curvetting up and down the line of kilted troops than on the representatives of royalty there was some excuse for her.

Archibald Napier was the hero of every moment of those days. Even when she was sitting on the packed benches of the sombre Assembly Hall, between her father and mother, listening to the weighty logic and profound theological disputations of the most eminent divines of the Scots Church, her traitorous thoughts were with him, speculating as to his whereabouts, recalling words and glances, past intercourse, anticipating future meetings, with always that black moment of annihilation at the end, when the week should be over and her connection with this magic life severed.

But to-day the climax of her enjoyment was to be reached, and she had resolutely put away all thought of the impending doom.

In the afternoon a drive with Archibald round the breezy uplands of Arthur's Seat, and in the evening the High Commissioner's reception at Holyrood Palace. There had been a little demur on the part of the Misses Drummond when the young man suggested the *tête-à-tête* excursion; but he was so frank and natural in his request for Helen's society, pleading that the pony had to be exercised, and it would do them both good to escape for an afternoon from the strenuous events of the week, that they had considered it more politic to yield. He arrived directly after luncheon in his smart little cart, and the pair set off together with a delightful sense of freedom and intimacy in both their hearts that strangely enough kept them silent for the first part of the way.

'This is better than that dull old Assembly Hall,' Archibald said at last, turning to look down at his companion with smiling eyes as they left the narrow streets of the Old Town behind and spun out into the wide expanse of the Queen's Drive.

Helen smiled back at him comprehensively. The fresh breeze had brought a lovely colour into her face, and the simple woollen tam o' shanter pulled down on her fair hair lent a quaint, boyish touch to her beauty that appealed to him strangely.

'I ought not to think so,' she returned; 'but then I don't understand theology,' in a more serious tone.

He laughed aloud.

'You foolish child! What does a woman want with theology? There are other lessons much more important for you to learn,' glancing quickly at her to note the effect of his words.

Her gray eyes had a veiled look as she gazed straight ahead of her, unconscious of the beauty of the profile she turned to him.

'I am a minister's daughter; I must never forget that,' she persisted.

'You are a little Puritan,' he laughed, flicking the pony into a canter.

A troubled look crossed her face at his words. She turned to him.

'You don't think I am a hypocrite, Cousin Archie?' she pleaded.

But he continued to smile tantalisingly, without looking round.

'I am sure you do,' she went on, her distress deepening. 'If you only knew how—how I dread going home,' with a fine impulse of confession. 'It is wicked of me, I know. When we first thought of accepting Aunt Charlotte's invitation they were afraid I might be discontented with Muirton afterwards, and I laughed at them. Now'—— She broke off, glancing fearfully at him to note the effect of her words.

But there was only chivalrous commiseration in his blue eyes as he turned to her.

'Poor child, is it so very dull there?' he asked in a tender voice.

'I used not to think so,' she said, half-shamefacedly. 'I dare say it will be all right again after a time, when—when'—— Again she broke off.

'When you have forgotten us,' he finished for her. 'But I am not going to allow you to do that, Cousin Helen. I am coming up to Muirton in the autumn, and'——

But a little gasp of delight from the girl interrupted him.

'Oh, will you really?' she cried. 'Will you promise?'

'Of course,' he asseverated boldly, then paused,

conscience-struck. A list of his autumn invitations had risen up in his mind to shame him, and according to present arrangements there was not so much as a week-end to spare for Muirton. Besides, was there not every prospect that by that time he might be an engaged man with an autocratic fiancée to account to for his movements? But for to-day, what mattered it? To have brought that radiant look into the beautiful child-face beside him was a temptation few could have resisted. And Helen believed him as if his word were the gospel.

The whole outlook was changed for her now; the dreaded eclipse that had threatened her life had passed harmlessly away. There was to be a continuation, a second chapter, after all. She was much too naïve and unsophisticated to disguise her delight, and for a time her talk was all of Muirton and his promised visit.

They had reached the brow of a steep, upward climb by this time, and as they were proceeding along the higher level of the road that winds round the southern side of Arthur's Seat a motor that had been following silently in their rear flashed by them and disappeared in a cloud of dust. There was an instant's pause while the pony, startled by the apparition, reared up in the shafts, backing the cart towards the narrow parapet that protected the road from the steep of the hillside. Then, with a desperate plunge, the animal started forward in the wake of the motor.

Archie, who had flung his arm across Helen in that instant of peril to keep her in her place, recovered his position. But the words that had escaped his lips unknowingly to himself in the crisis sang in her ears triumphantly through all the mad progress that followed. 'Sweetheart! little sweetheart, sit still!'

The cart, rocking and swaying, dashed onwards from turn to turn of the narrow, winding road. Once or twice the girl cast a side-glance at her companion. The fierce contest between his own will and the terrified brute-strength of the runaway animal had driven the colour from his face; but he was smiling, though with set teeth, and there was a hard, metallic brilliance in the blue eyes such as she had often pictured there in the hour of battle.

Was it not glory enough for her to share this danger with him—her hero? Whatever happened afterwards, nothing could rob her of this triumph. And now there was another uphill gradient before them, and gradually the masterful control on the reins was telling on the frightened animal, and the mad gallop passed to a canter, and then slowed still more, till at the summit of the hill the last effort was made, and the runaway came to a full stop, with heaving chest and spumy flanks.

'Whew! that was a stiff pull!' said Archibald, with the little, half-savage laugh of the conqueror. Then, turning to his companion, 'You weren't frightened?'

Helen met his gaze, a reflection of her late triumph still in her eyes.

'No,' she said, and laughed.

'Plucky child!' he retorted, taking out his handkerchief and passing it carelessly over his heated brow. 'We'll give the pony a moment's breathing-space, and then get home. By the way, I wouldn't say anything about it to the aunts, if I were you. They might be frightened.'

'We needn't tell anybody,' said Helen quietly. Her brain was still dancing with the intoxication of those muttered words; it was all she could do to control herself to speak. Another stage in her development had been reached; the first love-words had been spoken.

'Sweetheart,' he had said.

That was a very different epithet from cousin. It had been surprised from him prematurely, she believed. But she had no experience of the world to tell her how generic even that sacred term can become on a man's lips.

For the remainder of the homeward way little was said by either of them. Only when they reached the door of the great house in Moray Place, and he was helping her to alight, he held her hand in a firm, steady clasp.

'Till to-night then, little cousin,' he said, and, mounting the driving-seat again, drove quickly off without another glance round.

It is said that realisation seldom fulfils anticipation. Helen Campbell would have given the aphorism a flat denial at the end of the first half of that day's programme. The drive with Archie had done far more than fulfil her expectations; it had created a whole new universe of possibilities that were already taking the more definite shape of hopes within her. Unconsciously she looked to the events of the evening to further the transformation.

But so far its happenings had had the reverse effect. The first chill of disillusionment had made itself felt when she entered the great, sombre hall at Holyrood Palace, and saw among the heterogeneous crowd assembled there a scattering of those representatives of the fashionable life of the capital with which her mother had once been familiar. Some essential difference between herself and them struck her at once. There were plenty of those around her bearing the unmistakable stamp of the country cousin had she wished for countenance. But the idea of such a parallel did not present itself to her. They were not there as the favoured friend and cousin of Archibald Napier, to be recognised presently by him before the whole assemblage, and made welcome with his brave, gallant smile. She held her head higher at the thought. The scent of a spray of roses at her breast seemed to rise up and encourage her. They were a present from her cousin, sent at the last moment as she was dressing, and their arrival had put the finishing touch to her excitement.

'It's a sin and a shame that her aunts should let her go in such a dress to her first party,' had been the mental comment of Miss Drummond's maid,

who had helped to fasten the flowers into their place.

But at that time Helen had been happily oblivious of the deficiencies in her attire. Her faith in her cousin was too implicit to allow any doubt as to the nature of his regard for her. He knew all about her circumstances: the simple manse, the unsophisticated life, the lack of this world's goods, yet the knowledge had had no deterring effect upon him.

'Archibald will be too busy to attend to us to-night,' Mary Campbell had ventured to say by way of warning before they started, her maternal fears awakened. 'He is to be on duty, you know.'

'Yes, he told me,' Helen retorted quietly; but she had smiled to herself as she spoke. How could her mother know of those last fervently uttered words, 'Till to-night then, little cousin'?

And now the evening had come, and so far she had only caught one glimpse of her hero. He had been standing among the brilliant suite gathered around the Lord High Commissioner in the Throne Room when her turn came to be presented, looking to her eyes far the most gallant figure of them all in the glory of his Highland dress. But apparently he had not seen her; his blue eyes, smiling and indifferent, had been gazing over her head. There was a set expression on his face.

'He is on duty,' Helen had told herself, as she joined the little group waiting for her in the farther room.

'Did you see Archie?' were her aunt's first words. 'He was standing next Lady Jean Dalrymple, and very pretty she looked!'

'Yes, I saw him,' said the girl. 'I did not notice who was next him.'

She had hardly recognised her own voice as she spoke. It seemed so strange and far away.

'The child is quite pale with excitement,' laughed Miss Drummond, turning to Mary Campbell; but there was only a faint answering smile on the mother's face. The fears and apprehensions that had been growing steadily within her during these days in Edinburgh had taken definite shape at last, and she was woeful for the consequences she foresaw to her daughter's happiness.

'We must wander about for another hour, I am afraid,' went on Miss Drummond in a tone of scarcely veiled resignation. 'I did not order the carriage till ten-thirty.'

She was finding the evening a very tedious affair herself, though she strove to conceal her boredom. Certainly Effie had the best of it at home.

'Till to-night then, little cousin.' Had he really spoken the words, or had she dreamt them? Helen was beginning to wonder.

Somewhere in the distance a band was playing, and the impetuous bursts of music wafted every now and then to her ears above the babel of tongues seemed to stir up a sort of panic within her which her loyalty strove to combat.

No, she would not lose faith. The evening was not over yet; sooner or later he would escape, if only for a moment, and seek her out. She glanced down, as if for encouragement, to the roses at her breast; but already they were fading. Had Jean Dalrymple such beautiful flowers? she wondered, startled the next moment by the sharp stab of jealousy the thought occasioned her.

Their wanderings had brought them to a long picture gallery, with seats placed at intervals on either side, once perhaps the rendezvous of royal lovers. What secrets could its walls not unfold! But Helen's mind was too centred on her own affairs to be conscious of the historic atmosphere; only her mother had a quaint connotation of the hapless queen, induced perhaps by a realisation of her daughter's plight.

'Let us sit down somewhere,' she said in her quiet voice.

Miss Drummond had drifted away with a passing acquaintance, leaving the three alone.

They ensconced themselves in a windowed recess overlooking the wide pleasance in front of the Palace. Down below, through the darkness, was an ever-shifting procession of lights as the rows of cabs and carriages moved silently this way and that. Higher still were the lamps of the Old Town, rising in slow gradation to the dark terminus of the Castle rock.

Helen, gazing out, could hardly believe that they were the same streets she had passed through with Archie that very afternoon so full of joy and excitement; or, rather, was she the same person?

A stir of commotion at the other end of the gallery at this moment drew her attention away from the window. A brilliant little official group was advancing towards them down the long corridor.

'It is the Lord High Commissioner and Lady Dalrymple,' whispered the minister.

On each side the people rose as they passed, and either bowed or curtsied.

The marchioness was smiling graciously; the Commissioner, soldierly and erect beside her, his breast ablaze with orders. Behind them came a slim brunette, whose vivacious face was turned laughingly to her companion, Archibald Napier. The swish of her silken skirts as she passed seemed to express her utter indifference to the people around her. She had no official obligation in recognising them as had her parents, and was therefore free to enjoy herself in her own way.

Archibald's whole air gave the same impression of irresponsible enjoyment. He was no longer on duty; that was evident in a flash. Yet as he turned for an instant and met the gaze of a pair of luminous eyes gleaming out of a girl's pale face in the window he glanced quickly away again.

'Let us go home,' said Helen Campbell in a queer, lifeless voice to her mother.

'Yes, let us go,' echoed the minister grimly.

A few minutes later they were overtaken by Miss Drummond.

'They are dancing in the big hall,' she said. 'Helen, would you care to watch them for a little? Archie was waltzing gaily with Jean Dalrymple when I left.'

But Helen shook her head. 'I would rather go home,' she said.

*(To be continued.)*

# A MEMORY OF ST ANDREWS.

By Henry H. Brown.

IN an exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy towards the end of the 'seventies there was a picture which greatly interested me, and of which thirty years later I retain a clear recollection. A tall, majestic man, clad as a prince of the Roman Church, was standing in a dimly lighted room. His face and parts of his scarlet vesture were illuminated by flames which were darting beneath the door. The artist, with much skill, had allowed the observer's imagination to fill in the details; but it was obvious that the cardinal was at bay, that only a wooden door intervened between him and some deadly peril, and that the door was being slowly destroyed. His feelings in these appalling circumstances had left their impress on his features. One recognised stern resolve, hatred and scorn towards his enemies, pride, something of the bitterness of death, but no trace of fear. The picture, of course, represented the penultimate stage of the assassination of Cardinal Beaton at St Andrews on 29th May 1546, a crime which is correctly characterised in lines attributed to Sir David Lyndsay:

> As for this cardinal, I grant
> He was a man we might well want,
> God will forgive it soon;
> But of a truth, the sooth to say,
> Altho' the loon be well away,
> The fact was foully done.

As the circumstances of the assassination are recalled, the ease and simplicity with which it was accompliahed add to its horror. No obstacle was placed in the way of the perpetrators; no hand was raised to help the victim. In the early hours of a bright summer morning less than a score of armed men assembled by twos and threes in the precincts of the cathedral. The leaders were well-known Fife gentlemen—Norman Leslie of Rothes; his uncle, John Leslie; William Kirkaldy, younger, of Grange; James Melvin or Melville of Carnbee; and Peter Carmichael of Balmaddie. So soon as the drowsy porter lowered the drawbridge of the neighbouring castle to admit workmen and materials, the conspirators, by a few at a time, made their way into the inner court. The porter was quickly overpowered—some say he was slain and his body thrown into the ditch—and the keys were secured. With the utmost coolness the workmen and domestics were expelled, the portcullis was dropped, and all exits were guarded. It was some time before Cardinal Beaton became aware that his residence was in the hands of his enemies; but when he discovered this he retreated with a single attendant to his chamber and barred the door. John Leslie began to parley with him, and tried to induce him to open to them, making a half-promise that if he did so they might spare his life. The cardinal declined to be tricked, and as the solid oak door was too strong to be forced, fire was brought to consume it.

This is the stage which the artist chose to depict. It was grimly tragic: a determined man within, his implacable foes without, and between them a burning door. It will never be known what were the thoughts and feelings of Cardinal Beaton during this awful pause. His memory might well recall a day, only two months past, when George Wishart was burned before the walls of the castle, and when he had gazed with triumph on the sufferings of the martyr. He might remember that on that day the flames of the faggots lit up his chamber just as the flames of the burning door were now glancing on the polished furniture. He could not have forgotten the words in which the martyr foretold for the prelate an early and miserable death, nor could he doubt that the prophecy was about to be fulfilled; yet his reflections seem only to have dispelled fear, and to have nerved him to meet death with the same firmness as Wishart. Inspired with this resolution, he ordered his attendant to open the door and freely admit his assailants. Like Becket on a similar occasion, he reminded them of his sacred office and of the sacrilege involved in killing a priest; but, like the four Norman knights at Canterbury, Leslie and his companions cared for none of these things. Two rushed at him in violent passion, striking at him with their weapons. Melvin, however, rebuked their haste, pushed them aside, and addressed the cardinal. This address, as preserved by Knox, is probably as authentic as the long speeches in Livy; but it is interesting as showing what was then deemed the proper form of words for use on such an occasion: 'Repent thee of thy former wicked life,' he said, 'but especially of the shedding of the blood of that notable instrument of God, Master George Wishart, which, albeit the flame of fire consumed before men, yet cries it a vengeance upon thee, and we from God are sent to revenge it. For here before my God I protest that neither hatred of thy person, the love of thy riches, nor the fear of any trouble thou

could have done to me in particular, moved nor moves me to strike thee, but only because thou hast been and remainest an obstinate enemy against Christ Jesus and His holy evangel.' With these words he ran his sword two or three times through the cardinal's body and killed him. Such were, according to Knox, 'the godly fact and words of James Melvin.' We are reminded of the inscription on the tombstone which, in the fresh remembrance of the scene on Magus Muir, declared that Hackston of Rathillet died for adhering to the Word of God.

By this time a clamorous mob had gathered before the castle demanding to see Cardinal Beaton. The assassins in derision hung out the mangled body in a sheet from the window, exclaiming, 'There is your god; now that you are satisfied, get home to your houses.' It is not necessary to defile this page with an account of the shameful and disgusting indignities afterwards heaped upon the inanimate clay.

It is often said that the assassination of Cardinal Beaton was designed to avenge the martyrdom of Wishart. This is not quite true. With the possible exception of Melvin, who was a personal friend of the martyr, all the leaders were at enmity with the cardinal, and the crime was in the main an act of private vengeance. It is more than likely that the recollection of this circumstance induced Hackston of Rathillet, more than a century later, to stand aside at the murder of Archbishop Sharp, lest his known quarrel with the victim might 'mar the glory of the action, and cause it to be imputed to private revenge.'

The prime mover in the assassination was Norman Leslie, commonly called the Master of Rothes, who was neither a bad man nor a coward, as his conduct in this affair might suggest. He was, in fact, a brave soldier who distinguished himself in the service of his country, and then, like a later Quentin Durward, offered his sword to Henry II. of France. He was one of the most famous Scots who have gained for themselves a name on foreign battlefields. What led him into this crime was a transaction entered into with Cardinal Beaton regarding certain lands at East Wemyss, in which the latter had undertaken obligations which he was by no means willing to fulfil. Leslie demanded implement; the cardinal refused. A quarrel thus arose; and since in striving with a man of the cardinal's temper, as in fighting with a lion, it is better to strike the first blow, and to make sure that the stroke is fatal, Leslie devised the plot for his assassination, which was so ruthlessly executed.

Of the character of the victim there may be more than one opinion. He was a man of dignified appearance, with aristocratic features marred by an expression of cynicism and insincerity. He had little learning and less morality. He was haughty, intolerant, and ambitious. But, again, he had great talents, was a profound politician, had a thorough knowledge of the leading men of the time, and was not lacking in strong patriotic feeling. If it is true that it was at his suggestion that James V. instituted the Court of Session, there is one act at least for which he merits the thanks of Scotsmen. He possessed unyielding determination and unflinching courage, but his firmness and boldness merely hastened the downfall of the Church he revered. The time was past when the spread of the reformed doctrines could be checked by burnings and tortures. Instead of carrying on a furious persecution he might have made for the Church friends of the mammon of unrighteousness by a judicious distribution of lands amongst the great barons, retaining the tithes for the support of the clergy. This course at least held out a hope of success. The burning of heretics was hopeless.

There may thus be differences of opinion as to the character and policy of the victim; there is none as to the nature of the crime. It was a foul deed, and a useless one. It is an example of the truth repeatedly illustrated in history that the removal by violence of an opponent of a cause never benefits that cause. The argument that the taking away of an obstacle by any means is bound to facilitate progress is a specious one, but it is as false in expediency as it is wrong in ethics. A political or religious assassination always produces revulsion of feeling and reaction. It alienates many who are wavering, and whose leaning towards the opinions of the doers is overcome by abhorrence of their deed. The murder of Archbishop Sharp did great harm to the cause of the Covenanters; the assassination of Cardinal Beaton retarded the Scottish Reformation. The effects are equally disastrous to those implicated in the crime. They may feel no remorse at first, and may neither repent of their act nor regret it, yet it leaves a burden upon them which grows heavier as the years pass by. When the Master of Rothes lay dying on the field of Cambray the piteous cry of Cardinal Beaton may have again echoed in his ears, 'I must have Norman Leslie; *he is my friend!*' and he may have at last realised that the doings of that fatal May morning had blotted the record of his distinguished career and placed upon his forehead the brand of Cain.

## NATURE'S CALMING INFLUENCE.

Tossing on pillows thro' the weary night,
I could not sleep; I could not even lie:
Miserable! 'twould seem relief to die,
And so defeat *Insomnia's* cruel might.
I rose, and went abroad into the light.
Around my temples played the freshening air;
The east was all afire, and everywhere
Nature, like happy maiden, laughed outright.
Flowers exhaled their scents upon my way;
Birds woke the echoes with their songs of love,
Thrilled with the freedom of the fields and grove.
Glory of dewy green and white of May
Gladdening my inner eye, morn's witch'ries wound
Their spells about me, and sweet rest I found.

William Cowan.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

'London, *Yesterday*.

HAVE not the smallest molecule of faith in aerial navigation other than ballooning, or of expectation of good results from any of the trials we hear of. So you will understand that I would not care to be a member of the Aeronautical Society.' One of the greatest scientists of the time, the late Lord Kelvin, wrote a letter embracing these sentences to Colonel Baden Powell in 1896; and such a pronounced disbelief in the scientific possibilities of aviation, as we have come to call it, expressed by a man who was qualified in some considerable way to be an authority upon the future, serves to impress upon us once again the magnitude of the work and the achievement which has been accomplished in this field in recent times, marking a rate of advance that has never been approached in any department before. In these days we proceed from the apparently impossible through a series of rapid changes to the complete realisation in the space of a few months or even weeks. We compress an old-time decade into a modern fortnight. In the summer-time last year the present writer was crossing the English Channel on his way to France the day before Blériot crossed it in the opposite direction on his aeroplane. People even then said that crossing the Channel as a daring and most uncertain feat was one thing, but that what might be called practical flying was quite another. But a few weeks since he who writes saw a man (Rougier) and his machine flying round and round about the bay at Monte Carlo in the most perfect and complete command of all his movements in the air, though he was only doing what probably a score of others could have done at the same time. Yet, with all our knowledge of what had been accomplished, and the advantage of the full descriptions of the flying performances that now appear in the papers daily, it is nevertheless a magnificent, a deeply thrilling sight to see for the first time a human being manœuvring his aeroplane in the air. It makes one feel that there is a change in the world, that the evolution of man has gone a long way forward all at once, and that he has become such a despot in the whole scheme of creation as we had never imagined he would be. And then one falls to uneasy and fruitless speculations as to where it all will end. Even in 1904, when the problems of the air were being tackled in a manner more serious and determined than ever before, Lord Kelvin declared that 'the day is a long way off when we shall see human beings soaring around like birds.' But if he had only lived for a year and a half longer than he did he might have seen it for himself, for in less than that time Blériot crossed from France to England on his aerial machine. There was every excuse for Lord Kelvin; but he was one of the most conservative of scientists, and he was often out of touch with the scientific inspirations of his time. That much may be said without the slightest disrespect to his magnificent achievements, which need no monument; and it may be added that many of the limitations which he imposed on his beliefs and ideas were such as would gain for him the sympathy of those who have the best interests of the human kind at heart. It does not frequently happen in these days that the deeply penetrating scientist is at the same time a strongly religious man; but Lord Kelvin was that, and he scouted the idea that science gave any countenance to Atheism, while at the same time he disliked Ritualism as much as Spiritualism, and observed that the 'High' Church was high only in the sense that game was said to be 'high'—meaning that it was decomposing. Such things as these are very well brought out in the biography of Lord Kelvin by Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, which has recently been published in two volumes that are most entertaining. These are the days of biographies of everybody who ever was anybody, and generally speaking they are a form of literature that is as valuable as it is interesting to the average reader who can give a thought to anything else than the abounding


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fiction. Yet such a one as this was not an easy one to make at the same time both interesting and adequate; and Professor Thompson—who of course had exceptional qualifications for the task—is to be congratulated on the fact that he has succeeded where almost all others would have failed, and has produced a work which stands out from the majority of its class as one of very special and enduring value.

* * *

Lord Kelvin's scientific objects, ambitions, studies, were of an exceptionally practical character. Of course, in a sense, all scientific ambitions are practical; but those of this great man were specially so, and for the reason that for the most part he only strained forward to that which intuitively or by reason he felt to be within his reach. That is one chief reason why he has so much solid, valuable achievement to the credit of his name, why so much of the real progress that was made in his time is accounted to him exclusively. However, what may be called the practical side of this biography, the record of what he did and how he did it, may be overlooked in the present instance in favour of the lighter side, the relation of anecdote and of views upon him and by him. It happens most frequently, or so we are led to believe by the stories that are handed down to us, that the real genius shows little sign of his future greatness in his early youth, but bursts upon the world more or less suddenly and to its great surprise in after-years. But William Thomson—which was, of course, his name to begin with—was from the first remarkable. By going to college when he was only ten and a quarter years old he improved upon the famous record of Cardinal Wolsey; and after winning all the prizes that were to be won he went to Cambridge at sixteen, and a few days after his arrival there he was already spoken of as a likely Senior Wrangler. In the end he was only second; but that was admittedly because the man who gained the first place was less of an enthusiastic mathematician and more of a sober mechanical adept in tackling examination-papers, one who was less interested in the questions set him for what the problems implied than for the number of marks they would gain for him by their satisfactory solution. Thomson himself explained rather ruefully that in the problem-paper he spent his time and energies on one problem in which he was interested, having reference to the movement of a gyrating top on an inclined plane, and had not sufficient time left in which to deal with a paper which, to use his own words, he 'could have walked through.' But one of the examiners who set the papers remarked to Blackall, his colleague, 'You and I are just about fit to mend his pens!' In the course of his after-career it was all science with him and hardly anything but science, and it was often remarked that he saw mathematics in all things and all things in mathematics. Of course he had his special tastes in the matter of relaxation, but he did not permit them to occupy any considerable share of his time. He was a great lover of music, with strong preferences in regard to it, being very fond of Beethoven and a hater of Wagner, while he seemed to regard the case of Strauss as so very bad that he looked upon him more in sorrow than in anger. But on the point of the mathematics being always in his mind, of his almost seeming to consider how the natural laws were affecting his getting of the change for a shilling, some curious tales are told. Thus in the Memoirs of Sir George Stokes it is written: 'Lord Kelvin's visits were occasions of enjoyment to him, and great were the discussions between them, which anything served to begin. For instance, the eggs were always boiled in an egg-boiler on the table, and Lord Kelvin would wish to boil them by mathematical rule and economy of fuel, with preliminary measurement by the millimetre scale, and so on.' And we are told by Professor Thompson that in announcing a welcome piece of intelligence at the close of the dinner to Virchow in 1893 Lord Kelvin said, 'Gentlemen, the reduction of cellular tissue to free chemical molecules may now commence—in other words, you may now smoke.' Again, when proposing the health of Admiral Colomb on one occasion, he said, 'Admiral Colomb has done duty all over what the mathematicians would call the "great equipotential," or, in plain language, the *ingens æquor*.' Plain language! Thus it is seen that for all his 'seeing mathematics in everything' there was nothing that was dull in this scientist, but that he had a keen sense of humour; and all those who had the privilege of his friendship or acquaintance found in him the most lovable of companions. He was only a young man when Thackeray first met him. The two were introduced to each other by Dr John Brown, who afterwards wrote to Mrs Thomson's youngest sister, Miss Jessie Crum: 'Thackeray was delighted with your William Thomson; he said he was an angel, and better, and must have wings under his flannel waistcoat. I said he had, for I had seen them!' And after one of the great controversies between him and Huxley, the latter wrote: 'I may be permitted to say of him as the old poet says of Lancelot:

> Gentler knight
> There never broke a lance.'

This book is a record of the work of one of the greatest minds of the last century, and the story of a career of indomitable energy and resolution. It is very well worth the reading.

* * *

A curious and interesting question, and one which may be said to be of some importance concerning the habits of business men in the City of London, has lately been put forward: Do they drink too much during business hours? There are strange tales told of the way in which City men 'carried on' in the olden time, of the more than a bottle or even two bottles of wine that they would consume

at their midday meal, and of their complete incapacity thereafter for attending to the smallest details of their affairs until the following morning. These habits, we may be well sure, have long since passed away; but it happened the other day that when an inquest had to be held on a City man who had come by a sudden death, it was said he belonged to a certain Exchange—which was shown afterwards to be untrue; and it was also declared at the inquest that the drinking of a certain amount of whisky was a necessary part of the carrying out of transactions on this and some other Exchanges. There is a very great difference between such drinking and the ways of those ancestors of the City men who have been referred to; but still even this suggested necessary refreshing was also indignantly denied. The City, on defence for its habits, urged through the lips of many good authorities, and with some warmth, that it was never a soberer City than it is at the present time, and that its tendency is to become soberer and soberer all the time. It is declared, indeed, that in this respect most remarkable progress has been made in a very short period recently, for that, in so far as the Stock Exchange is concerned, while, when large sums were made by many members almost every day during the Kaffir boom of 1895, some thousands of bottles of champagne were consumed by way of celebrating the various *coups* that were effected during the hours of business, the state of affairs during the rubber boom which has been in progress lately, and in the course of which some excellent business has been done, has been that there has been no extra drinking, and so we are solemnly assured, and are glad for the assurance, that 'the habits of City men have changed, and changed for the better.' In the same way the managers of some of the leading restaurants in the City to which these men of business do most resort during the luncheon-hour declare—perhaps not without a tinge of regret—that a constantly increasing number of their customers drink only mineral water with their meals. The unyielding critics of these City people might quite likely put forward the suggestion that for several recent years times have not been at all good on 'Change, and that when at last the rubber boom came to help them the profits that accrued were needed for other purposes than the purchase of wines and liquors. It will need more than one boom to bring about any considerable superfluity in the pockets of many of these people who have had such rich times in the past, for the public do not deal on the Stock Exchange by way of speculation in the way that they used to do. They have been taught many severe lessons, and not all the wiles of the House will attract them back again. However, no matter. Let the City have full credit for its reformation, from which it no doubt feels that it derives a considerable physical and pecuniary benefit. Nevertheless it might be difficult to persuade some of those who walk about the City occasionally, and look into the places that are frequented by leading men of business, that it is by any means so completely lacking in self-indulgence as some of its advocates will hint; and those who do thus pry, and are perhaps inclined too hastily to connect cause with effect, might suggest that there is no ground for complaint of decreasing business and the difficulty of meeting foreign competition while so much time is laid to waste by partners in concerns, during which the management of their affairs is left to deputies.

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There is a certain class of large restaurant which exists almost solely for these leading men of business, and is kept open only for four or five hours during the day. It is generally approached down an alley, or has some other means of entrance which makes no advertisement of itself. It is a class of house that has to be found out and known, where the customers are regular and of long standing, and almost as if they were the members of a club together; and in such places the stranger feels a little uncomfortable, and is oftentimes treated with some specially hopeful sympathy by the waiters, who know the faces and the names of the regular patrons almost as well as they know those of their own family. Here on every day but Saturday and Sunday you may see the business men of means and position lunching in a manner that indicates that everything in the world is very well indeed so far as they are concerned, as in most cases it probably is. They take no small quantity of wine for their lunch, and then the coffee and the liqueurs and cigars are wheeled along, and some time later more liqueurs and cigars, and so the time is spent until three o'clock or after, and then just a short visit is paid to the office to sign letters and see that 'everything is going on all right,' and so home. This is not a matter of hearsay, but the result of personal observation on scores of occasions; nor does it concern but a few groups of people, but thousands of them. It may be said, then, that surely those who are doing well have the right to do as they please; that some allowances must be made for human nature; that life was never meant to be all work and no play; that the City is the City after all, and has its own ways which are not to be compared to those of a provincial town, where there is less money and less habit and tradition, and so on—arguments which are quite unanswerable in a way, especially in the matter of tradition. But whenever it is added that it is just the same in other large capitals, that has to be denied. It is not the same in New York, for instance. The average prosperous man of business in New York cuts far less time to waste than the average man in the City of London. Probably he works more hours; but if he does not do that, he certainly gets through far more work during the period that he is supposed to be attending to his affairs. He has an afternoon session, which in a large proportion of cases the Londoner has not. The man of business

in our great Metropolis who is so situated that he is in command of his own time, and goes home at five or six o'clock, pretending that he is weary with his efforts of the day in the direction of commerce, is, in a large proportion of cases, a very considerable humbug, and again he is so when he takes but a very modest dinner, and desires some credit to be given to him for his abstemiousness. The men who lunch from one o'clock to three in the manner aforesaid do not generally need much more sustenance during the remainder of the day. Of course one is not so foolish as to suggest that there is anything approaching to universality in this sort of thing; but we point to a type, and to a type that is very common indeed. There are as hard workers in the City as elsewhere; but any one who made close observation upon it for a long period would have great difficulty in coming to the conclusion that it overworked itself, or in believing that the methods of this very numerous type are those which built up the commercial greatness of London and the country. Rather would such an observer put it to himself that the men of the type were having their good time, as they may think it, because of the industry of their grandfathers long departed.

* * *

The really bad feature of the thing is that it is not a good example, and its bad effects are clear. The young man of the City who is in a subordinate position is more inclined to laziness than he has ever been. Watch him in many places all through the working day, and it is impossible to imagine that one in a hundred of him is even a most dimly possible Lord Mayor. He often enough looks forward to his day chiefly for the enjoyment that it will give him in the companionship of those like himself in underground meeting-places, where they drink tea and coffee, smoke cigarettes, and play dominoes. There is this domino-playing to the very last minute of the luncheon interval, and in the middle of the afternoon there is a concerted rush again into these subterranean, smoke-filled chambers for some further participation in the game. No casual visitor to London City can fail to be impressed with this feature of the life that is lived there; and in this case the type is a far larger proportion of the whole than in the other case, and it is fast on the increase. And those who will make excuses for everything will say that after all there is not much harm in tea and dominoes, and young men may have very much worse habits. Very well. But there are more idle apprentices in the City of London now than ever there were, and, be it said with confidence, there is more dominoes played between 3.45 and 4.30 in this place than anywhere else in two days or even perhaps a week. As a whole, the City is no doubt an intensely busy place. Men work there at feverish heat; great projects are carried through in a rush; there is a fierce strain of competition and fight; and the outsider gets the impression of all this from the hurrying crowds, from the noise and bustle of traffic, from the appearance of all men being in great haste and having an intense desire to do the best for themselves. But appearances are to some extent deceptive, and the City is not nearly so busy as it looks—not anywhere nearly so busy. Man for man, the Londoner of the one square mile does not work at all so hard as he of Glasgow or Manchester or Liverpool. But, of course, it is a very great and wonderful City, and its people are wonderful too.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII.—HOW JACK BECAME KNIGHT-ERRANT.

AND so it came about that next day Jack Sax, deep in his books and figures, was surprised by a sudden summons to Sir Charles's private room. He slipped off his stool with a perfectly easy conscience and small thought of all that lay between him and it before their acquaintance should be renewed.

In the private office he found Sir Charles and his grandfather awaiting him with burdened faces.

'Jack,' said Sir Charles when the door was closed, 'your father gave his life for mine on Dunkirk sands. Is his son prepared to risk his life for a Lauriston again?'

The only Lauriston Jack considered likely to be in any serious trouble was Charlie. He could not imagine what it could be, but he was ready to do anything he could to get him out of it.

'I'm ready, sir. Is it Charlie?'

'No, my boy. It's Mavie.'

'Miss Mavie!' jerked Jack in amazement.

'Mavie and her mother. We fear that if Mavie is not got home we may lose her mother. The anxiety is wearing her out. I want you to get into France and bring Mavie home, by hook or by crook; only—bring her.'

'I'm ready, sir;' and a very fine specimen of straight, clean-made, healthy-inside-and-out young British bulldog he looked, as he stood there with a deep glow in his eyes and a fine colour in his face.

'It is a great charge I entrust you with, my boy,' said Sir Charles gravely, as he laid one hand on Jack's shoulder, which was about on a level with his own now. 'I do not know any other in whom I could place so much confidence. I doubt even if Charlie could carry such a matter through as well as I hope you may succeed in doing. He is too impetuous, and, besides, he is all in pieces at present.'

Jack jerked up his brows in surprise. He had not heard.

'He's had a nasty fall with the hounds, and won't be able to move for weeks. I will only ask of you, Jack, to do your very utmost to bring her home. I fear her mother's life depends on it.' And he looked into the boy's clear eyes.

And Jack looked back into the deeps of trouble in his, and said simply, 'I will do it, sir, if it can be done. When can I start?'

'The sooner the better. Take as little as possible. If you get safely across you must rig out as a Frenchman. You understand you will have to steal her away. Bonaparte is said to be in Austria, so the strings may be somewhat loosed in Paris. You can have all the money you can carry. Better buy a body-belt and wear it next your skin. We will line it with French bank-notes—they will be the lightest; and you will take some French gold for your immediate needs. Go straight home now and get together what you require. Book a seat on the Brighton coach for to-morrow morning as you pass the "Golden Cross." As to your business, say nothing to anybody. I will call at Queen Street this evening and give you my ideas as to getting across and back again. I trust you, my boy, to do your best.'

'I will, sir.' And he turned and went.

Not a boy of many words, you perceive; quicker of thought than when he suffered reproof at Mavie's hands for lack of imagination in the matter of Red Indians on Brent-side, but just as matter-of-fact and common-sensed as then, and given now to fairly speedy conclusions and prompt action thereupon. But, above all, a lad whose frank face and honest eyes inclined you to most perfect confidence, not only in his good faith, but in his ability also. Many of his contemporaries in the bank could beat him at figures in point of speed, but those above him came in time to appreciate this outstanding fact, that whereas the others made mistakes now and again, what Jack Sax did he did, and there was never any need to check it. In two words, he was straight and he was thorough.

And so he was speeding along to the Golden Cross Hotel as the first stage towards the rescue of Mavie Lauriston. And if his head was in somewhat of a whirl and his heart somewhere up in the clouds—well, where would yours have been in like case, my friend, supposing you were nineteen, and had not seen your dream-lady for two years, and she in dire distress, and you ordered off to the rescue?

'From Brighton,' said Sir Charles when they got to discussion of detailed plans that night, 'you will make your way to Newhaven, and inquire at the "King George" for a smuggler named Paul Lebon. If he is there he will take you across to Honfleur. If he is expected shortly, you will have to decide yourself whether you will wait or try elsewhere. But above all things, my boy, keep clear of the press-gangs. They have no mercy. If you fall into their clutches you will never get Mavie home. You have got a belt? Here are twenty French notes of five hundred francs each, and here are one hundred louis. Stow all these in the belt, and take these twenty guineas in your purse for use on this side. And God grant us a successful issue!'

'I will do my very best, sir.'

'I know you will, Jack, for all our sakes. I trust you completely.'

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### HOW JACK FELL INTO GOOD HANDS.

THERE was no difficulty in finding the 'King George' at Newhaven. But when Jack whispered into the landlord's ear an inquiry after Paul Lebon, that worthy, from a somewhat knowing man of the world, well informed and quite ready for a chat, became of a sudden as dense and simple as any yokel of the country-side, and suspicious beyond even the capacities of his new character. He had never heard the name, and could not even pronounce it correctly.

'I only want his help,' said Jack.

But the rubicund one smelt Excise, and had never heard of any such person in those parts.

So Jack took a stroll among the fishermen, and laid out a judicious sum by way of tongue-looser among them at another house, and learned several things of moment—among others, that trade was bad, and that very few French boats were coming that way at present, because the Channel was full of warships and the risks were too great. The only people doing any business at present were the Guernsey men, and they went farther west, Poole and Weymouth way, where the waters were wider and less patrolled. And how could he get to Poole or Weymouth? It was a cross-country journey, beset with difficulties if the coast towns and their dangers were to be avoided. What about running one round the Isle of Wight in a smack? Well, that could be done for a consideration. There was always the risk of running across a king's ship and being hauled aboard and trapped. They took little account of 'protections' when men were wanted. Still, it might be done in the night. How much? Ten guineas—after much discussion—to be paid beforehand and left with the wives in case of accident. And five o'clock that afternoon found him running down-Channel with a brisk wind aboard the smack *Mary*, Tom Bone master.

They kept a good offing and a sharp lookout as long as daylight lasted, saw the lights of Portsmouth —'Wouldn't go in there to fetch a thousand pounds,' said Bone tersely—stole with their hearts in their mouths past a great man-o'-war beating up from Portland way, and crept into Poole harbour about six o'clock the next morning.

'Keep your eyes skinned for the gangs, mate,' was Master Bone's parting word of advice, as Jack

leaped out on to the sand; and they put off, to lie hidden on Brownsea Island till sundown.

Here he found himself in luck. Inquiring cautiously at the first water-side inn he came to as to the prospect of getting across to the islands, he was introduced to a stalwart Guernseyman, Daniel Martin of St Peter Port, in high good humour at the accomplishment of a successful run, and returning to Guernsey that very night.

When Jack spoke understandable French to him he fell upon his neck and was completely at his service. He took him aboard his *chasse-marée* at once, and cleared out a bunk for him, and Jack stretched himself in it with great content, and only woke up, with still greater content and a mighty appetite, when the motion of the boat told him that the next stage of his journey towards Mavie was fairly in progress.

Martin found him food, and he sat eating it alongside the jovial steersman as they ran past bosky Brownsea and cut through what Martin called the *goulet* to the open sea, just as the setting sun set the long stretch of sandy cliffs aflame.

He questioned the jovial one as to means of getting across to France, and Martin in turn did his best to get out of him what he wanted in France, where, *ma foi!* they had less liberty than ever, it was said, since Bonaparte had made himself Emperor.

'It's we in the islands that have the liberty,' he said. 'And I'd like to see the king's ship that would dare come into Peter Port and rake it over for sailors as they do in this poor England of yours. Why, no man is safe nowadays across there,' with a backward jerk of the shoulder.

But all he could get out of his passenger was that he had business over there, and hoped soon to be coming back this same way; and if M. Martin was coming across he would ask no better than to come with him. A sentiment of which M. Martin was pleased to express his hearty approval.

And where might he be wanting to go to in France?

To Paris. Ah, then he would recommend getting to the coast of Normandy, say by Surtainville. Roscoff in Brittany would not be difficult. They were doing a big free-trade business down there, but it would be out of the way.

And how could he get across to Normandy?

Easy enough. If none of their Peter Port boats were going, some of the Sark men would put him over—George Hamon or some of them. A good man, George Hamon, gone out of the free-trading since he got married, indeed, but always open to a passenger-job either to or from France or England.

It was past midnight when Jack's straining eyes caught a twinkle of light in the eastern darkness.

'Casquets,' said Martin briefly, and then, having weathered that danger-point, he surrendered the helm to another and went below to sleep.

But after his all-day nap Jack felt no desire for sleep. The novelty of his surroundings and the wonder of the quest he was upon kept his brain far too busy. If his quest were not to be an everlasting reproach and the missed opportunity of his life he must ensure it a successful issue.

He tried his best to follow out the possible lines of his journey, but for a boy who had never been outside England in his life that was no easy matter. He saw the uselessness of planning on so insufficient a basis, and gave it up at last, determined to get through somehow on his knowledge of the French language and his plain English common-sense.

What was that bold lump of an island over there? 'Why, Herm,' growled the steersman, who was beginning to feel sleepy. And that behind it? 'Sercq.' And this right ahead? 'Guernsey.' And they slipped down Little Russel and into Peter Port harbour just as the rising sun was setting the window-panes aflame.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE LAND OF A THOUSAND DAYS.

## THE FAYUM DISTRICT OF EGYPT.

By Douglas Sladen.

EW visitors to Egypt except sportsmen go to the Fayum, though the railway takes you direct to its ancient capital, Medinet Fayum, in about three hours from Cairo, and it is one of the most beautiful, most purely native, and most mysterious parts of Egypt.

In the Fayum you meet no Europeans except a stray Greek; there are only Egyptians (very Arab Egyptians) and Syrians. The return of the Hadji here is not robbed of its antique pageantry; the pavilions for their reception, the processions of chanting torch-bearers, belong to the age of the Caliphs; the streets are full of basket-weavers whose toes are as useful as their fingers; a donkey-ride will take you to a Bedâwin encampment.

The Fayum is not reckoned among the oases; but it is a true oasis—resulting from a depression below the Nile level into which the Nile waters infiltrate—and looks it more than any so-called oasis in Egypt; for it is a land flowing with sparkling waters, which is surrounded by the desert on every side. Here you see the rich palm-groves which the teachings of your childhood have associated with the idea of an oasis. Except that its waters are not still, but

blessed with the swift natural current which turns the frequent water-wheels automatically and sweeps away the dreaded malaria, the beginning of the Twenty-third Psalm—'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters'—might have been written of the Fayum, the land of many waters, whose pastures are so green in the midst of the desert.

In Egypt the Fayum is known as 'the Land of Roses;' it is the only place in Egypt blessed with corn and wine and oil. For nowhere else, except in an orchard or two round Alexandria, do you see the olive flourishing by the side of the vine. Here the orange, the peach, the fig, the pomegranate, and the prickly pear rival each other in their luxuriance, and rice, sugar-cane, cotton, and flax pour forth their abundance. Very refreshing to the eye are this riot of greenness and fertility, and the mighty lake of fresh-water beyond, in a land where every acre which is not irrigated from the waters of river or lake is absolute desert.

It is a land, in Arab legend, of ancient traditions too, for its name, 'the Land of a Thousand Days,' comes into the story of the patriarch Joseph. And all the ancient historians from Herodotus onwards wrote of its marvels and its monuments. They were probably very extraordinary, and the Fayum is sown with their remains, but too mutilated to give any idea of the grandeur of the Colossi which rose from the lake at Biahmu by King Amenemhat's great barrage, or the splendours of the Labyrinth, that thousand-chambered palace of snow-white limestone fine as marble, full of sculptured figures, of which Herodotus wrote: 'If any one should add together the buildings and the public works of the Greeks they would be found to have cost less labour and expense than this Labyrinth, though the Temple in Ephesus is deserving of mention, and also that in Samos. The Pyramids, likewise, are beyond description, and each of them comparable to many of the great Greek structures, yet the Labyrinth surpasses even the Pyramids.' Herodotus may not have said too much. We know that it covered a space almost as long and twice as wide as the Vatican, and that though its twelve courts contained but fifteen hundred rooms above ground against the thirteen thousand of the Vatican, every nome in Egypt had chambers for its government and temples for its gods in this one Imperial Palace.

The whole extent of the cultivable part of the Fayum was never more than forty miles each way, and is now not much over twenty; but it was the favourite residence, small blame to them, of the great kings of the twelfth dynasty, the Usertsens and Amenemhats, one of whom, Amenemhat III. (3200 B.C.), may prove, if tradition is borne out by the discovery of fresh inscriptions, the most interesting monarch of remote antiquity. It was he who had the first Nilometer marked on the rocks of the cataract above Wady Halfa; it was he who drained part of the Fayum, and turned the rest into the first Nile reservoir by the twenty-seven-mile-long barrage with which he banked in Lake Moeris, and of which traces still remain. That we know. It was he who built the Labyrinth, he who built the Hawara Pyramid to be his tomb. And if the Arab tradition which associates the patriarch Joseph with the cutting of the Bahr Yusuf and the draining of the Fayum relates a fact, since the King Raiyan of the legend is undoubtedly Amenemhat III., we have a flood of new light thrown upon Joseph and his Pharaoh. But even if the Fayum had had no traditions, no antiquities, no scenic glories, no opportunities for sport, it merits a visit; for, with the exception of a portion of the Delta, it is the richest and most highly cultivated part of Egypt.

In one respect only was I disappointed. There are hardly any up-to-date photographs or post-cards to be bought in Cairo; and from Major Hanbury Brown's volume I had imagined its capital to be a medieval Arab city, as picturesque in its decay as Rosetta or Damietta, as full of old mosques and tumble-down palaces. But instead of this I found a thriving modern town, with an old bit here and there, it is true, but depending for its picturesqueness on the Bahr Yusuf and the oriental aspect of its noble mansions, which look like pashas' villas, but mostly belong to rich Coptic or Arab landowners, who live in them and superintend the cultivation of their land. Some of them live there altogether; others, as their wealth increases, have houses in Cairo also, and use their Medinet Fayum mansions when they want to visit their property, and as country-houses for passing the summer months.

Medinet is saved from ugliness and vulgarity solely because there are no Europeans living in it. Its palaces are purely Arab, and as they are spreading and lofty, and have overhanging meshrebiya-latticed windows and gay Arab decorations, the effect is oriental and pleasing. But the old mill which once spanned the Bahr Yusuf in the main street has been improved away, as have the picturesque and tumble-down adjuncts of the mosques, and the bazaar is of the uninteresting sort you find in a prosperous native town which does not expect visits from foreigners.

Everything in Medinet depends upon the famous Bahr Yusuf. It is the Bahr which gives this ancient capital its beauty. It is a river-like canal, which flows through the centre of the city in Venetian style, spanned by many bridges, and with palaces overhanging it. To this day it is not finally settled whether it is river or canal. The latest scientists contend that it is a naturally formed branch of the Nile; that at some date before the dawn of history the Nile in flood burst through the bank separating it from a chain of depressions, and struck out a fresh channel for itself, by which its waters found their way into the Fayum reservoir, to flow back again at low Nile. The swift current supports this idea; but the tradition of its being an artificially cut canal is of high antiquity, and traditions generally have some kind of foundation.

The Arab tradition quoted by Major Hanbury

Brown states that Joseph, who was still prime minister of Egypt and high in favour with the king when he was more than a hundred years old, incurred the envy of the Court. The courtiers insinuated that age had robbed him of his judgment and sagacity. The king told them to set him a task which should be a test. At that time the Fayum was called El-Hun, or 'the Marsh.' It was a mere waste basin for the Nile floods. The courtiers suggested that Joseph should drain it, and give the king a new province. The king sent for Joseph and said he wished to give his daughter a separate establishment, but that he had no territory available except the submerged land of El-Hun. Joseph inquired, 'When would you wish it done? For accomplished it shall be, by the aid of Allah the All-Powerful.'

'Then Allah inspired Joseph with a plan. He directed him to make three canals: one from Upper Egypt, a canal on the east, and a canal on the west. Joseph collected workmen and dug the canal of Menhi from Ashmunin to El-Lahun. Then he excavated the canal of El-Fayum, and the eastern canal, with another canal from El-Hun. Then he set an army of labourers at work; they cut down the tamarisks and the bushes which grew there, and carried them away. At the season when the Nile begins to rise the marsh had been converted into good, cultivable land. The Nile rose, the water entered the mouth of the Menhi canal and flowed down the Nile Valley to El-Lahun, thence it turned towards El-Fayum, and entered that canal in such volume that it filled it, and converted the land into a region irrigated by the Nile. King Raiyan thereupon came to see his new province, with the courtiers who had advised him to set Joseph this task. When they saw the result they greatly marvelled at the skill and inventive genius of Joseph, and exclaimed, "We do not know which most to admire—the draining of the marsh and the destruction of the noxious plants or the conversion of its surface into fertile land and well-watered fields." Then the king said to Joseph, "How long did it take you to bring this district into the excellent state in which I find it?" "Seventy days," responded Joseph. Then Pharaoh turned to his courtiers and said, "Apparently one could not have done it in a thousand days." Thus the name was changed from El-Hun, or "the Marsh," to El-Fayum, "the Land of a Thousand Days."'

Certain it is that the Bahr Yusuf has all the effect of a river. The riverscape both up and down the stream is delicious; even the far-famed Mahmudiya at Alexandria does not yield such dream-pictures of palms. The inhabitants of the Fayum, so the Khedive himself informed me, are the worst people to be found anywhere in Egypt, except in one small patch of the Delta. He accounted for this partly by their having more Bedâwin blood in them than any other settled population in Egypt, partly because they were rich. 'It is a noticeable thing in Egypt,' he said, 'that when people grow rich they begin to intrigue.' I asked the Governor of Damietta why people should intrigue because they were beginning to be better off. He replied that 'an Egyptian likes to intrigue when he has enough brain, but that when he is poor he has not the proper opportunity.'

One can spend a week very profitably in the Fayum, though those who are particular about their creature comforts would not spend two nights at Medinet, for the best hotel and its food are on the primitive side, if the bedrooms are free from vermin. The dual system practised at this hotel is also a little trying. It has a branch establishment out on Lake Kurun; and when the waiter, who is the only person that speaks any civilised language, is out at the lake it is not easy to express your wants to the Greek proprietor. This was our lot. Fortunately the cook could speak Italian, so he used to wait on us and answer our bedroom-bells, while the proprietor took his place in the kitchen. As the food was just possible, and the rooms were clean, we could be quite philosophical in such a focus of interest and beauty.

Out at Lake Kurun everything was very well done, but of that anon.

We spent three or four days at Medinet because there were three things which we wanted to see well: (1) the ruins of Arsinöe, the city of the crocodiles, and of the famous buildings on Lake Moeris, if Lake Moeris ever came near them; (2) the Hawara and Illahun Pyramids, and the Labyrinth, about which classical anthors wrote such marvels; (3) the high cultivation of the Fayum.

Lake Kurun or Karun, the Moeris of the ancients, is still much the largest body of fresh-water in Egypt. Even now it covers seventy thousand acres. Once, if we may believe tradition, it was one hundred and fifty miles round, or if we can believe Herodotus four hundred and fifty. Its surface is one hundred and forty feet below the level of the Nile, and two hundred below the level of the sea, and tradition favours the idea that its waters flowed right up to the walls of Arsinöe—in other words, to the Bahr Yusuf and Medinet Fayum. Engineer officers, using their levels in the unaccommodating way they affect, have found difficulties. They do not believe that the two stone bases at Biahmu were ever surrounded by the lake; they have still less faith in the two Pyramids six hundred feet high (half as high again as the Great Pyramid) which Herodotus says rose, with Colossi on their summits, from the middle of the lake. On their showing the lake in which the sacred crocodiles that gave Arsinöe its name of Crocodilopolis disported themselves, with their hides gilt and bracelets on their paws set with precious stones, could hardly have been the great lake itself; it must have been a smaller lake devoted to the purpose. One could almost weep tears over these poor crocodiles, who were fed like human beings, instead of being allowed to cater for themselves

with festering corpses, which are snipe to the crocodile.*

The expedition to Lake Kurun, the existing portion of the magnificent Moeris created by Amenemhat III., is full of interest from the moment the train deposits you at Ebshawai to take carriage for the hotel on its shores. The whole way along you meet a procession of the half-Bedâwin inhabitants who live on the lake shores, very elegant people, of a very distinct type. Sometimes you meet a woman on an ass, with a babe in front of her, and her husband walking beside them, in the traditional attitude of the Holy Family; much more often you meet the husband riding the ass, with his wife walking meekly beside him, carrying on her head an enormous iron cauldron containing the produce she means to sell in the market. I have even seen half-a-dozen geese in one of these cauldrons. The faces of the women are often very pretty, in spite of the blue tribe-mark tattooed round their mouths and their eyes, and they have beautiful figures. They dress like the Bedâwin, and, like the Bedâwin, are unveiled. Their jewellery is unique and resplendent, especially in the matter of nose-rings and necklaces.

All the Britons who go to Lake Kurun come away pleased; the sportsmen find its tamarisk marshes excellent cover for water-fowl, and its fish running much larger than fish of the same species in the Nile. Under the Pharaohs every year, when the flood-water of the Nile was ebbing out of it, the king's fishermen used to take a talent's worth of fish each day. Plenty of people who do not care for sport are delighted with the Central African aspect of the hotel, as it stands on a patch of lawn surrounded by tall clumps of reeds, from which every minute you expect a hippopotamus to emerge. The bedrooms are reed-thatched Kaffir huts. The dining-room and drawing-room are in a canvas pavilion, lined with gay Arab tapestries, erected on the platform which serves as a place of refuge in time of flood. Weird African birds haunt the reeds. Fishing-boats, very large, very clumsy, delightfully barbaric, which look as if they had been left behind by the Pharaohs, glide up the waterways between the reeds.

But these waterways are deceptive. If you wish for a sail on the open lake among the pelicans, or to cross over to Dimé, the Egyptian Pompeii, the boatmen have to get out of their grand boats and walk breast-deep in the muddy water, pushing them over the shallows in the tamarisk swamps.

No one could call the ruins of Crocodilopolis beautiful or interesting. There is nothing left of them but the mud walls, and, as a large Mohammedan cemetery is perishing on the site, it is often hard to tell whether the walls before you belong to an Arab's grave or an ancient Egyptian's palace. Added to this, the keen agriculturists of the Fayum regard the dual site as a valuable bed of manure, which they cart away as they require it. But since the manure-hunters find many interesting objects of Ptolemaic art, from little gods to clay toys, they are perhaps blessers in disguise.

The drive out to the two Pyramids and the Labyrinth, on the other hand, is one of great interest and beauty, and with it is combined the best opportunity for studying the high cultivation of the Fayum. When you first leave Medinet your way lies between deep groves and orchards and crops which seem to spring up spontaneously, so rich and well watered is the land. Then you cross a plateau with the ruins of an ancient Greek village on it, undistinguished, after the manner of domestic ruins in Egypt. Immediately beyond this is a sight almost unique in Egypt, a broad, green valley with a river running along its bottom, and waving trees.

Hawara itself, when we saw it out of irrigation-time, was pure Egypt, relieved by the smiling village with its broad lagoon, its groves of shady lebbeks, and wonderfully picturesque pigeon-towers. For it consisted of broad fields of sandy soil as bare as the desert, intersected by deep canals, and rising gradually to the base of a Pyramid which, when it had its fair, white limestone casing, was as large as the Great Pyramid is to-day. At the proper season these arid stretches of soil bear one of the richest cotton crops of Egypt. Twelve thousand cantars of cotton, fetching forty-eight thousand pounds, were raised from Mr Haddad's Fayum estates the year before. The land was very highly farmed, a couple of steam-engines were ploughing, and another was working an earth-scoop to change a level. Mr Haddad, who was riding a blood-horse and was dressed in immaculate English riding-kit, though he was a Syrian looked like an Englishman fresh from Oxford. He was as modern in his methods as a Lothian farmer.

We left our carriage and mounted three of the strong Egyptian asses for a ride round this famous field of antiquities. First we determined to ascend the Hawara Pyramid, leaving our asses, when we had ridden across a vast Egyptian cemetery, denuded by the winds until the whole slope was strewn with skulls and bones, and linens which had been wrapped round mummies two thousand years ago.

*There has been a city on the site of Medinet Fayum for four or five thousand years. The Pharaohs called it Shodit, 'the Reclaimed,' from the draining of the great marsh. The crocodile god Sobku, the chief of the aqueous gods, was naturally most in favour. Maspero speaks of 'the unique character of the religious rites which took place there daily. The sacred lake contained a family of tame crocodiles, the image and incarnation of the god, whom the faithful fed with their offerings—cakes, fried fish, and drinks sweetened with honey. Advantage was taken of the moment when one of these creatures, wallowing on the bank, basked contentedly in the sun. Two priests opened his jaws, and a third threw in the cakes, the fried morsels, and finally the liquid. The crocodile bore all this without even winking; he swallowed down his provender, plunged into the lake, and lazily reached the opposite bank, hoping to escape for a few minutes from the oppressive liberality of his devotees. As soon, however, as another of these approached he was again beset at his new post, and stuffed in a similar manner.'

Here were laid bare the famous Roman portraits of the British Museum and our National Gallery. There was a tradition that this Pyramid was built by the Israelites. If it was, they made its bricks before they were deprived of straw. I took a photograph which brings out plainly the straw in the bricks, which are very large, as much as half a yard long.

As we climbed up the Pyramid I was consumed with remorse, because the bricks which had defied the elements for forty centuries crumbled under my shooting-boots at every step. We had a fine view from the summit of the other Pyramid, and the desert which encompasses the Fayum oasis. But my eyes soon wandered back to the mêlée of mud foundations and shattered cornices and columns which lay at our feet in the sharp angle of the deep, swift canal. For this was the famous Labyrinth, where Joseph's Pharaoh was a god on earth.

Of Herodotus's fifteen hundred underground chambers, filled with the mummies of crocodiles and kings, remains may yet come to light; but there is more left of Carthage itself than of the Labyrinth above, which was one of the wonders of the world.

From mud-brick cellars my attention soon wandered to a covey of young sand-grouse a little paler than the colour of the sand (which I could have killed with my stick if I had not been trying to kodak them, as I kodaked the monster porcupine in the berseem an hour before), and a curious transparent lizard, which seemed to be almost white naturally. This I took at first for a cerastes, the little, horned viper of Egypt, the asp which made Cleopatra cease from troubling. There was not much to see; there was absolutely nothing to be made out. More interesting really was the clump of bulrushes growing at the edge of the canal below, for they are supposed to have died out of Egypt since Moses's time.

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# ONE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—AND AFTER.

## CHAPTER III.

MUIRTON again—the home-port. But for one of the voyagers who had left it so full of joy and hope a short week ago it was a changed place. Formerly it had represented to Helen Campbell the whole of life; all she had ever known or felt had been experienced at Muirton. Now it had become a sanctuary wherein she might hide the hurts and disfigurements that a week's contact with the world had inflicted on her.

Her life seemed to be divided into those two strangely unequal parts, eighteen years and one week, yet in the latter division the sweet, gradual development of the whole earlier period had been ruthlessly undone, burnt out as it were, in one intense experience. The last day in Edinburgh was like a separate, detached fragment of her history; it belonged neither to the unrealising part nor to the delusive security of her first acquaintanceship with Archibald Napier.

But the very bitterness of the disillusionment she had suffered had carried her through it. Even the minister and his wife were momentarily deceived by the exuberance of her spirits on the morning following the reception at Holyrood; while her aunts, whose knowledge of psychology was limited, took no pains to conceal their mystification.

Helen's one hope had been that she would be spared another meeting with her cousin, but even this boon had been denied her. He had arrived while they were still at luncheon, moody and taciturn, and altogether unlike the gay, insouciant Archie of old; and after refusing his aunts' offers of hospitality, he had abruptly invited Helen to go out driving with him.

Something in the girl's manner as she declined the invitation brought a sting of colour into his face. There was no mistaking the disillusionment in the gray eyes as they met his. All the hero-worship, the faith of the previous days that had ministered so to his vanity, while at the same time it appealed to his better nature, had vanished, and for the first time in his life perhaps Archibald Napier felt ashamed of himself.

The fact of her refusal, too, increased his desire for her society. If he could but have her alone again, he felt confident of his power to reinstate himself in her regard. There were so many excuses he could offer for his neglect the previous evening, arguments that he knew must appeal to her—he had been busy preparing them all morning.

But a further request on his part only drew forth a more unflattering negative.

'No, thanks. I don't want to risk my life a second time,' she had retorted laughingly.

The surprise occasioned by her words told Archibald that she had respected his wishes in the matter of keeping silence as to their adventure on Arthur's Seat. Her disclosure of it now was but another proof that his desires were no longer of consequence in her eyes, and added a further sting to his humiliation.

A little later he had abruptly risen to depart.

There was no suggestion of a continuance of their intimacy in Helen's eyes as she held out her hand, but a sort of finality that he was bound to respect.

'Good-bye,' he said, and turned away.

And that was the end of her romance.

Now there was no need for any further acting or dissembling. By a sort of tacit intuition she knew that her parents realised her plight and sympathised with all the silent strength of their affection for her. It was herself she had to face in those gray

days after her return: the rehabilitating of her shattered forces, the building up of something new out of the ruins, something new and different, so different from the Helen Campbell of old.

But instead of becoming easier as time went on, the task she had set herself increased in difficulty. The hurt to her pride gradually faded, being only a temporal affair; but her love remained. The disillusionment had altered its quality, but left its strength undiminished.

Archibald Napier was no longer the hero she had apotheosised, but he was still the man to whom she had given her love. She had flung his flowers from her in the first access of her bitterness, but she had returned to pick out one rose from the faded spray that she kept now as the sole relic of her romance.

Occasional news of him reached the quiet manse in her aunts' letters. They had conscientiously set themselves to carry out the reconciliation with their misguided niece, effected by their invitation to Edinburgh, and the result was an intermittent correspondence that Mary Campbell would have willingly dispensed with. Much more had been lost than gained by the experience, as far as the happiness of her family was concerned, and she dreaded further trouble for Helen in the announcement that might any day arrive of Archibald's engagement to Jean Dalrymple. The Misses Drummond had judiciously hinted at the possibility before they parted, perhaps from a kindly motive of destroying any latent hopes in the girl's heart, perhaps for more worldly reasons.

But both their ambitions and Mary Campbell's fears were destined to an unlooked-for conclusion. The news of Lady Jean's engagement did appear shortly after this, but the name of the bridegroom was not Archibald Napier. One of his brother-officers had carried off the prize upon which the worldly heart of Miss Effie Drummond had been so eagerly set.

A few days later came an agitated letter from Edinburgh to the manse at Muirton. Archibald had exchanged into the other battalion of his regiment at present engaged in a small punitive expedition on the Indian frontier, and had sailed that very day.

The corollary was unmistakable, but on Helen the news acted like a challenge. What matter his motive? The fact remained that he had volunteered for active service. The heroic side of him was uppermost again, and the little lapse in chivalry, the momentary concession to externals, was forgotten, wiped out as if it had never been.

Her whole mind and thought were concentrated on that spot on the map where among the narrow mountain passes and treacherous rocks her hero was to exploit his valour. The fact that he had left without a word of reconciliation or explanation for her afforded her no pain. She had accepted the reality of her defeat too literally to expect any greater consideration. Yet with womanly perversity she nourished a strong resentment against her rival for having, as she believed, disdained his love and so driven him to this step.

The suffering she had herself been through gave her an insight into what he must be enduring, and the longing to comfort him eclipsed even the sense of her own loss.

The minister and his wife anxiously watched this new phase of her development. Could she go on indefinitely at this high tension? Her beauty had bloomed again miraculously under the impulse of the new emotions, but there was a strange spiritual quality about it that betrayed the unnatural exaltation of her mood. What would be the effect of any disastrous news from the front upon her now?

The list of casualties was slight; but at any moment the name they had been dreading might appear, and that would be a still more terrible awakening for her. One officer and three men wounded in a scrimmage; then the death of a subaltern, victim of sniping among the treacherous rocks. And so on, week by week.

At last the climax arrived, though in a fashion unlooked for by any of them. Archibald Napier was recommended for the V.C.

A letter from Miss Drummond was the medium by which the glorious news reached Muirton. The wife of the brother-officer whose life the hero had saved by a splendidly reckless act of daring had written full of gratitude and thankfulness to tell her. No mention of the little incident or its consequences in Archibald's own letters.

That was the end of Helen's endurance. Her tears came then, and washed away the last memory of all she had suffered and the wrong that had been done her.

Miss Effie died that autumn, passing delicately out of life, as she had always lived, in a luxurious chamber, surrounded by every luxury and refinement that money could buy, and with as little struggle as it had cost her to exist.

Miss Drummond endured her loneliness for a few months, and then wrote to Muirton, summoning Helen to bear her company. So, in a little while, the girl found herself once again an inmate of the great house in Moray Place, though under very altered conditions. Now that Miss Effie's influence was removed there was no one to deter her aunt from following her own bent in the matter of her niece's adornment, and for the first time in her life Helen was equipped with all the necessary paraphernalia of a girl of wealth and position.

Miss Drummond took a frank satisfaction in watching her beauty develop under the process, and of hearing on all sides the admiring comments of her circle. But for Helen herself the exuberant delight she would have experienced six months ago over her own metamorphosis was tempered to a great extent by the sorrow she had passed through. There was the feeling that as far as her happiness was concerned it had all come too late, though she

was true woman enough to appreciate the pleasurable sensations of being well dressed and exciting admiration.

If only she had had the same advantages on her first acquaintanceship with Archibald Napier her romance might not have been so ruthlessly cut short. Already her short contact with the world had revealed to her the tragic episode at Holyrood in its true proportions. The shock to the fastidious, conventional side of her cousin's nature at the contrast she must have presented that evening to the other women of his set, his masculine incapacity to assign the true cause of the difference, his chagrin at her failure to come up to his standard—it was all so simple, so excusable, seen in the light of a wider experience; she could almost laugh at the little episode now that had cost her such infinite bitterness a few months previously.

No reference to the incident had been made by her aunt since her coming to Edinburgh, and Helen herself avoided any allusion to the subject. Their talk of Archibald was always of an impersonal nature. He was the object round which both their interests centred, but it was almost exclusively in his public capacity that they discussed him. Helen's sympathy for Miss Drummond's anxiety as to his welfare did a great deal to help and sustain the elder woman during this time, but of her own feelings she said no word. It was enough for her to be at the headquarters of intelligence about him, to see his handwriting on her aunt's letters, and listen to the scraps of news they contained read aloud for her edification.

The little campaign was nearly over, any day they might hear of the withdrawal of the troops, and so far he was safe. He had achieved distinction besides. The story of the escapade that had earned for him the Victoria Cross had been made public in the newspapers, and congratulations had poured in on Miss Drummond. But on one subject she still preserved an unbroken silence: the motive that had driven him to volunteer for the front. Perhaps her disappointment in the matter of his marriage was too keenly felt to allow of any allusion to it; perhaps her resentment against Jean Dalrymple made any reference to the subject difficult.

These, at all events, were the reasons Helen assigned for her aunt's reserve. But events were to prove how mistaken her beliefs were.

The revelation of the truth came unexpectedly one evening. They were going out to a quiet dinner, the first definite invitation Miss Drummond had accepted since her sister's death, and she had insisted on Helen's putting off her customary black and appearing in a white satin dress she had herself ordered for her with great care.

As Helen entered the drawing-room, fully attired, her aunt, who was seated by the fire, turned expectantly, uttering a little gasp of amazement as she did so. It was as if the full revelation of the girl's beauty had come to her for the first time.

'Do you like it, Aunt Charlotte?' said Helen, laughing a little with pleasure as she came forward to the fire.

Miss Drummond had risen and was gazing at her with a curious mingling of admiration and regretful sadness in her eyes.

'My dear, there's a story attached to that dress,' she said. 'You should have had it last year for the reception at Holyrood; but Effie, for certain reasons of her own, would not let me order it for you.'

A shadow had crossed Helen's face at her aunt's words. Her eyes, turned to the fire, seemed to be seeing strange things. Again in imagination she was living through the steps of that evening's disillusionment. Again there seemed to come to her the faint scent of roses dying at her breast. Then all at once the desire to know more recalled her to the present. Such an opportunity for learning the truth might never occur again.

'Why did Aunt Effie not allow you to order the dress?' she demanded, raising her gray eyes suddenly from the fire and fixing them full on her aunt's face.

The Miss Drummond of six months ago would have returned some evasive answer. But the uncompromising directness of the question was infectious, and seemed to call for an equally candid response. Besides, she realised in a sudden flash how dear this slender girl had become to her, next to Archie in her affections, and she could not resist the importunity in the gray eyes.

'It was because she was afraid of your attractions for Archie,' she acknowledged quietly.

Helen's face paled at her words, then she laughed a little bitterly.

'She need have had no fear,' she said. 'Cousin Archie cared only for Lady Jean Dalrymple.'

'Did he?' queried Miss Drummond sharply. 'You're mistaken there. He never even asked her to marry him. I suppose you believed, like other people, that she had refused him?' she added bitterly.

But Helen was staring at her with bewildered eyes. She seemed not to have heard the words.

'Then why did he volunteer for the front?' she said at last in a slow, deliberate voice.

Miss Drummond shrugged her shoulders.

'That's another question,' she said, 'one that I can't answer. It certainly had nothing to do with Jean Dalrymple. It was just a whim; he was always impulsive, and I suppose the do-nothing life at home had tired him. It was a great blow to poor Effie; her heart was set on that marriage. I think it helped to kill her. But there's the carriage; we must go,' stooping to pick up her cloak from the chair.

Helen looked round vaguely for her own wrap, and her thoughts were whirling strangely. Could he have cared—could he have cared after all?

The drawing-room door had opened. But as they turned, instead of the servant they had expected to announce the arrival of the carriage, their

eyes were met by a stalwart, sun-browned figure enveloped in a long, dark coat.

'Archie!' screamed Miss Drummond, staggering against the mantelpiece.

Helen caught her, placing an arm protectingly around her. She too, for an instant, believed that the apparition was a wraith. But the next instant his voice reassured her.

'Don't be frightened. I'm not a ghost,' cried Archibald Napier, coming quickly forward and taking his aunt out of the girl's arms. But his eyes were on Helen's face all the time. 'White satin without diamonds!' he said in a queer, low voice. 'How often I have seen you like that in the camp-fire, and dreamt of you too, Cousin Helen.'

He broke off, turning away. Helen was white as death, but her eyes were luminous.

'I—I can't think of anything but the V.C., Archie,' she said.

'It was won for your forgiveness,' he said huskily.

THE END.

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### THE ELECTRIC 'MARY ANN.'

NUMEROUS efforts have been made to popularise the utilisation of electric power in the house; and although small, serviceable, and reliable motors have been devised for the driving of the knife-cleaner, the mincer, coffee-mill, and what not, the main drawback has been that each machine required its own motor, which became a fixed attachment. It is apparent that under such circumstances the cost of fitting electric motors to the various domestic machines in an average household would be somewhat prohibitive. This disadvantage, however, has been ingeniously and successfully overcome by the production of the electric 'Mary Ann,' which is the invention of a well-known consulting electrical engineer, Mr R. Borlase Matthews, A.M.Inst.C.E. This machine comprises an electric motor which can be attached and detached from any appliance in the house within a few seconds, and, weighing only seventeen pounds complete, while it is no more bulky than a typewriter, can be easily carried from room to room as required. The motor is small, strongly built to withstand rough wear, and so designed as to prevent breakdown. The motor is fitted with a counterweighted projecting arm which carries a large pulley. On the inner side of the shaft of this latter is mounted a small drum, and a belt passes over the large pulley and a small one mounted direct on the motor-shaft. In addition there is a large, light rim-wheel which is attached to the particular machine to be operated. For instance, say a knife-cleaner is to be electrically driven. The wing-nut on its shaft is released, the detachable rim-wheel placed on the shaft, and the nut replaced. The knife-cleaner is clamped firmly in position in such a way that the rim-wheel comes into contact with the drum on the shaft of the outer motor-pulley. When the motor is set in motion the rotary action of the pulley is transmitted to the wheel on the knife-cleaner by friction-drive. If a coffee-mill or mincer is to be used the rim-wheel is similarly set in position. The attachment and detachment take only a few seconds, and by electric power what is generally regarded as an arduous, protracted task is achieved with ease and no physical effort in a few seconds. The motor is fitted with a switch, a short length of flexible wire, and a plug. All that is necessary is to withdraw an electric lamp from its holder and insert the plug, switching on and off as required. The motor will drive any machine in the house that is ordinarily turned by hand, and the list of such appliances runs well into fifty. It can be adapted to the cleaning of grates, boots, and silver-plate. For this work there is provided a short flexible shaft, coupled to the shaft of the motor and fitted with a polishing-bob on the outer end. In cleaning, it is only necessary to pass the bob over the surface to be cleaned, and the high speed at which the bob revolves accomplishes the cleaning operation in a few seconds. Rotary washing-tubs, wringers, sewing-machines, vacuum cleaners, &c. can all be driven in turn by this electric servant, and at the minimum of expense. The cost of electric energy is a farthing per hour actual working-time; and when it is finished with, the motor is packed in a box and stowed away. Householders already using electric light will find this little apparatus of great value, and it will be found to be a successful solution of the problem of accomplishing distasteful work in a highly satisfactory manner in the minimum of time.

### A SIMPLE POWER-DRIVE FOR CHURCH ORGANS.

The manual blowing of a church organ by the oscillating movement of the bellows-handle is a particularly arduous occupation, especially with 'full organ,' when the tell-tale appears to resist any inclination to descend far below the 'empty bellows' reading. Conversion to mechanical blowing is, however, generally a somewhat expensive matter; but recently a new idea has been elaborated which is the acme of simplicity, highly efficient, and inexpensive both to install and maintain. This is the 'rotasphere.' It comprises a baseboard upon which is mounted a small electric motor fitted with a hemisphere of polished aluminium, which transmits the power of the motor through friction-drive to the pneumatic tire of an ordinary bicycle-wheel. The latter is fitted with the usual chain and

sprocket gear, the final transmission of power to the bellows being secured through a crank connected to the bellows-handle. The motor, of one horse-power, is mounted on a swivelling carriage, turning at right angles to the axis of the bicycle-wheel; and as the hemisphere turns with it, though always keeping in contact with the tire, the varying speed ratio is obtained. There is a chain connecting the swivelling carriage with the bellows, and the position of the hemisphere to the tire is varied according to the demands on the wind. When 'full organ' is being used and the heaviest call on the wind is made, the hemisphere is swung round so that the bicycle-wheel is driven at the maximum speed, and as the wind demand slackens the swivelling carriage returns to its normal position under the action of a powerful spring. The blowing is thus entirely automatic. The motor runs at a constant speed, and it is only the varying ratio of the hemisphere surface to the tire that brings about changes in the oscillating speed of the bellows-handle according to the demands upon the organ. The system is about one of the simplest and easiest that has yet been devised, for it entails no structural alterations. Should a breakdown through any unforeseen circumstance occur, the coupling-crank can readily be released and the bellows actuated by hand in the usual manner. The cost of running is about one penny per hour. The rotasphere occupies but small space, and as the vital part of its mechanism is built up of ordinary bicycle parts any replacements can be easily effected. Owing to the surface of the hemisphere being always in contact with the inflated tire there is no wear, so that maintenance expenses are reduced to the minimum. A simple, cheap type of mechanical drive for organs has long been desired, and the rotasphere certainly fills the gap. By means of a switch near the keyboard the organist can cut the motor in and out as desired.

### NOVEL COMBINATION SCISSORS.

The combination knife fulfilling a variety of functions has become well established in popular favour, and now the combination scissors have been introduced. They can be carried about in the pocket or used at home in the usual manner. They comprise the usual two legs; but these are so designed and fitted as to enable the tool to be used, in addition to ordinary cutting operations, as a cigar and flower cutter, pliers, a three-inch measure by graduating one side of the closed tool, paper-knife by making the outer edge of one leg comply with this requirement, screw-driver, railway-carriage key by the fashioning of the thick leg-end, wire-cutter, coin-tester by a notch in the side near the rivet, piercer, and nail-file. Such are only a few of the useful purposes to which these scissors can be adapted. In general appearance they resemble the conventional instrument, are just as compact, and as light. Practicability and serviceability are assured by the use of the finest steel, and they will be found a most useful acquisition to the pocket, while the housewife will find many of the combinations of distinct value in the course of her domestic tasks.

### A LAKE OF SODA.

During the past few months Uganda has come very much to the fore. But its claims to attention have been rather in the interests of sport. Lately, however, attention has been centred in a discovery, or rather a rediscovery, of valuable commercial resources in the form of vast deposits of soda stretching over an area of some fifty square miles. This find was first made some eight years ago by Major Burnham, but at that time the absence of transportation facilities prevented the chemical wealth being exploited. The soda is really the bed of a huge depression similar to the great Salt Lake desert of Utah. The area was formerly covered by a sheet of water, and was known as Lake Magadi; but the water has long since disappeared, so that now the lake exists in name only. At the same time, however, numerous springs bubbling forth over the district are continually contributing to the soda encrustation. The chemical has been analysed and found to be of great purity and of very high grade. The railway authorities are now preparing to remove the transportation disability by the surveying of a short spur from the Uganda railway to the depression. That the deposits will pay to exploit there is not the slightest doubt, as there is an enormous demand for the commodity, especially in the form of common or washing soda, while the demands of the soap manufacturing industries run into thousands of tons per annum. One great disadvantage militating against the working of the deposits is the inaccessibility of the region and the absence of water in the district separating it from the main line; but nowadays these drawbacks are not so serious as they were, say, eight years ago. There are over thirty million tons of the chemical in sight, and once the railway taps the region there is no doubt but that the industry will be taken seriously in hand. The demands for this article in various branches of commerce, the insufficient supplies from existing sources of production, and the cheapness with which the raw material could be obtained should certainly result in the creation of a great industry and the establishment of a lucrative enterprise in what has hitherto been regarded more as a natural zoo than anything else.

### DISINFECTANT TELEPHONE MOUTHPIECE.

On all sides the dangers lurking in the telephone mouthpiece have been emphasised, and a call has been made for some means of combating the dissemination of disease by this medium. An enterprising inventor has recently evolved an ingenious idea for avoiding the contraction of the germs of diphtheria, influenza, and consumption from this source of contamination. It comprises a solid metal mouthpiece fitted with a thick lining of solid disinfectant, and conforming to the lines and shape of the ordinary mouthpiece, only a trifle

smaller, so that it can slip into and fit tightly the latter. There are two metal clips which serve to hold it securely in the transmitter. The disinfectant is always clean and dry, the surface constantly changes under evaporation, and it retains its disinfecting properties until the whole of the disinfectant has evaporated, a period of several months. Another advantage is that owing to the shape of the mouthpiece the sound is increased, so that one can speak at a greater distance from the instrument than is at present possible. The attachment is cheap, and the potency of the disinfectant employed successfully prevents the multiplication of the germs which medical men insist continually takes place on the surface of the ebonite transmitter.

#### SAFETY POISON-BOTTLE COVER.

That accidents will happen in the best-regulated families is an old saw that cannot be disputed, and when these accidents assume the form of inadvertently taking virulent poisons from bottles the results are disastrous. To guard against this possibility various coloured and peculiarly shaped bottles have been devised; but when one is preoccupied it is very easy to make a mistake, as the poison-bottle is only closed by a cork, like hundreds of other bottles. As a protection against such a calamity, an inventor has evolved a special type of cover for bottles containing poison. It consists of a large disc of buff-coloured paper with the word 'Poison' printed in large letters in red round the edges and in the centre. A double tape is also provided to tie the covering round the neck of the bottle and over the cork. A space is left in the centre for affixing a gummed label specifying the nature of the contents—whether a lotion, virulent acid, or what not. In opening a bottle containing dangerous contents protected with this device the person would perform a definite and peculiar operation quite dissimilar from the withdrawal of a cork, and this would warn him of the fact that he was not opening an ordinary bottle. It would also guard against the opening of a wrong bottle in the dark, as the existence of the protective covering would instantly betray the fact that a particular bottle with a protective and distinguishing seal was being handled. Certainly the invention is a commendable preventive against the accidental use of the dangerous contents of a particular vessel.

#### A HOUSEHOLD WATER-SOFTENER.

The demand for soft water in every household at one time or another is one that cannot always be easily satisfied, especially in those districts where the supply is notoriously heavily charged with lime-salts. To meet this requirement a simple and inexpensive apparatus has been devised which should appeal to the householder, and which ensures a supply of soft water whenever necessary. It comprises a receptacle of five gallons capacity, fitted with a specially constructed filter. In this receptacle is placed a certain proportion of anti-calcaire powder, the quantity of which varies according to the hardness of the water. The tank is filled and the powder added. The contents are then thoroughly stirred and allowed to stand for at least six hours. The ingredients of the water responsible for producing the hardness are precipitated and are withdrawn in the form of a sediment. The chemical powder which brings about the softening of the water is perfectly innocuous, so that the person who drinks the water need not apprehend any ill effects. Although the powder removes the injurious lime-salts from the hard water, the sulphate of soda content, which is so valuable, and which constitutes the principal ingredient of the famous Carlsbad water, is left. When introduced into the system, water softened by this means gradually dissolves all the chalky deposits therein, and if the partaker indulges in plenty of exercise the amount of urea will be increased, with a coincident diminution of the proportion of uric acid, which is the poison that is responsible for rheumatism, gout, and other similar disorders.

#### EGG DEPÔTS.

Sir Horace Plunkett, Lady Salisbury, Mr Edward Brown, honorary secretary of the National Poultry Organisation Society, and others have been thinking out systems of agricultural organisation which will certainly tend to make farms and small holdings more profitable, and benefit the consumer. We can produce the best bacon, cheese, butter, and eggs in the world, yet we are only too much beholden to the foreigner for our supply. Over two thousand one hundred and eighty-five millions of eggs were imported from abroad in 1906, a large proportion of which might have been produced at home. The National Poultry Organisation Society is doing its utmost to remedy this by encouraging the establishment of egg depôts up and down the country, where farmers, small-holders, and cottagers may place their eggs to be tested, graded, and then sent quickly to market. By this system a higher price will be secured, and the consumer receive fresher eggs. The breed of hens is also being improved from poor layers to those which lay from one hundred to one hundred and fifty eggs a season. The work of certain Dutch merchants was described in 'Egg-Gathering in Russia' in last year's issue, and shows the value of co-operative effort. What *Punch* calls 'eggspresses' or 'missionary egg-trains' are to be run on certain lines. Two or three cars will be provided, fitted with models of appliances and diagrams, and experts will give addresses and demonstrations at various points. This should rouse the interest of farmers. Leaflets and literature and all information may be had from the National Poultry Organisation Society, Regent House, Regent Street, London. The Scottish and Irish Agricultural Organisations are in their own way working in the same direction. What can be done by private effort is seen in the success of Kinnedder poultry-farm, Fife, conducted by Mrs Dalziel. Last

December five thousand eggs were produced by four hundred laying hens. In the drawing-room at Kinnedder, where it has stood for a hundred years, there is a writing-table which belonged to Sir Walter Scott.

### AEROTHERAPY.

Professor Richet of Paris has invented an air-filter, which consists of a small ventilator worked by electricity, and beneath the fans of the ventilator is a reservoir of glycerine. The rotation of the fans scatters the glycerine in very fine drops along the walls of the cylinder containing the ventilator, and the two thousand cubic metres of air which pass through the cylinder are purified, since they constantly come into contact with a little cyclone of liquid particles, which carry with them as they fall the germs, dust, microbes, and spores always in the air. The mechanical sterilisation of the air by this method is a kind of laboratory imitation of the vast purification of the atmosphere caused by a heavy rainfall. Professor Richet thinks that the general use of his apparatus would materially diminish the risks of contagion by the germs of scarlatina, smallpox, and consumption. The 'Influence of Motoring on Health' was commented on here in 1908 (page 335). Dr R. W. Philip has pointed out that the chief factor in the causation of tuberculosis is the exclusion or insufficient supply of fresh air. The air of the United Kingdom he thinks remarkably well suited for the open-air treatment. The experienced cyclist and motorist is aware of the exhilaration which comes after a ride, as well as the risk of catching cold and depression which come from attendance at a gathering where the fresh air is exhausted. Madame Fanny Moody says that motoring improves her voice. The air is driven into the lungs in a way that neither walking nor golfing will do it. Only we have no analysis of the evil influences caused by inhaling miniature dust-storms caused by motor-cars. Dr Fremantle, County Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire, says dust on the roads must have a definite injurious effect on the lungs.

### BETTER FARMING.

Sir Horace Plunkett has set down some of the results of his thirty years of experience of agricultural affairs in a series of five articles in the New York *Outlook* upon 'Better Farming, Better Business, and Better Living.' He pleads for more co-operative action amongst American farmers, and suggests the formation of a Country Life Institute, which would be a bureau of research in rural social economy, gather existing information, examine and co-ordinate it, and lay down the lines of future investigation. Useful subjects to consider are the influence of co-operative methods on rural communities, and social life, rural education, changes in cost of living, and the action taken by different Governments to assist rural development. What Sir Horace managed to do when connected with the Irish Department of Agriculture is an object-lesson in this direction, as are also the facts in a paper by F. C. Howe in the March *Outlook*, 'A Commonwealth Ruled by Farmers.' The writer points out that though Denmark is far from rich, the climate not of the best, and the winter long, yet Danish butter, eggs, and bacon have captured the British and other markets. He points out that Denmark is a country of peasant-proprietors; the Danish peasant owns the land, as in France, Holland and Switzerland, and the co-operative system is well-nigh universal. This, along with intensive cultivation, is given as the secret of the Danish farmer's success; the land is a great dairy-farm and market-garden, the chief products of which are butter, eggs, bacon, poultry, and fine stock. The co-operative dairy system, egg export society, and bacon companies have meant commercial success to the whole country. In a valuable article in the *Field* on 'Agricultural Co-operators,' it is noted that from Russia in the east to France in the west, from Finland in the north to Hungary, Switzerland, and Italy in the south, agricultural Europe is full of co-operative societies. The Irish Agricultural Organisation Society has now a turnover of about two millions sterling a year. In England and Scotland the movement is younger, but is making steady headway.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

## NEWNESS.

A SONG.

White clouds, light clouds, in the skies above;
Blue flowers, new flowers, like the light of love;
Gorse blooms 'mid the glooms, yellow as the sun;
Sunny ways, lengthen'd days all for youth to run!

Leaf-time, brief time, once again is near;
Bird-lays, full of praise, fall upon the ear;
Windows ope; on the slope, southern airs ablow
Banish all winter's thrall and the thought of snow!

Soon will vale and hill blossom free and far;
Sloethorn, reborn, every spike a star,
Throwing out, round about, scents that woo the bard.
Oh how bright the present light! Waiting time how hard!

Roll away, clouds at play, like to sheep that roam!
Little lambs seek their dams in the fields of home;
All the world recreate hails the time of cheer—
Spring-time, wing-time, chiefest of the year!

William J. Gallagher.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

PART I.

I FEAR that, to begin with, I must bore you with a little bit of family history, or very likely family legend, to explain the ring—in part.

Family gossip says that in 1509, when Julius the Second was Pope, the head of a Venetian family named the Cavalli fled hastily from Venice to Rome, for what reason is not known, and he found it to his profit or his pleasure to stay there.

In Rome the family remained until 1663, the year that *Paradise Lost* was finished. A certain Riccardo Cavallo, Pope Alexander VII.'s messenger according to family tradition, was first in Ireland and then in London, often about the Court of the Merry Monarch, and evidently well known there. He married a lady-in-waiting to Henrietta Maria, and immediately afterwards bought a small estate in Cornwall, and took her there. Apparently they never saw anything of Court life again.

This, as I have said, was Riccardo Cavallo; but his son's son was known to the men of Cornwall as Richard Carvel, probably because Carvel was a name already known to them; and the eldest son has always been Richard Carvel since that time. The ring belonged, according to tradition, to that Riccardo Cavallo who buried himself, and his wife and any ambitions he may have had, in Cornwall.

The gold setting is thin with wear, and indeed must have been heavy at the start to have lasted so long. The cameo is rather large for modern taste, and the crest or device on it is a winged horse. That, say the family wiseacres, is reminiscent of Venice. The motto is the one word '*Amore*'—'Love' or 'By Love,' according as you take it for Italian or Latin.

One might romantically wish to trace some association between that word and Riccardo Cavallo's (and his wife's) retreat from London and the Court. Cornwall must have seemed sleepy after Whitehall. But the family wiseacres intervene again, and point out that if you reverse '*Amore*' you get *è Roma* ('from Rome'), qualifying the winged horse of Venice. We will venture no opinion about that, although such fantastic ingenuities were rather characteristic of some Carvels, as you shall see. We can only say that, while some three generations ago the small estate and any money there was in Cornwall took wings, no one knew precisely how, the winged horse did not fly, but remained, a considerable incongruity, to be occasionally unfortunately conspicuous upon the left hand of Richard Carvel, a most ordinary young general medical practitioner.

There was more on the ring than the winged horse and the motto we have mentioned; but young Carvel, who now takes up the tale, did not know it for some time. If you choose to read you shall see what he and others found on it, how they found it, and what it told them.

## THE ECCENTRIC MISS RAIMES.

She was a tall, very handsome woman, aged about fifty-five, with a dark, weather-bronzed complexion, in fine contrast to her absolutely white hair. I already knew that Dr Sime, whose practice at Ashford was in my hands while he went through a course of foreign baths, looked upon her as one of his most important patients. He had mentioned her to me before he went away as 'eccentric, but enormously wealthy;' and so, when I got my first message from her, I knew that I should be expected to appear promptly.

I was prepared to find a woman with more money than manners, difficult to please with anything short of obsequiousness, but I was quite mistaken. Miss Raimes charmed me from the first by her distinguished manner and her simple directness. I know it was pure kindliness for a lonely stranger which made her insist, at my first visit, upon ordering tea for me after my professional errand was accomplished. That, by the way, was



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to advise her concerning her arm, which was rheumatic. She had broken that and a leg some five years previously when hunting. The broken leg caused her to limp ever so slightly; and she called her arm her barometer, it was so sensitive to weather-changes.

The Grey Moat, as her old place is called, has an uncanny reputation now, and I have heard people say that the very sight of it is suggestive. That may be, but nothing unpleasant suggested itself to me when I first rode up to the wide hall-door, and looked at the trim terrace, the old yew-trees and thick box-hedges, and the long, low, gray building, with its mullioned windows.

I suggested daily massage for the painful arm, and, getting in Miss Raimes's maid Parrett, I demonstrated the movements. To do this I slipped off my ring and laid it on the table beside me. Miss Raimes presently asked if she might look at it more closely, and she examined it while I gave Parrett, the elderly maid, her lesson.

Later, while I enjoyed some very delicious China tea, Miss Raimes referred to the ring again, touched upon the crests and armorial bearings of one or two families, mentioned incidentally that her own family was of Spanish descent, and showed an acquaintance with some curious jewel-lore.

'I have some interesting odds and ends of that sort,' she said, 'interesting at least to those who care for curios. I'll pick out a few and show them to you when you give Parrett another lesson. Come up on Sunday about tea-time, if you happen not to be busy.'

I suggested that if Parrett rubbed the arm according to my directions, and if the weather improved, Miss Raimes might not want to see me.

'Oh, come up! come up!' she said. 'An elderly spinster is better than no company at all on a Sunday afternoon down in Ashford. There's no society here, you know. Besides, I warn you that Dr Sime will feel defrauded when he comes back if he doesn't see at least two visits a week down against me.'

I think I tried to look scandalised; but I evidently didn't impress Miss Raimes, who merely laughed. After all, I suspected that she had measured Sime pretty accurately.

So it became a rule that I should go up to Grey Moat twice a week, as a matter of routine. It was not long before I had one invitation a week to dinner there; and whenever I could I accepted with the greatest possible pleasure. For a stranger like myself there was little to do in Ashford, once the day's work was finished. More than one of the big houses in the place were shut up, two or three families being in town. Naturally, too, those who were still in the country saw no reason, unless they were unwell, for bothering about a vagrant medical who would be gone in a couple of months. So I was often at Grey Moat, felt a greater liking for Miss Raimes every time I left her, and had fair reason to suppose that she liked me. Don't imagine that conceit misled me in the matter. Her liking was quite frank, a trifle patronising if anything, but not enough to offend. After all, she was thoroughly *grande dame*, with more accomplishments, more refinement, and better manners than I could flatter myself I possessed.

As for liking her, why, in that I merely agreed with everybody else. Poor Parrett adored her, and I do not believe that any of her servants ever ventured to criticise, even amongst themselves, any one of her many little eccentricities. Indeed, they were shown in such a matter-of-fact way that often you did not think of them until you had left her—even if then.

After all, on consideration, perhaps I am wrong in supposing that this whimsical lady liked me. She was interested in my ring, as you will see; perhaps without that as a talisman I should have known little of the eccentric Miss Raimes. I must hark back a little.

I went up to Grey Moat on the Sunday afternoon following my first visit, supervised Parrett's not very skilful efforts, had tea in a wonderful white boudoir, and saw some of Miss Raimes's curios.

I have since heard that her collection of jewels is unique, and that she could easily put fifty thousand pounds' worth of her rings on one hand without overloading it. But that afternoon she only showed me curios, mostly valuable no doubt, and many beautiful, but shown to me for their antiquity or historical interest only.

I remember a little hashish-box made out of two emeralds, which she said was of course valuable, but of no particular interest, and not to be compared with a quaint green armlet lying near it, which she had herself taken from the tomb of a Ptolemy. She showed me with one hand a jewelled fifteenth-century crucifix from Rome, and with the other a needle-pointed glass dagger from Florence of the same period. She had faintly scented gloves which she told me a blood-relation had carried to the guillotine; and by the gloves she laid an amber-tipped ebony wand which had belonged to an ancestor burnt for black magic in 1540; and by the rod, again, she laid a little, plain reed-pipe, which she said she had bought from an Indian snake-charmer, after having seen him use it.

'I practised with it on adders at one time,' she said calmly, 'and got on rather well. But servants are so foolish! The maids protested that they were afraid, after finding one among the sofa-cushions. I gave it up.'

I very well remember the first night I dined there.

I had never been able to live luxuriously, and would dine happily enough any night if I had something to eat, clean surroundings, and a book. That, I may say, is still very much to my taste. But Sime's servants were taking their holidays, and I had been catered for and served by the groom's wife, who gave me burnt chops, smoked milk-puddings, and generally left a finger-print on my

plate. So I fairly revelled in Miss Raimes's dinner-table, with its flowers, fine glass, old silver, and beautiful napery, and I enjoyed the Grey Moat claret very frankly.

'Claret has gone out of fashion, I believe,' Miss Raimes said regretfully, 'and whiskies-and-sodas have come in. I'm glad you drink claret, for I'm no judge of whisky.'

'A whisky-and-soda is quite good enough for me,' I remember saying with some amusement; 'but who wouldn't drink claret like this if he could get it?'

I remember this trifle because, for one thing, the claret was wonderful, and, besides, it seemed more in harmony than did whisky-and-soda with the old, panelled dining-room, the wood-fire, the quiet, skilful service, and above all with Miss Raimes herself, very erect at the head of her table, her great piles of elaborately arranged white hair conspicuous above a black dinner-dress, and her diamonds and emeralds flashing back the firelight from her long, fine hands.

I remember that at the end of dinner the liqueur she recommended was extraordinarily fragrant, and came, she told me, direct to her from Damascus, where a certain Jewish family had the secret of it.

While I drank some very excellent coffee (and what a rare thing that is!) and smoked a couple of cigarettes, Miss Raimes used a narghile, explaining that she always smoked for company's sake if she had men-guests.

I barely noticed her pipe, for she began to talk of various places and people of her acquaintance, and twice at least she had to remind me that my coffee was growing cold and my cigarette was burnt out.

That night she asked to see my ring again, and gave it an amount of attention that rather flattered and, at the same time, amused me. She questioned me further about its history, or legend, and I gave her—without vouching for their accuracy—little bits of gossip about it, which are not worth repeating just now, though I may speak of them later. But she shook her head at me, half-smiling, when I said that I had come to the end of my information—or gossip.

'You have no use for it?' she asked.

'None,' I said, 'except, of course, perhaps as a reminder that money takes unto itself wings. As I've practically no money, and no prospect of any worth mentioning, the reminder seems superfluous.'

She continued to consider the ring. She even got a small lens and peered at the thing through that.

'Did you know there were scratches on the inner surface?' she said at last.

'I can't say that I've noticed them.'

'If you have no use for it, perhaps you wouldn't mind selling it?'

'Oh, pardon me, Miss Raimes,' I said, 'I've no use, but some fondness for it. I might sell more useful things more readily.' Whereupon she dropped the matter for the time, and presently offered to show me over the house.

It seemed impossible to move in any part of it without being confronted by evidence of a long purse and a most cultured and artistic owner. Pictures, marbles, bronzes, tapestries, were all around, always in the right place, never crowded. Nor had any of the rooms the appearance of show-places. They seemed all more or less in use, and use was never subordinated to ornament. Every room's purpose was plain, till at the end of a long upper corridor Miss Raimes took a key from her chatelaine, and, unlocking a door, went before me into a room different from the rest.

This room was not so large as some we had looked into. Perhaps it was twenty-four feet by eighteen. It was remarkable for two things, which I could not help noticing immediately. The whole room was panelled to the ceiling with some dark wood of great smoothness and polish, and the floor too was polished and rather slippery, without any rug or carpet. Indeed, in the whole room there was nothing, except a curiously carved, low, four-legged wooden seat. There was not even a fireplace; and the window, rather high in the wall, was closed. That was the first evident peculiarity, but I had hardly observed the bareness of the place before I was conscious that I had quite involuntarily sniffed.

'What's the matter?' Miss Raimes demanded rather sharply.

'Oh, nothing,' I said. 'I—I suppose I was trying to identify your perfume.'

'Perfume' seemed a nice, polite word to use, but as a matter of fact the odour, whatever it might be, was not to my liking.

'Perfume!' Miss Raimes echoed. 'You don't mean to say that you smell anything? What is it?'

I sniffed again more openly, but couldn't tell her. It wasn't exactly drains; it wasn't incense.

'Is it musk?' I asked.

'Never use it,' said Miss Raimes with decision and some evident amusement.

'Perhaps it's just the odour of an unused room,' I suggested, 'and some polish the servants have used. You should have the room aired, Miss Raimes.'

'I must see to it,' she said gravely. 'Does your ring suggest nothing?'

'My ring!' I stared at it and at her. 'No,' I said, sniffing again; 'not that I am aware of. But my nose does.'

Of course I know that such blunt statements seem very rude; but really Miss Raimes dealt in blunt statements herself, and liked them in others—a rather unusual combination, I have noticed.

'Now, that is very interesting,' she said. 'I haven't found that other folk said anything.'

'I expect other folk aren't as rude as I,' I admitted. 'It's not strong, but it's here.'

'And you can't suggest a cause?' said Miss Raimes, herself sniffing delicately.

'I've no idea, but you should try open windows,' I said. 'And unless the air gets fresher you should have some of this panelling moved. There seems a good deal of space behind it;' and I rapped here and there upon the wood.

'Oh, any amount of space,' said Miss Raimes; and, leading the way out, she locked the door behind her.

As we went down the stair I said casually that I wondered such a good room was unoccupied.

'Pardon me,' Miss Raimes said at once, 'I use it constantly. I do a lot of thinking there.' Whereupon it occurred to me that perhaps she used the room for meditation or ritual of some sort, and that, after all, the smell might be that of stale incense or some burnt drug. I thought that I had perhaps pressed the matter too far, and had seemed curious. I said no more.

It was perhaps a fortnight later that the departure of Parrett took place. She was very much attached to Miss Raimes, but also, unless I was quite mistaken, very much in awe of her. I have, for example, seen her turn pale on dropping some unimportant article in Miss Raimes's boudoir, although her mistress did nothing more than shake her head at Parrett, as one might at a child.

I think it was Parrett's great anxiety to please, together with her nervousness, that made her so poor a masseuse. Middle and old age must be as anxious a time for the average domestic servant as for any one—which is saying a good deal. In my occasional fits of consideration for others I thought of Parrett with some sympathy, though I was too young then to guess what the anxieties of improvident or unprovided-for middle age are.

Miss Raimes made no complaint, but showed me a small bruise or two, in Parrett's presence, with a shrug.

Parrett began to quake and to lament, and Miss Raimes told her quite gently that she needed a rest, and must go and lie down for a while. Parrett went without another word, and Miss Raimes shrugged her shoulders again.

'Poor Parrett!' she said; 'a most well-intentioned creature, but old—too old and clumsy. Not of pleasing appearance either.'

'Not very old surely?' I said, for I confess I was sorry for Parrett, though why I didn't exactly know.

'Oh, no older than I, in point of years,' Miss Raimes admitted calmly, putting my actual thought into words, 'but a very great deal older in all that makes life cease to be worth living. I must provide for poor Parrett soon, I 'm afraid.'

And Parrett went sooner than I expected.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE ROMANCE OF COBALT, A MODERN EL DORADO.

SINCE the days of the Klondike gold-rush, no more remarkable mining discovery has been before the public than the rise of silver-mining in Canada. Only three years ago Canada was an unimportant silver-producing country compared with Mexico, and yet the returns for 1908 showed that it now ranks third in the silver-producing countries of the world. The most astounding fact of all is that the producing area occupies the small district, seventy miles long by forty wide, lying about three hundred miles north of Toronto, in the heart of the Canadian Highlands. In 1908 this district produced eighteen million ounces of silver, or more than 9 per cent. of the world's total production.

The discovery of Cobalt, as the district is named, was, like many other discoveries, entirely accidental, and occurred in the spring of 1903. In that year the Government of Ontario was building a railway through northern Ontario for the purpose of opening up the country. The news of the discovery was generally discredited at first, and Cobalt struggled through the summer of 1904 without any 'rush.' With the spring of 1905, however, things took on a different appearance, and prospecting started in earnest. In that year more prospecting was done than had previously been done at any one time in North America. Ground was torn up, cliff-faces were tapped, fissures were gutted, and phenomenal quantities of rich ore were obtained. In many places veins of solid silver were found on the surface, and often these self-same veins were polished to exceeding brilliancy by lumber, &c., which had been drawn over them by pioneers of northern Ontario.

The first discovery is credited to Fred La Rose, a working blacksmith attached to the railway construction-gang. It is said he threw a hammer at a rabbit scampering past, and when picking up his hammer had his attention attracted by a white streak on the rock-surface. Two other men, M'Kinlay and Darragh, also discovered mineral about the same time, and proceeded to stake out claims. La Rose, being an uneducated man and speaking little English, took Mr Martin, the railroad contractor, into his confidence. The latter helped him to stake out his claim, and received in return a half-interest in the property. Shortly afterwards La Rose sold his share to the Timmins Brothers of Ottawa for the paltry sum of twenty-five thousand dollars. The Timminses and Mr Martin worked the property together for some time, but eventually converted it into a company and named it La Rose. After the Nipissing Mine, the La Rose is the richest in Cobalt. It excites one's sympathy to learn that although La Rose does not work any more, he has not found wealth an unmitigated blessing. He can neither

read nor write, and whiles away his time gazing at illustrations in magazines and the like.

It was in the year 1905 that Cobalt promised to become a live mining-camp. Men prospected with redoubled energy, companies came into the field, and their labours were so successful that in that year alone no less than a million and a half dollars' worth of silver was produced. In 1907 the production was four times as great, while 1908 showed a return of over nine million dollars. The average price of silver in the New York market is fifty-two cents an ounce, and the Cobalt mines can produce the silver at a price varying from eight to ten cents an ounce. Compared with the cost of production in Mexico, where it is thirty-five cents an ounce, it is at once evident how Cobalt silver can dominate the market. In addition to this, the mines in Cobalt possess far readier means of disposal than the Mexican mines, having the railway to their door, so to speak. Thus, even if the price of silver went down to thirty-five cents an ounce, Cobalt mines could still pay handsome dividends, while the Mexican mines would of necessity have to close down.

Cobalt has not been without its giant nuggets. Only last May what seemed to be nothing but a boulder on one of the properties attracted the attention of a miner. Out of sheer curiosity he struck it with his pick. What was his surprise on hearing it give a metallic ring! He stripped off the moss and earth, and the sight that met his eyes gave him a shock. There at his feet, smiling in its lustrous beauty, was a glistening mass of apparently pure silver, a fortune in itself. It was over five feet in length, and weighed over a ton. It was a nine days' wonder in the camp, and the people of Cobalt became delirious that night when it was driven into the camp for exhibition.

Exploration shows that northern Ontario promises great wealth, and Cobalt would simply seem to be a key to the most wonderful mineral belt in the world. The silver-field is already about a hundred miles long, and so far the limit has not been reached. During the past year a considerable amount of attention has been directed to the Montreal River (the upper part of the Ottawa River), and silver deposits almost equal to the first discoveries in Cobalt have been found, especially on Lake Gow Ganda and Lake Miller. These lakes are situated about eighty miles north-west of Cobalt, and the first discoveries in Gow Ganda were only made last August. Claims there have been selling for as much as three hundred thousand dollars, and in consequence a stampede has raged, creating a record and almost on a par with the rush to the Yukon. Men, youths, and even boys left their work and rushed there, with no experience of the woods, but stricken with the desire for sudden wealth. Not a few who took part in that frantic scramble will never return. Unprepared for the rigorous climate, entirely ignorant of what they were undertaking, and thinking nothing of how they would survive the freezing nights, these mad specimens of humanity raced onwards like moths to the light. In winter, in that inhospitable wilderness, the mercury often freezes, and the temperature is frequently forty degrees below zero, or seventy degrees of frost. Temporary shelters were erected at intervals on the route, but the accommodation was hopelessly inadequate; and, with the cosmopolitan crew who frequented them, they were overrun with vermin. Provisions and other necessaries of life had to be hurriedly brought, too, during the winter, for after the break-up of the ice on the lakes and rivers transportation is almost impossible. The only method is by canoe, and even then the number of portages renders the journey dishearteningly difficult. Under these circumstances one can imagine the feverish speed with which men and horses sleighed over the snow. The sight of the winter trail was a never-to-be-forgotten one. Endless streams of sleighs and prospectors plodded along through the snow, and at places where the ice had been kept broken for the purpose of watering the horses the temporary halt stopped all the teams behind for a great distance, so close did they follow upon one another.

Nearly every producing mine in Cobalt has some little romance connected with its discovery. There is one which is typical of many. In the early days of the history of the district a young student forsook his books and journeyed from one of the southern universities to seek his fortune in northern Ontario. His father, although he raged at first, decided to allow the boy fifty dollars a month until he 'made good.' The son prospected patiently all that season, but unsuccessfully; and his father came to the conclusion that he was simply idling his time, and stopped his allowance. Nothing daunted, however, the young fellow pluckily worked in a hardware store during the following winter, and succeeded in saving sufficient to enable him to prove his claim when the season reopened. Summer was again over, and autumn tints were colouring the trees, but still he plodded on. The silence on the boy's part made his father anxious, and he paid a visit to his son in the mining-camp. His visit could not have been more opportune. On reaching the claim he saw two prospectors excitedly tapping and examining what was apparently only a piece of rock. He came up unnoticed, and was on the point of addressing his son, when the second man suddenly gave a yell: 'Hurrah! it's the bloom at last!' (bloom—cobalt bloom—a mineralogical test applied to cobalt and silver ores). The boy and his companion leaped up and danced, and in so doing the son recognised his father. The property was eventually sold for one hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

Another case, but of the opposite extreme, was that of a young Englishman who possessed three claims, but eventually confined his energies to one, relinquishing the other two. Not long afterwards two prospectors came along and restaked the derelict claims. The Englishman's property turned out to be worthless, and by some strange irony of

fate the two which he had discarded proved to be extremely valuable, and the lucky finders netted the handsome sum of three hundred thousand dollars.

Mining is not without its tragedies. If some men were offered a fortune for a good claim they would gladly accept it; but one poor prospector wanted more than was offered him. He had a fine showing of native silver in his claim, and in the early summer was offered the sum of one hundred thousand dollars for it. This he declined, naturally imagining it might be worth much more. With a view to developing his showing to better advantage, he put in a shot or two, and instead was overtaken by disaster. The whole thing was blown out, and his claim became worthless as it stood. The silver had only been a patch. What a disillusionment for one who thought he had a fortune in his grasp! We can picture the castles in the air he had built in anticipation of his good fortune, the joy with which he would notify the dear ones at home; and now the whole magnificence was in the dust! Fortune does play scurvy tricks at times!

Canada's experience of the 'rush' to the Yukon caused the Ontario Government to adopt stringent measures when the 'boom' in Cobalt commenced. They determined to make Cobalt a model mining-town so far as the observance of law and order was concerned, and the attempt has been a remarkable success. Drinking-saloons and gambling and other dens of vice were strictly forbidden. The gambling propensity of the miner is a byword. His life is a gamble from start to finish. He sells a claim, realises a fortune, and throws discretion to the winds. The sudden possession of wealth paralyses his mental faculties, and all the animal in him rises to the surface. What a life would be led if Cobalt were an American mining-camp with drinking-saloons! The scum of the earth would be there, murder and robbery would be rife, and in place of the orderly little town we should have a repetition of the wild scenes of early mining-towns elsewhere. Not a murder has taken place since it was founded, and this alone shows that great success may attend a mining-camp without the aid of the usual Wild West 'bad man.'

The town is now assuming quite a modern appearance. It is lighted throughout by electricity, and a water-supply has been installed. The old cabins and dwellings of the prospectors have given place to more substantial and commodious houses, to which the miners can now bring their families with some degree of comfort. All denominations of Churches are well represented, and there is a fine school and a new town-hall. The population to-day is about ten thousand, and the Mayor and aldermen deserve great credit for the high state of respectability to which they have brought the town.

Mining, of course, can never be a permanent industry in any one place. Sooner or later the district becomes worked out; but so long as silver can be mined in Cobalt, so long will the locality continue to flourish. At first geologists and mining experts predicted that Cobalt could only be a surface-camp, and as such only temporary. Their predictions, however, have been completely upset, for the values increase and the veins of silver widen out as they go down. The conclusion that has been come to is that the silver has been forced up from below by volcanic action. The formation of the silver and cobalt deposits is unlike anything occurring elsewhere, and the geological characteristics of the whole district are most peculiar. The veins are in most cases narrow, averaging from a few inches to about a couple of feet, but their richness is the wonder of the world. Some veins are absolutely virgin metal. Nowhere else has silver in the native state been found in such quantities, and it is on account of the richness of the ore that the cost of production is so low. Ore which produces two or three hundred ounces of silver to the ton is thrown on the 'dump,' and this ore is usually the wall-rock of the vein. The rock on either side of a vein is impregnated with silver for two or three feet, so that practically everything taken out of a Cobalt mine is of value. The higher-grade ore is shipped at present, and when it is exhausted the mines will have enough low-grade ore—which, it may be added, would be considered 'Bonanza' ore in Mexico or the States—to keep their mills going for some years. As only about 25 per cent. of the various properties have been prospected, some idea of the magnitude of their resources may be obtained. It is predicted that by the time 'stope' working is commenced in the Cobalt silver-mines Canada will have first place among the silver-producing countries of the world.

As has been already mentioned, great fortunes have been made during the past five years in Cobalt. In individual cases it was merely a question of skilful prospecting or good luck. With the advent, however, of business men and the most approved and skilful methods of mining, fortunes became possible in other ways. We refer to shares in mining companies. In this connection one or two cases may be quoted. A number of gentlemen principally connected with lumbering and farming formed a company in the early days of Cobalt, and capitalised it at twenty-five thousand dollars. A single carload of silver ore would have more than returned every cent invested. They were unfortunate at first, and the stock went down to a few cents in a short time. At last, however, they struck a rich deposit, and the stock went up. It is now two hundred dollars a share, and the company pays 300 per cent. per quarter. It has brought fortunes in dividends to the lucky shareholders, and chagrin to those who sold out at fifteen and twenty cents. Another mine, the Crown Deep, had quite as exciting an experience. At first the stock sold at about twenty cents for a dollar share, but as development-work proceeded it gradually rose till it stood at seventy-five cents a share. When the stock reached that point many holders sold out and netted quite a handsome profit. Soon, however, it began to rise

again, and many who had sold out at seventy-five cents bought in again at a hundred, or par. That stock is now three dollars twelve cents a share, and the company pays 80 per cent. per annum. The manager of a branch of the Bank of Commerce at Cobalt made fifty thousand pounds sterling in a single summer. Every one out there has shares in some mine or other; bank-clerks, journalists, artisans, and even servant-girls speculate. Everybody is money-mad.

Of late we have observed notices in British papers offering investments in Cobalt mines. Our advice is to have nothing to do with them. In many cases the mines are mythical, and exist only on paper or in the imagination of the promoters. The fact that little or no Cobalt stock is offered in any Exchange in this country tells its own tale. It is too eagerly pounced on by those on the spot for any good things to come this length. With that word of warning we close.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

*Author of Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian, &c.*

## CHAPTER XI.

JACK felt a new sense of freedom as he set foot on Peter Port quay, and great elevation of spirits. The place was alive with many activities. Greetings in harsh-sounding *patois* rattled round Martin as he came up the steps, and jovial congratulations when the success of his run was made known.

He was taking Jack along the front to a café, where he promised to join him at breakfast in a few minutes, when he stopped suddenly in front of a tall, gray-headed man in fisherman's garb who was striding along towards the boats.

'The very man for you,' he said to Jack; and to the other, 'How goes it, Philip? Are you open for a passenger-job—all fair and above-board?'

'We might manage it among us. Where is it to? Is this the passenger?' and his quiet gray eyes took in Jack comprehensively.

'That's him. He wants across to France.'

'It's mostly the other way. The Englishmen in France want across into England. What does an Englishman want into France for?'

'Private business of importance, sir,' said Jack modestly. 'I want to go in and come out again. If you can help me I shall be grateful, and I can pay you well.'

He was a tall, upstanding man, gray-haired and gray-bearded, with a grave, kindly face, and he walked with a slight limp. Jack liked the looks of him. Like draws to like.

'Will you take him to the café there, Philip? And I'll be with you in two minutes. We were going to have some breakfast.' And the patriarchal one turned and walked back along the quay by Jack's side.

'Ever been in France before?' he asked quietly.

'No; and I'm doubtful how I'll get on. But I've got to do what I've come for.'

'You speak good French, however.'

And Jack explained how that came about.

'Is it political matters you're on?'

'No; private entirely. A matter of very great moment—of life and death in fact—to some very dear friends.'

His new acquaintance had breakfasted already, but consented to another cup of coffee while Jack stowed away eggs and bacon as if he had not eaten for a week. By the time Martin came in, after a very long two minutes, they were on quite a friendly footing.

'*Bien!*' said Martin. 'You have come to terms, you two? That is good. You couldn't be in better hands than Philip Carré's if you tried for a month.'

'He will come over to Sercq with me,' said old Philip thoughtfully. 'George Hamon will be able to advise him.'

'No one better. George used to know his way into and out of France as well as most. Since he got married he's dropped out of things.'

'Some things,' said the other with a smile. 'He's become an honest man, you see.'

'Ah, come now, Philip! you wouldn't tell me I'm not an honest man?'

'The honestest free-trader I know. All the same, as you know, I don't hold with the free-trading.'

'You'd have been a richer man if you had, Philip.'

'Depends what you mean by rich. I've got all I want.—When you're ready, Monsieur Sax, we will get on;' and five minutes later they were running out of Peter Port for the blue, whale-backed island which lay basking in the sun across the tumbling shimmer of the racing tides.

They drew in at last to a steep cliff, down which ran wooden ladders to the water, and the old man bade Jack climb carefully, and then turned and busied himself with ropes by means of which he anchored his boat beyond reach of the rocks. Then he joined Jack, who was sitting precariously on the top rung of the ladder, not seeing where to go next.

'This way.' And they passed along a ledge of rock, and caught a rope and hauled themselves up, till they stood on a rough path which led through cushions of gorse to the top of the cliff.

'I must call in here,' said his guide, as they came

abreast of a substantial farmhouse. 'Come in. Jeanne Falla would never forgive me if I took a stranger past her door without a word.' And they stepped into a large room in which were a very wide fireplace, out of which came a pleasant smell, and what looked to Jack like a very large, square bin filled with dry bracken, with dark, oaken sides nearly a foot thick and about two feet high.

A little, old lady, in a large, black-silk sun-bonnet, inside which was a pleasant, sharp face, wrinkled and coloured like a winter apple, was seated on the side of this green bed, busily knitting a very small stocking.

'Well, I should say so,' she said as they entered. 'Whom have you got there, Philip, *mon beau?*'

'It is an Englishman who wants into France, Jeanne Falla.' And Jack made his politest bow.

'*Ma fé*, he must be mad, then! It is out of France the Englishmen want nowadays;' and her bright eyes twinkled on him like a robin's.

'He wants both in and out. Where is Phil, and have you seen George Hamon go past?'

'They are down in Jument hauling *vraic*. They 'll be up for sure when their stomachs tell them it 's dinner-time.'

'And Carette?'

'She 's taken the children to see their other granny. You 'll find her there, unless they 've tumbled into the Saute.'

'And how would you get to Paris and back if you wanted to go, Aunt Jeanne?' he asked gravely.

'*Ma fé!*—Paris!—me! Well, I'd ask George Hamon. He 's the only one hereabouts that knows his way about those parts, and George can see as far into a stone wall as most.'

'We 'll ask him.'

And as they went on across the gorsy headland, with the vast, blue plain of the sea on their left, studded with bristling rocks and distant islands, Jack said to himself that this was a very wonderful change from his high stool in London. But it seemed to him that he had fallen into safe hands, and he felt ready to trust himself to them implicitly.

They came to a smaller farmhouse nestling in the landward hollow of the cliff, and walking in through the open door, came upon a charming family picture.

Leaning upon the solid side of a green bed similar to the one in Jeanne Falla's house, but smaller, were two women, looking down into the enclosure and laughing merrily. Inside were two children — a tiny girl lying on her back on the soft, faded bracken, kicking vigorously with a pair of plump, creasy legs, and bubbling with enjoyment, and a sturdy youngster who was trying to scale the wooden wall and make his escape.

As they entered, the two black silk sun-bonnets turned and disclosed two very sweet faces, one with the rounded contours of maidenhood still in it; the other older, but still very comely and full of quiet happiness.

'*Holá, bisaïeul!*' cried the young mother. 'Come and see the little pigs in their pen.'

'*Mé noh! mé noh!*' jerked the small boy, as he wriggled over the top and came down in a heap on the other side and started for the door, and was swooped upon by his mother and dropped, kicking, into the bed again, with a laughing, '*Ah méchant*, would you?'

Like draws to like, and Jack felt instinctively that here was good company, though how very good he did not then know.

'My daughter, Madame Hamon,' said the old man, with a gesture towards the elder of the two. 'My granddaughter, Madame Carré, and these in the pen are my great-grandchildren. The boy is Phil Carré the Third, and the kicking one is Carette, after her mother.—Monsieur is English,' he explained to the others, as Jack produced his best bows, and the small boy stayed his expostulations to gaze at him. 'He wants to go into France. I thought George would know more about it than any one.'

'They are all down vraicing. They will be up in half-an-hour,' said Madame Hamon, and turned to give an admonitory stir to a big black pot over the fire.

'If not before,' laughed Madame Carré, whom some of us have known as Carette le Marchant before she married Phil Carré. 'Hard work makes hungry men, as Aunt Jeanne would say, and here they come, and as ravenous as congers, I 'll warrant.'

There was a sound of heavy feet outside, and three men came in, all clad alike in rough, blue guernseys and great sea-boots, and all very wet and weary.

'Hello, grandfather!' said the youngest of the three; 'you 've got back? And how 's Peter Port?' and he picked up the small boy, who had set up a shout at sight of him, and gave the little one a ride on his wet knee as he sat on the side of the green bed. He had a strong, pleasant, sunburnt face, and steady, blue eyes, and crisp, light hair. The next was an older man, strong and brown and weather-beaten. The last was the most curious man Jack had ever seen. He was short-built and very powerful-looking. His face was covered with hair, out of which looked two gentle brown eyes like a dog's, and his arms seemed as long as a monkey's.

'Peter Port is all right, Phil—that is, as right as usual.—George, this gentleman wants across into France—to Paris—and out again. How should he go?' And they all stared at Jack. 'What do you advise?'

'Dinner first,' said George Hamon. 'We 're about dead-beat, but we 've got all the *vraic* we want for this year.'

'It 's thick, is it?'

'Piles of it. Good stuff, too.'

The two wives had been quickly spreading the table.

'You will eat with us, monsieur?' asked Madame Hamon, and they all sat down to the meal, Baby Carette jumping and goo-gooing in her mother's arms, and little Phil reluctantly on his grand-

mother's knee, since his father had other matters to attend to at the moment. It did not seem surprising to Jack that the old man said a short grace, though he could not understand a word of it, for he was more conscious every moment that he had fallen among uncommon people.

'The best way,' said George Hamon suddenly, as soon as the edge was off his hunger, 'would be to work across Cotentin,' which he indicated by a nod, 'and Calvados to Honfleur, and then up Seine. That's how we used to get our goods in.—You see,' he said, turning to Jack, 'travelling on water is always freer than it is on land. And they're not as strict in Normandy as they are in some parts. The folk there liked the old way of things better than the new.'

'And how do I get across to Cotentin?'

'We can manage that part all right.—By Surtainville, Phil?'

And young Phil Carré nodded thoughtfully, as though the name held memories for him.

'All the same,' said George Hamon, 'you'll have your own risks. Better rig out as a fisherman, and dirty your hands a bit. Your French will pass muster — in Normandy at all events. What are you going for?'

There is a time to speak and a time to keep silence. It seemed to Jack that this was a time to speak if he wanted the fullest help these good people could give him.

'I'll tell you,' he said, 'on condition that it goes no farther;' and he looked round.

'You may trust us, monsieur,' said old Philip.

'I am sure of it. I am sent to bring home a young lady to her mother, who will die, they say, if she cannot have her back. Bonaparte has refused to let her go since the war broke out.'

'There are many others in the same hole,' said Hamon. 'We have had more than one this way. You'll find it no easy job.'

'I'm afraid not, but I've got to get her home.'

'You'll get her,' said young Madame Phil, with glowing face and sparkling eyes. 'Are you in love with her?'

'Oh madame!' stammered Jack, and strove so hard after equanimity that he went red to the roots of his hair. 'She is very much above me. Her father is rich. I am nobody.'

'All the same!' said Madame Phil with a knowing nod. 'And will she come for your telling? Does she know you?'

'Oh yes. We used to play together, and she will trust me.'

'*C'est ça!*' and Madame Phil nodded her pretty head very many times, as if she had been there herself, and knew quite all about it. 'Let us think now,' she said presently, knitting her smooth brows over the problem. 'You find her. You tell her. How do you get her away? You cannot walk off with her under your arm. She is in Paris.' She may be watched. Anyway, a young fisherman and a fine young lady arm-in-arm would easily be followed.—Phil! Uncle George! Can't you think of any way? *C'est la coue qui est la pière à écorchier*, as Aunt Jeanne says' ('It is the tail that is hardest to flay'—that is, the end of a job is more difficult than the beginning).—'All right, *ma mie*,' to her tiny namesake, who was nuzzling into her neck as if she would bite bits out. 'It is not I who am going off with a young fisherman. We've got all we want, haven't we, my beauty? On your head if you wish, my girl, but don't bite it like that,' as the small one clawed her father's blue stocking-cap off the window-sill behind, and began to make a meal off it at once.

'*C'est ça!*' cried Carette, with sudden illumination. Then, clasping the baby between her knees, she twitched off her black sun-bonnet, and for a moment the room seemed the brighter for the glory of her hair; and then, with a deft twist, she had the stocking-cap on, covering it all to the nape of her neck, and transforming her into an unusually handsome sailor-boy.

'*C'est ça! C'est ça!*' she laughed delightedly. 'You will take with you the clothes of a sailor-boy, and there you are! Mademoiselle disappears, and two nice-looking sailor-boys walk away to the coast.' And her merry brown eyes danced excitedly along theirs.

'That head of yours is as good inside as outside, my little one,' said her young husband, full of admiration.

'That's the way to do it,' said George Hamon. 'If you could get on one of the boats going up to Paris, and come back same way, we may hope to see you again. The water for me, if it's only a river. The land is full of pitfalls.'

And truly it seemed to Jack that this was the way, and that it was opening before him in marvellous fashion.

'Will she mind? What kind of a demoiselle is she?' sparkled Carette, full to the brim of her scheme.

'I don't think she'll mind. She always wanted to be a boy when she was a girl. Of course she may have changed. I've not seen her for nearly two years, you know.'

'No, she won't,' said Carette, flashing to her points. 'If she's that kind of a girl she won't. I always wished I was a boy.—Didn't I, Phil?'

'You were as near one as you could be—a regular *garçonnière*, if ever there was one. But I'm glad you were a girl after all.'

'How big is she?' asked Carette, working out her idea.

'She was nearly sixteen when she went away. She'll be near eighteen now.'

'About as big as me?'

'I should think about the same height, madame.'

'Then I'll find you all you'll need, and you'll make them up into a little bundle, and no one will know her once she's dressed up like a sailor-boy.'

'I used to know a man in Honfleur who went up and down to Paris,' said George Hamon. 'He did

a great trade in drugs for the armies, and no one ever interfered with him, because Bonaparte found him and his drugs of value. He may be dead, of course, or he may have got so rich that he 's given it up. I 've not been across there since I got married, and one never knows what may have happened. But I 'll give you a letter to him, if Rachel will write it. Jacques Dartré was his name, and they called him One-Eye, because he 'd only one left.'

'I am very grateful to you all,' said Jack modestly. 'I don't know how I should have got on without you. When can I start?'

'In the morning,' said Uncle George. 'We must finish hauling the *vraic* to-day, or we 'll lose half of it next tide.'

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### CHAPTER XLI.—HOW JACK FELL INTO THE WATER AND ON TO HIS FEET.

HE rest of that day Jack spent in wandering over the fairest little land his eyes had ever lighted on. To be sure, he had not up to that time been much of a traveller, but all his life long, even after he had seen many lands and many people, he always held that little Isle of Sercq in peculiar esteem both for its beauty and for the rare kindliness of its inhabitants.

But then he had fallen well. But a very few years before, the little island had gone through storms of blood, and those whom he had met—Philip Carré and his grandfather, and George Hamon, and Philip's mother, now George Hamon's wife, and Carette, and the dumb man Krok—had passed through the fire and had come out purified, to the enjoyment of peace and larger living. All which things you may read elsewhere, if so inclined.

On the following morning, with the little bundle of clothes knowingly and delightedly made up by Madame Carette herself, and the letter to Jacques the One-Eyed safe in his pocket, he climbed precariously down the ladders again into Havre Gosselin, and boarded the boat with young Phil Carré and George Hamon. And Carette, with Carette the Second in her arms and Philip the Third clinging very tight to her blowing skirts, waved them hearty farewells and all good-luck as they cleared the head and swung away to the south to get round Little Sercq and make for France.

No money-payment could have adequately expressed Jack's gratitude for all their kindness to him. When he had hinted at it with stumbling tongue, Carette, as spokeswoman, shut him up very quickly.

'Give us a sight of ma'm'zelle in those things,' she laughed, 'and it will be better than all the money in the world. Do come back this way if you can.'

And he promised right willingly.

A steady south-west wind sped them across to Surtainville in three hours, which George Hamon employed in filling him with directions and the names of old acquaintances in the free-trading business in Cotentin who might be of service to him.

'You tell them George Hamon of Sercq sent you, and they 'll treat you well, unless they 've changed in the last four years. I 've never been across since I married. The wife doesn't like the free-trading, you see, and I can do without it now.'

They landed him on the bare, sandy coast to the south of Surtainville, in case the zeal of the new Government should have extended to the planting of a watchful gendarme in such an outpost of the empire even as this.

'We 'll put in there presently,' said George Hamon, 'and have a word with the man I 've just been telling you of—remember, Jean Lebas! If you come back this way he 'll be on the lookout, and he 'll help you across to Sercq, gendarmes or no gendarmes.'

'I 'll do my best to come back this way,' said Jack; 'and I 'm mightily indebted to you all.'

'Bring ma'm'zelle for Carette to see,' cried Phil Carré as they shoved off, and Jack waved his hand and trudged away inland over the yellow sandhills.

Keeping strictly to George Hamon's directions, he slept that night at an old mill which had long since given up grinding, but yet seemed—in the person of its owner—extremely prosperous. From which Jack concluded that there were other ways by which millers could make money in Cotentin than by grinding corn. George Hamon's name and a very small payment procured him all he needed and full directions towards the next link in the chain; and so, without any untoward happening, and marvelling much at his good fortune, he came at last to Honfleur, and inquired at once for Jacques of the Single Eye.

And here came his first set-back, for M. Dartré's place in those parts knew him no more. He was said to have made a great fortune in his free-trading in drugs for the armies, and had gone down south and become a wine-grower. And four years, which might bring but little change in Sercq, had made differences so great in Honfleur that George Hamon's name seemed unknown there, or he could not strike just the right person whom it might have influenced.

He was wandering along the water-side wondering how to get round one or other of the barge-owners to the extent of obtaining a passage up the river, when once more the way suddenly opened before him at no more cost than a cold bath.

It would, of course, have been easy to purchase a passage; but in that case he must go as a passenger, and be subject to the inquisition of every official who overhauled the boat. What he wanted was to go as one of the crew, beneath official notice, and attracting no attention.

He was standing looking at an unusually clean and spruce-looking barge, and thinking how well it would suit him if only it was going his way and they would take him. She was evidently a long-distance traveller, for she had a great mast, and a roomy cabin astern, and a vast run of deck on each side of the hold, sweeping up to bold, bluff bows, and she was happily called *La Belle Marie*.

In the cabin a busy wife was keeping one eye on her cooking and one on a small boy who was sitting on the deck outside, thumping a tin basin with an iron spoon and shouting lustily, and beside the boy lay a big black dog.

It was a dog on the quay began it. He came down to the side and looked down at the black dog below, and said, 'Whuff! Nursemaid?' in the most provocative fashion.

The ship-dog had been on the watch all night, and paid no attention.

'Whuff!' said the town-dog once more. 'Come up here, nursemaid, and I 'll make holes in you.'

The ship-dog yawned and stretched himself lazily. The pot in the cabin boiled over. The small boy's tin basin slipped and rolled away to the side, and he put himself on all-fours and followed it anxiously. Arrived at the side, he could just see over, and the sight of the water was entrancing. He raised himself cautiously for wider view. The low bulwark reached up to his middle. The town-dog, encouraged by the ship-dog's visible disinclination for anything in the shape of active exertion at the moment, took a short run along the gang-plank and said, 'Whuff! Austrian! Englishman! Russian!' The ship-dog sprang up, all teeth and scruff at this encroachment on his territory, and unfortunately cannoning against the small gazer into the water, sent him overboard with a splash.

The startled mother just caught glimpse of his plump disappearing legs, and rushed to the side with shrieks.

Jack simply jumped in and had the small boy above water in less time than it takes to tell.

The tide was high, but he was a good swimmer, and in no danger whatever. He swam to the boat and handed up the astonished explorer, still grasping his iron spoon, to his mother, amid the plaudits of the hastily gathered crowd. And the mother, after kissing the rescued one passionately, proceeded to spank him with much energy for giving her such a fright, and possibly with some latent idea of encouraging circulation.

As Jack hung for a moment with one hand on the curve of the mighty rudder, an excited man in a blue cotton blouse came rushing through the spectators, knocking them right and left, and ran across the plank.

Then followed vociferous explanations, in which husband and wife and crowd all joined, and presently a round, black head came peering out over the stern. At sight of Jack below, it broke into a frenzy of gratitude, and, more to the point, dropped a rope and towed him round amidships, where he easily scrambled aboard and was at once enfolded in a rapturous embrace by the owner of the round, black head, while the crowd on the quay cheered excitedly.

'*Mon brave! Mon brave!* What hast thou done for us! And at risk of thy life! Without thee our little one would have drowned without a doubt. And thou art wet as a sponge! Come quick and change; thou shalt have my very best! *Tenez!* She is changing the little Auguste. In one moment, monsieur!—Hasten then, Marie! Monsieur here is dying of cold. Pass me, at all events, that bottle of cognac and a glass—two glasses—*c'est ça!*' as the bottle and glasses came out. 'And hurry up, my good woman, lest monsieur die on the deck here;' and he filled two glasses from the bottle and clinked them, brim and heel, and bowed most amiably to Jack, with tears still on his red cheeks, and tossed off his portion and felt almost himself again. And Jack, unaccustomed as he was to strong waters, felt a flush of warmth in his sodden skin as he followed suit.

'Good stuff, *mon beau*, is it not?' asked his host with a knowing wink. 'You don't get cognac like that in the cabarets round here—no indeed! *Ah v'là!* the little Auguste is renewed, and madame would thank you for saving his life.—Come here, little rascal, and be spanked for thy foolishness!' And he almost smothered the little rascal, and quite forgot to spank him.

And madame expressed herself no less volubly than monsieur had done, but omitted the embrace, since monsieur and the crowd were present.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE INTER-RELATION OF INSECTS WITH PLANTS.

By P. B. Gregson, Member of the American Association of Economic Entomologists.

VERYWHERE around us there is a continual warfare going on among plants as to which shall keep their ground; for plants are fighting against each other all the time for space, soil, light, and food. We can understand how it is that plants have to struggle so among themselves when we remember that each produces, as a rule, a vast number of seeds—some, like the poppy, producing many thousands on a single stem; and the world would in a very few years be full of poppies were it not that other plants are competing with them for space and food, and thus keeping the poppies from taking up more than their fair share of room.

Then besides these other competing plants there

are all the plant-eating animals, which eat plants in every stage; and the birds, which eat the buds and seeds; and the frost, which kills off whole multitudes of plants; and drought, floods, &c.

But plants of all kinds, from the great oaks and elms down to the smallest weed, have hosts of insect enemies also, against which they are perpetually struggling; and there are as many different kinds of insect enemies as there are kinds of plants, and as a general rule each kind of plant has its own particular kind of insect to fight against; for instance, the caterpillar which injures our fruit-trees will not eat the potato, and the wireworm which eats the potato will not touch the gooseberry, nor will the beetle which strips off the potato-haulm in the United States molest the wheat, and so on.

Most insects lay eggs which hatch into grubs or caterpillars, and the chief damage which is done to plants is done by the grubs or caterpillars of beetles and moths. The average moth will lay about three hundred eggs, and this would give in three years (if unchecked) more than a thousand million caterpillars; and there are thousands of other insects which would all multiply just as rapidly unless checked.

Insects attack plants in every possible way, neither leaves, roots, seeds, pith, nor the solid wood being immune. There is a little midge which lays its eggs in the flower of clover, and the eggs hatch into little grubs which eat up the forming seed. Beetles lay eggs like other insects, and the gardener often finds inside green-peas a little grub making his home there. A little beetle has climbed up the pea-bine and laid its eggs in the pod, and the grub hatches out and discovers the green-pea close by ready for his food. Maize or Indian corn has every year to contend against larger beetles, which lay their eggs at the root of the plant for the grubs to eat when they hatch.

Caterpillars also attack the ear of corn. In the United States both corn and wheat have another very injurious insect to fight against, and this insect alone causes a loss to the farmers of about twelve million pounds a year.

Another great enemy which wheat has is the 'army-worm,' the moth of which lays more than a thousand eggs, and causes sudden and overwhelming attacks on the wheat and corn fields in certain districts by myriads of these caterpillars.

In England during 1909 the apple crop suffered extensively from caterpillars; many trees were stripped of leaves and much fruit damaged or destroyed. Occasionally in Michigan whole forests of oak, elm, and maple are stripped just as if winter had come, and large areas of fir and pine are injured by beetles in the timber regions.

In the cotton states the caterpillar known as the boll-worm attacks the cotton, and often causes losses amounting to many millions of dollars; and even cured tobacco does not wholly escape, for there is a beetle which is a great lover of tobacco in all its forms, and its grub relishes it, either in cigarette, cigar, or cut leaf, almost equally well, and of course ruins it for the human user. It is estimated that in the United States one-tenth of the entire crop of every kind is lost by the ravages of insects. This means that in a single year, in that country alone, insects cause a loss to the farmers and manufacturers of seventy-five million pounds.

In the state of Maine a caterpillar called the forest tent-caterpillar (because it makes a web like a tent over the branches of trees) collects sometimes in such vast numbers that a band of them eleven miles in breadth has been known to march through the country, devastating every tree and plant like locusts.

We see, then, how severe the struggle is in which plant-life is perpetually engaged for very existence, and it would seem as if vegetation must be in danger of being exterminated. But Nature has devised ways of preventing the plant-feeding insects from obtaining full control of plant-life by providing enemies of various kinds for them. Chief among these enemies are other insects themselves. There is the grub of a very abundant little fly whose natural food is this very same forest tent-caterpillar and the army-worm. The fly lays its eggs within or attached to the body of the living caterpillar, and presently the little grubs hatch and slowly consume the inside of the caterpillar till it dies. Immense numbers die in this way in a season. Frogs and birds also are very active insect-eaters.

The potter-wasp, an insect rather smaller than the common brown wasp, is extremely partial to the canker-worm, which is a caterpillar that attacks our apple and pear trees. This wasp fills her cells with canker-worms as food for her young. There is also a very minute four-winged fly which actually pierces the egg of the canker-worm moth, and therein lays one of its own eggs, which in due time hatches within the canker-worm egg, the shell of which, though only one-thirtieth of an inch long, serves for its habitation and the contents for its food.

In 1889 the orange and lemon crop of southern California was threatened with extinction owing to the ravages of the fluted scale insect, *Icerya purchasi*. This insect, which was accidentally imported into the country, increased abnormally in the state of California because of the fact that its enemies were not brought in with it. The finest orange and lemon groves became almost worthless, and ruin stared the growers in the face. A little, black-and-red ladybird (*Vedalia cardinalis*) was found to feed upon this insect in its native country of Australia, and it was introduced into California. It recognised the fluted scale insect as its prey, and devoted itself entirely to that species, totally suppressing it in a short time.

Frost also kills off multitudes of insects every

year; and, as if by a kind of retributive justice, there are several kinds of plants which themselves eat insects. All vegetation must have various materials for its support, in addition to air and water. It needs nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, &c., and it generally gets from the soil the nourishment it thus requires; but in very boggy soils there is often a lack of these materials, and so there are plants existing which actually eat insects in order to get nourishment from them. The pretty little English sundew is an insect-eater. It has round leaves thickly covered with small red hairs which are very sticky, and when a fly alights on the leaf, attracted by the smell of the sticky fluid, he is caught and held by the gummy mass, and the hairs on the leaf close up round him, and soon the leaf has sucked the poor victim's body dry to provide its own nourishment.

Another instance is the common English teasel. The leaves of the teasel grow opposite one another, and form between them a sort of cup or basin which will hold water. If you look close into this you will find that it is often full of dead midges, flies, ants, &c. The water is both a trap and a solvent; the insects are first drowned and then decay, and the plant puts forth long threads into the water and derives its needed food. In the Western Hemisphere there are many other insect-eating plants.

We see, then, first a constant threatening by the vegetable world to overrun the earth, and then its danger of extermination by the animal world; while all the time checks and counterchecks are at work to keep each race within due bounds. This is called the Balance of Nature; and when the farmer does anything which alters this balance, as by growing a crop on which particularly destructive insects feed—such as wheat or Indian corn—then we find that that particular kind of insect, by being thus encouraged, outmatches the other insects and things which keep it in check in its natural state, and then it is that artificial remedies (such as poisons or variation of the crop) have to be adopted to aid the farmer to fight it, and most Governments have established bureaus where entomologists study the best remedies to apply. It is not within the scope of this sketch to explain the various devices adopted, such as spraying with arsenites or emulsions or fumigating with gas for leaf-eating insects, injecting bisulphide of carbon into the soil for root-eating insects, &c.; but one instance may be mentioned as showing the attentive watchfulness of these entomologists in the interests of the farmer.

Every year the cotton crop is liable to immense damage in the Southern States from the boll-worm, which bores into cotton-bolls. This species is one of the most difficult of insects to deal with directly, from its habit of feeding concealed in such a way that in most cases the application of arsenites is a practical impossibility. It was found that Indian corn was the favourite food, and they will attack it in preference to everything else. This preference is taken advantage of by cotton-growers, who plant Indian corn in cotton-fields at such a time that the ears will be in an attractive condition precisely when the moths would otherwise lay their eggs in the cotton-bolls. In 1887 (before the adoption of this practice) an estimate was made of the loss caused to cotton-growers by this insect, and it was stated to be sixty million dollars in that one year.

Leaving now this struggle of plants and insects, we may turn with a feeling of relief to a happier phase in their lives. Most plants depend entirely on the help of insects to enable them to produce seeds, and the kind office performed by these insects (though unwittingly) more than compensates plants for the damage done by other insects, for without seeds plant-life would soon disappear. Let us see how insects help. Suppose we take a geranium-blossom for the purpose, and examine it carefully. We find in the very centre of the blossom a tall spike, which is called the pistil. If we touch the top of the pistil gently with our finger we notice it is a little sticky. On examining the blossom still further we find a number of slender, thread-like parts of the flower which are called the stamens. These shed a yellow powder which is called pollen. At the lowest part of the pistil are very little knobs which later on are seeds; but they would not swell and grow into seeds of themselves, but would wither away and come to nothing. They require some of the pollen to reach them, and the only way by which the pollen can reach them is by some of it being applied to the pistil. As soon as even one grain of it touches the top of the pistil it adheres, and instantly begins to grow by sending out a little tube which makes its way down within the stem of the pistil until it comes in contact with the little knobs, and the moment it reaches these they quicken into life and begin to develop into good seeds. The yellow pollen powder is always produced at the top of the stamens.

And now we are in a position to understand how insects help. Plants have several ways of attracting them. Generally they have brightly coloured parts (which are called petals) surrounding the stamens. These are the 'signboards,' and they are painted all kinds of colours—red, yellow, blue, &c., and advertise to the insects that 'here is good honey.' Plants do not unfold their 'signboards' till the stamens are ready to supply the pollen or the pistil is ready to receive it, and then come the insects (principal among which are the bees) to get the honey, and as the honey is always placed right down in the base of the flower, they force their way down as far as they can. In squeezing into the flower they rub against the stamens and get some of the pollen upon their bodies. They then go to another flower to get more honey, and squeezing into it, they touch the pistil and some of the pollen attaches to it, and, as we have seen, quickens

the seeds into life. This is called pollination. Gardeners and florists often pollinate flowers themselves. They procure some of the pollen-dust from the stamens of one flower and rub it on to the top of the pistil of another freshly opened flower with the point of a penknife, and then they cover over the flower with a bag to keep insects from bringing more pollen, and of course they have to cut off all the stamens from the flower.

Plants which blossom in the evening depend on moths for carrying their pollen from blossom to blossom, and Nature has therefore provided that all night-flowering plants are white, because no other colour is seen so well in the dusk—a red or blue blossom would be almost invisible; and almost all night-flowering blossoms are heavily scented, like the jasmine, the white campion, tuberose, gardenia, &c., and this scent helps the moth to find the way to the flower when there is hardly enough light for him to see the white petals.

Flowers which do not advertise by a showy 'signboard' or by their scent have to be pollinated by the wind. The catkins of the hazel, birch, and walnut, and the flowers of grasses, wheat, rye, Indian corn, oats, &c., all have to depend on the wind, and so what these flowers need is a prodigal quantity of pollen, and the pollen must hang out in such a way from the cup of the flower as to be easily dislodged by passing breezes. If we were to shake the staminate catkins of the hazel we should be fairly covered with the pollen-dust, and so the wind blows this dust broadcast, and some of it alights on the pistils of other hazel-blossoms.

But we were talking really about what insects have to do with plants, so let us return to them. The bee is by far the most useful of all insects to plants. It is not the greed for honey that makes them so active; but at home in their nest are a host of young ones, and it is the necessity of getting food for them that keeps the bees so hard at work gathering honey. The pollen of each kind of flower is quite different from the pollen of any other kind of flower, so that if a bee rubbed the pollen of a buttercup on the pistil of a lily it would not make the lily have good seeds; but Nature does not allow such useless waste of pollen, for a bee only visits one kind of flower during the day. Suppose an apple-blossom was the first flower visited by a bee in the morning, it would only visit apple-blossoms during the whole of that day. This instinct has been abundantly tested.

Some flowers can only be pollinated by certain insects, because they are so shaped that other insects cannot reach the honey, which is all the insects really want. They, of course, do not know that they are pollinating, or anything of that kind. Our common English figwort is pollinated almost exclusively by wasps. It has a curious, lurid-looking, reddish-brown blossom, and as wasps eat meat as well as fruit, the figwort, to attract them, looks as meaty as it can, and has an odour consistent with its appearance. There are other plants which can only be pollinated by the humble-bees. The common nasturtium is one such plant, because no other insect has a proboscis or appendage and tongue long enough to reach the bottom of the spur which holds the honey. The heart's-ease and red Dutch clover are other flowers which are so shaped that only insects of the size and weight of the humble-bee with its long proboscis can pollinate them, and if all the humble-bees died out these flowers would probably wholly disappear. Every attempt to grow red clover in Australia and New Zealand failed until the humble-bee was imported. The bees have multiplied there with wonderful rapidity and spread over the whole of the cultivated portion of these countries, and abundance of seed is now produced as a result, where before Australia and New Zealand had to import their red clover seed.

The Smyrna fig, the most esteemed of the edible varieties, can only be produced by the agency of a small insect called the Capri fig-wasp. In 1880 a number of fig-trees were introduced into California direct from Smyrna, in Asia Minor, but for ten years never bore any perfect figs, the crop dropping off before the figs began to mature. Several of these little wasps were then imported from Smyrna, and now the growing of the Smyrna fig in California has become a very successful industry.

It is not possible within the limits of a sketch such as this to give more than hints of what is going on around us in the vegetable and animal worlds; but these will serve to show that Nature is really a vast arena, with plots and counterplots of infinite variety to maintain the balance, and that with the development of plants their enemies also develop, but never beyond the amount of injury the plant can stand.

# THE UNDER-SEA SAILOR.

By Day Allen Willey.

STROLL through the art gallery, and what painting first holds the glance? Is it not often the lifeboat crew pushing their craft through the breakers to the rescue of the men clinging to the rigging of the rock-riven ship? It is an illustration of heroism that gives the artist a chance to play upon one's sympathy and admiration. Yes, the man before the mast, the man on the bridge-deck, is a hero in the mind of the passenger even when he is performing his daily duty, for one knows that in the storm and the shipwreck he must be relied upon to save.

But how about the man whose work is below the waves; who day after day, sometimes night after night, is as much out of the world as if dead; who sleeps, if he can sleep, huddled upon perhaps a blanket, perhaps the bare floor; who must breathe artificial air instead of the ozone of the sea-breeze; and whose only light is that of the electric lamps? Such is another sort of sailor that the coming of the submarine craft has created. In every modern navy in the world does this under-water mariner serve, for the boat that plies beneath the sea is considered as necessary to the war-fleet as the battleship itself. The steel tube the submarine can throw from its hull is filled with such power that the percussion-cap or the electric spark makes it an engine of destruction that may be more menacing, that may be more death-dealing, than the entire armament of the cruiser. Machinery does much to move and guide the submarine and to discharge its weapons; but behind the wheels and levers and push-buttons must be men who know what to do when the time comes, and how to do it.

In the harbours of Britain, perhaps in the stormy English Channel and along America's Atlantic coast, you may see what looks like a pole moving through the water. From it flutters a tiny flag, but that is all that is visible. The lookout says the submarine is 'running awash' just below the surface. The pole rises higher and higher, and finally you see what would remind you of the back of a huge black turtle were it not for a little, round cylinder with dead-light windows in it. Now the craft is afloat, but so little of it is to be seen even at close range that a mile away the cylinder might be taken for a buoy or a bit of driftwood. Into the cabins and the berth-decks of the warship the sun throws its morning rays; the sea-breeze blows day and night into the vessel, purifying and invigorating the air. The crew perform their daily duties and go through their drills with plenty of room to exercise. Down in the hold is an ample store of food, in the galleys it is cooked, and seated at the long tables every man from quartermaster to stoker can eat his meal in comfort. In that blackened steel tube are a half-dozen or dozen men who may not have seen daylight for a week. They have not had even a breath of fresh air. No hammocks, no bunks save possibly cots for the officers. No deck to stroll upon. Here space is precious. Machinery takes first place. Humanity gets what is left.

And the under-water sailor has to know more things than his mate upon the deck. He is trained in the use of many curious devices. Before he is assigned to a vessel he becomes quite an electrician. He understands how to run the air-compressors, how the water-tanks may be filled and so sink the craft, the operation of the electric pumps that, sucking the water from the tanks, cause the boat to rise. Then there are gauges he must read so that when on watch at night he can tell how much oxygen is pouring into the air-purifiers, and if enough electricity is being generated. Every man on board is responsible for the lives of all. If he is ignorant of the purpose of a tiny wire or forgets to open or close a valve, every human being may be suffocated from poisonous gases, or the boat sink to where the sea-pressure will crush her hull like an egg-shell because her gravity is too much for her buoyancy. A tiny hand moving around a dial tells the depth of the draught in water. It is the duty of at least one of the crew continually to watch that hand.

There are no stoves or steam in the submarine—no room for such things. In summer heat is not greatly needed, but with winter you may hear a sailor call his craft an 'ice-box.' Officers and men say they prefer to be submerged in summer rather than winter. They would rather work under the sea stripped to the skin than swaddled in woollens. In winter, with little room to move about, the men of the crews are subjected to a cold-storage temperature. They get all the chills of a sleigh-ride party with the thermometer at zero, but none of the exhilaration. But when the snow appears the life below continues. The boats are usually out in the morning and in the afternoon, and sometimes longer.

In the American fleet, one of the stations most dreaded by the submarine crews is Newport, so far north that the winters are long and bitter. The waters off Newport form one of the principal cruising-grounds, and the little fleet is kept at practice there until sometimes the ice covers the waters. Last winter they were kept until the ice-cakes were in the harbour. Then the submarines were sent south. When the flotilla reached New York ice held the boats in the bay. They put out to sea, and the men in the little craft kept on bucking the tide and dodging ice-cakes; and though forced once to come into port for repairs, finally got clear of the ice-pack and reached their destination, the Virginia Capes; going thence to Annapolis. Not a murmur of com-

plaint came from the men who went in these boats on their four hundred mile journey, though for hours at a stretch the submarines kept their course with decks awash most of the time. At night they rode at anchor, and the stiff and cramped crews were taken aboard the steam tenders accompanying them to 'thaw out' and to get a bite of food and a few hours' sleep.

Without cabin or even bunk, every bit of space available is utilised for operating the boat or the torpedo-guns, and the crew take what room is left. Such is the shape of the submarine, moreover, that there is very little moving about when it is under way. When the conning-tower is closed and the boat is submerged every man in the crew keeps almost in one position. To counteract the cold in winter there is only the heat from the gasolene-engine, and then the air becomes foul and damp. Opening the little cylinder which constitutes the conning-tower for a fresh supply means taking the chance of shipping a wave and the flooding of the whole inner compartment. Anything but this. So the crew do the best they can in the close, stuffy quarters, chilled to the bone and cramped to a degree of numbness.

In cruising these under-sea vessels are usually submerged at a depth of about fifteen feet, or just far enough under water to be concealed and yet be able to use the periscope—that pole-like appliance near the conning-tower. By aid of a mirror in this periscope the commanding officer can see above the surface and guide his boat accordingly; but if it is necessary to sink entirely out of sight he must run by judgment, coming to the surface at intervals to sight, and then quickly sinking again. This operation is called by the Americans 'porpoise diving,' and is most spectacular as seen from the surface. Lying inert upon the surface, a submarine looks fish-like enough; but to see the craft rise and dive on long, slanting runs, its dull, steel sides glistening in the salt spray, one has the impression that it is some sea monster at play.

When the vessel is running with conning-tower and deck exposed, communication is by flags or 'wig-wag' by day and lanterns at night. When it is submerged, officers have a system in which they use bells attached to the outside of the hull in such a manner that their sound is carried as clearly and distinctly as the dots and dashes of the wireless telegraph apparatus in air. Either the Morse or the army and navy code is used, and in this way the boats of a submerged flotilla taking orders from the commanding officer can keep in line. It is even possible to communicate by means of hammer-tappings against the steel hulls of the boats, and this is often done by officers who in practice wish to get in touch with some other boat operating in the vicinity or with the tender. The ingenuity of these submarine officers in rigging devices and repairing engines is typical of the resourcefulness of the American.

See these officers at their work in the docks, and it is easy to picture them at their post, when, with all lights out and ballast-tanks full, and every man at his station, the submarine drops like a rock in the service test. How far they go only the man at the dial knows. This is what takes a strong heart and perfect self-control. It is the officer's only means of proving the nerve of his men, and the one unfailing test to discover the weak ones. Day after day come these tests, and he who shows the least sign of fear never sets foot on an American submarine again. The reason is that down in the depths the man who loses his head is a menace to craft and crew. Failure to perform even a slight duty may be fatal to all. The United States naval experts believe that to this rule is due the fact that not a submarine boat has thus far been lost or sunk through an error of any of the men aboard.

The feeling that comes to one in a voyage in the under-sea is thus expressed by the commander of a submarine: 'The first thing that you note is the smell. It isn't any different from being in the engine-room of a battleship, except that you haven't room to turn around in. You are jammed into a hot, stuffy, uncomfortable hole. You don't see anything. You don't hear anything but machinery. You watch a pointer jumping on a dial, and move your hands according to clocks. You are a machine, and you are running a machine. When you sink on a level keel you don't feel any motion. When you dive you feel a gentle incline of the floor. If you look at the porthole a sea-green globe of glass confronts you. If you were about to attack a hostile ship you would see your mark only by means of the periscope or the conning-tower on the porpoise dive. All submerging and diving have to be done slowly and gently, for fear of spilling the chemicals in your batteries. But there is one time that we all feel happy: when on a fine day in rising we glance up through the deck and see the under surface of the sea. It is as though we were approaching one great shining mirror.'

The very danger and hardship of the life seems to create an *esprit de corps* among the men and a confidence in their officers that, in the British and American services at least, have given the men of the submarine fleet a high standard of efficiency and discipline.

## A FANCY-FLIGHT.

O HAPPY skylark, quivering up the blue!
My soul, exultant, takes its flight with you.
Earth cannot hold me, for ethereal wings
Upbear me, while, with thine, my being sings.

Lost in the glory of a golden mist,
For me no more nor time nor space exist;
Earth lies below me like a fallen star,
And I—I am as the Immortals are.

A sudden silence, then a swift descent.
O bird, for me this rapture was not meant!
Ah, welladay! who knows but it is best
The quiet peace that broods in our home-nest!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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# SOME OF A HUNDRED BEST BOOKS.

By Sir HENRY LUCY.

WHEN Sir William Molesworth, editor of the works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, contested the borough of Southwark, he was met upon the hustings by angry cries of 'No 'Obbes!' The crowd that yelled forth this denunciation had but the vaguest idea as to who 'Obbes might be, did not know the name of a single treatise he had written, were obviously unconscious of the fact that he usually wrote his surname with the initial 'H.' They had been told by Sir William Molesworth's political opponents that Hobbes was a dangerous, unorthodox man, and that any one so far lost to a sense of decency as to edit his works was emphatically not the man to represent Southwark in the British House of Parliament.

There was something vaguely flattering to the self-esteem of the free and independent electors in thus proposing Hobbes to them as a ground of disagreement with one of the candidates. Whosoever he might be, he was evidently a literary person of some account; had, as far as they could make out, lived a long time ago; and had written works over which learned scholars wrangled. To pronounce an opinion respecting him naturally presupposed an acquaintance with his writings. So they drowned Sir William Molesworth's voice in cries of 'No 'Obbes!' and probably were really earnest in their desire that Southwark should, once for all, set its mark against the promulgation of 'Obbes's theories, whatever they might be.

Clearly this was an absurd crowd. But I am not sure that some of us whose literary attainments rank higher are not on a par with it, inasmuch as we daily shout out, 'No 'Obbes!' or ''Obbes for ever!' —generally the latter—at the mention of certain well-sounding names in literature, with the works of the owners whereof we have no more intimate acquaintance than had the Southwark crowd with *Human Nature* or the *Treatise on the Body Politic.* There is Milton, for example. How many who write or talk about the blind poet with gushing admiration ever read *Paradise Lost* all through, not to mention *Paradise Regained?* And Spenser: who has read the *Faerie Queene* from first line to last? Of those who have, who honestly pines over the loss of the concluding six books? Who reads Chaucer now, except members of Chaucer Societies, who are never in company ten minutes before they let everybody know of their experience, just as a man who has gone through and overcome great tribulation likes to talk about it, and extort the sympathy of those whose withers are unwrung. Or even Dante. We say reflectively, 'He was a sublime man; so intense in his feelings, so vivid in his conceptions, so graphic in his portraiture!' But did we ever read his Divine Comedy throughout? Voltaire was clearly of opinion that a great many of us had not. To a respectable person who was rhapsodising about the sad-visaged Florentine—see with what easy picturesqueness of phrase I write about him—he said, 'Ah, yes! his reputation will be continually growing greater and greater, because there is now nobody who reads him.'

Charles Lamb, chatting about books and reading, protests: 'I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read anything which I call a book. There are things in the shape which I cannot allow for such. In this catalogue of books which are no books—*biblia a-biblia*—I reckon Court calendars, directories, pocket-books, draught-boards bound and lettered on the back, scientific treatises, almanacs, statutes at large, the works of Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and generally all those volumes which "no gentleman's library should be without:" the histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew) and Paley's *Moral Philosophy.* With these exceptions, I can read almost anything.'

Beattie is not of much account now, though it would be just as well if one were able to say one liked him. Soame Jenyns, regarded in the light of a writer one 'ought to know,' scarcely outlived his generation. He was not of much account in it, if


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we accept in proof a contemporary stanza wherein occur the following lines:

> Where, like a farthing link-boy, Jenyns stands,
> And the dim torch drops from his feeble hands.

It is not without a shudder that I observe the honoured names of Hume, Gibbon, and Robertson included in a category in common with almanacs and lettered draught-boards. I have the works of all three writers on the top shelves of my treasured library. Hume is in eight volumes, and I have read nearly to the end of the second. Gibbon I have never read, though I have always been drawn towards him by the recorded observation of some great man (name I forget at the moment) to the effect that it was reading the *Decline and Fall* that 'first made him think.' When I was young and arduous I read Robertson's *History of Scotland*, but not his other works. However, I feel quite at ease on that score, having the volumes on my bookshelves, honestly intending to read them all through some day.

I need not say it is far from my intention to question the absolute merit of the principal works of men whose names are canonised in modern literature. It is above the region of controversy. What I am anxious to know is, admitting, as we all do, that they are transcendently superior to the works of modern writers, how is it they are not read? Would any one having a reputation to preserve venture to rise in critical company and declare his preference for Thackeray over Fielding? I know I dare not, although Richardson, with Dr Johnson's approval, sneered at Fielding. 'If,' he said, 'I had not known who the writer of *Tom Jones* was, I would have thought it was an ostler.' (I do not mind privately confessing that though I have, as in duty bound, read *Tom Jones* once, I have lingered over *Vanity Fair* half-a-dozen times.)

It is an added perplexity for the honest inquirer to discover that, of the writers whom he knows he ought to revere if not to read, some are spoken of with disrespect in high quarters. If we believe Plato, Homer was not such a great writer after all. Of Plato himself Mr Lewes remarks: 'He is a tedious and difficult writer, often quoted at second hand, but very rarely read. Men of culture usually attack a dialogue or two out of curiosity; but their curiosity seldom inspires them to further progress.' Sophocles was in his old age seriously regarded as a lunatic by his own children, who ought to have known something about him. Aristophanes mercilessly chaffed Socrates, whilst Athenæus attempts to prove that the great teacher was himself illiterate. Virgil was declared by Pliny to have stolen such slight beauties as his poems may display. Quintilian says Seneca was no great shakes. Cicero and Plutarch are both down on Aristotle. Demosthenes is pooh-poohed by Hermippus. Of Cicero it has been written that he is 'cold in his extemporaneous effusions, artificial in his exordiums, trifling in his strained raillery, and tiresome in his digressions.'

Coming down to the gods of our own household, does it not make the hair stand on end to find Tom Moore declaring he found Chaucer 'unreadable'? Lord Lansdowne (a forebear of the present Leader of the House of Lords) said he was secretly of the same opinion, but did not dare to speak of it. 'A.K.H.B.' writes: 'I would rather read Mr Helps than Milton.' 'What will you say,' inquires Lord Chesterfield, 'when I tell you that I cannot possibly read our countryman Milton through? Keep the secret for me, for if it should be known I should be abused by every tasteless pedant and every solid divine in Europe.' Charles Lamb says: 'Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him,' which, not to put too fine a point on it, is an inconvenient essential attached to a favourite author. Even Shakespeare has not been spared. Ben Jonson, 'Rare Ben Jonson' (rarest of all in the matter of readers), began it with the repartee to Shakespeare's admirer who boasted that the great Bard had never blotted out a single line he wrote. 'Would that he had blotted a thousand!' sighed Ben. Mr Samuel Rogers (whom everybody knows as the author of that charming but never read poem, *The Pleasures of Memory*) was fond of repeating the joke, believing that Shakespeare was a greatly overrated man. Nor was he in this matter alone in his coterie. 'Well, after all, Tom,' said Byron to Moore one day, 'don't you think Shakespeare was something of a humbug?'

I have quoted Voltaire's scathing remark about Dante. 'Can you read Voltaire's *Henriade?*' asked Mr Senior of De Tocqueville. 'No; nor can any one else,' was the prompt reply. Once at Abbotsford it was remarked, in Sir Walter Scott's presence, that the speaker had never known any one who had read the *Henriade* through. 'I have read it, and live,' replied Sir Walter. 'But, indeed, in my youth I read everything.'

Mrs Browning humbly confessed that she could never read to the end of Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*. Emerson was equally lacking in appreciation of this highly respected man. So was Dr Johnson. 'Sir, I could not read it through,' he says when Boswell refers to 'the distinguished poem.' 'I see they have published a splendid edition of Akenside's works,' he proceeds. 'One bad ode may be suffered, but a number of them together makes one sick.'

Dr Johnson had, indeed, a painfully reckless way of tweaking the noses on the monumental figures in our literary Valhalla. I reflect with sorrow on the fact that *London: a Poem*, *Rasselas*, and *The Rambler* are to-day little read, though I dare say we all have them in our libraries. Of the author of the famous *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* the Doctor snarls, 'We have had enough of Gray.' Of Churchill he remarked, 'I called the fellow a blockhead at first, and I call him a blockhead still.' Of Fielding Dr Johnson also observed that he was a 'blockhead;' and upon Bozzy's venturing to express 'astonishment at so strange an assertion,' the Doctor was good enough to explain, 'What I mean by his being a blockhead is

that he is a barren rascal.' Of Richardson he said, 'Why, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story you would hang yourself.' Upon Gay's *Beggar's Opera* he pronounced the following verdict —'collecting himself as it were to give a heavy stroke'—'There is in it such a labefaction of all principles as may be injurious to morality.' This criticism is perhaps outdone in originality and weight by that of the Duke of Queensberry on the same work. 'This is a very odd thing, Gay,' said his Grace on reading the opera. 'I am satisfied that it is either a very good thing or a very bad thing.' Johnson was rather partial to Dr Watts, but Prior suffered heavily at his hands. 'My dear lady,' he said to Mrs Thrale, who was defending the poet, 'talk no more of this. Nonsense can only be defended by nonsense.'

Intimate as I, of course, am with the writings of the men whose honoured names are here lightly spoken of—beginning each morning with a page of Homer, and 'spending my days and nights with Addison,' not to mention spare hours stolen for delightful and easy converse with Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton—it is natural that I should be pained when I read of distinguished persons declaring with more or less boldness that they don't care a brass farthing for them. Dr Johnson, it is true, is the only one who ventures to talk treason in voice above a whisper. Voltaire, it will be observed, was careful to construct his epigram at the expense of Dante in a way that left it to be understood that though the multitude were not able to live in the rarefied air of the *Inferno* or the *Paradiso*, he personally read these books constantly, and did not unduly hasten even out of the *Purgatorio*. Tom Moore was evidently humbled when he found he could not read Chaucer. 'In what terms some speak of him! while I confess I find him unreadable.' Lord Lansdowne, as we have seen, his guilty secret stolen from him in a moment of surprise, implored that he might not be betrayed. Lord Chesterfield is equally nervous, and Charles Lamb's affected sprightliness does not hide the concern he felt at the possible consequences of his indiscreet communicativeness.

This is a healthy sign, tempering the sorrow with which we see heresy springing up in unexpected places. There are not lacking folk who say that affected enthusiasm for certain old writers, whose books we possess but do not read, prevails for reasons akin to those which make a flock of sheep put themselves to the inconvenience of jumping over an imaginary rail because their leader has so leapt. This is an explanation that does not commend itself to minds of finer texture. It is easy to cry, 'No 'Obbes!' It is the respectable thing to do. It has, moreover, an air of erudition. If no inconvenient questions bearing on details are asked, I shall, to the end of the chapter, when reference is made to some of the Hundred Best Books, cry, 'No 'Obbes!' or ''Obbes for ever!' as circumstances may seem to require.

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# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER XLII.

WHEN Jack must go down into the cabin and array himself in monsieur's best, with monsieur very much in attendance, and his tongue going without ceasing.

'Thy things will soon dry in the sun if we spread them on the deck,' said he, as he gathered them up off the floor. '*Tenez!* here is something in the pocket. You had better keep it —a letter—perhaps of value;' and as he pulled it out, all limp with the water, he caught the name, and broke out afresh, '*Comment donc!* M. Jacques Dartré—you know him—the good M. Jacques?'

'I wanted to meet him, but they say he is gone.'

'Yes, he is gone. He has become *propriétaire*. He is no longer in the business. What did you want with him?'

'I come from Sereq in the Norman Isles. I want to go to Paris and back. This was to ask M. Dartré to give me his assistance in the matter.'

'Ah, Sercq—yes! And who is it from?'

'George Hamon.'

'The good Georges! I used to know him, but it is long since. He no longer comes here.'

'No; he is married and settled down. Perhaps you can help me, monsieur, in place of M. Dartré?'

'Without doubt, and only too willingly, *mon beau*. We will talk of this. Now I go to spread out your things to dry.'

When Jack issued forth, resplendent in monsieur's most festive garb, he found monsieur and madame in animated discussion amidships, as together they wrung and spread his things in the warmest places, while Master Auguste, with a somewhat subdued and still astonished air, was tied to the leg of the seat near the deckhouse, with just enough play of rope to permit of movement but not of adventure.

'*Ah, mon beau*, it is of you we talk,' said monsieur, as Jack appeared.

'And we do not even know one another's names yet,' said madame with a great welcoming smile. She was a very large woman, with sparkling black eyes and coarse black hair, and a very fresh-coloured face, and much energy. Monsieur was also large-made and voluble, but Jack got the impression that madame was the dominant partner in the firm. '*Me v'là* Madame Jolicot. The good man is Monsieur Auguste Jolicot. And you?'

'Jack Sax, madame.'

'Jaxax! *Mon Dieu*, what names you have in Sercq! *Eh bien*, Monsieur Jaxax, you have done us a great benefit in saving our little Auguste, the rascal! And you want to go to Paris and back? We go to Paris in two-three, three-four days, just as soon as our goods are all aboard. We can take you if you will be willing to work your way.'

'I'll be only too glad, madame. But I don't know much about this kind of boat.'

'It is nothing. Auguste there can tell you all. You are strong. You can push and you can pull. We hire our horses when we have to, and it is he has the good head to direct it all.' And monsieur tapped the organ in question so that there should be no possible doubt as to whose head was meant.

'It is this way, Monsieur Jaxax,' continued madame with energy. 'Our crew is married to-morrow, and he begged a few days' holiday, as he will be very drunk to-night, and more or less for two-three days, as is only natural when one gets married.'

'It is true,' said Monsieur Jolicot with an appreciative nod.

'After that, when he is getting better, he will be very sulky for a time, and we shall be just as well without him. So if you like to take his place.'

'It is very good of you.'

'Not at all! Not at all! You will be pleasanter company than the poor Verjus till he has recovered from his wedding. So if you say it is a bargain it is a bargain.'

'It is a bargain,' said Jack. 'And very good of you into the bargain.'

'Not at all! Not at all!' said Monsieur Jolicot heartily. 'The affair of the little Auguste comes in, you see, and you will do your best, and I with my head will direct it all. We might even have another glass on the subject.' The last suggestion with an airy matter-of-factness which seemed to take the proposition for granted, but at the same time with a glance at madame which implied a certain doubt.

'*Mais non! mais non!* It is not necessary, and I do not agree with drinking in the morning. One glass you had on the little one's account. The rest can wait. Monsieur Jaxax is no drinker, I can see.'

'That was the first glass of cognac I ever drank,' said Jack innocently. 'But truly it did me good.'

'*Mon Dieu!*' ejaculated Monsieur Jolicot, and looked on him with wonder.

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### CHAPTER XLIII.—HOW JACK CONFIDED IN MADAME.

THAT was how it came about that, three days later, Jack found himself sitting, in great content of mind, at the helm of the *Belle Marie* as she wafted slowly up the estuary of the Seine, and felt himself almost within touch of that other Belle Marie who awaited him in Paris all-unconscious of his coming.

He was on the best of terms with Monsieur and Madame Jolicot, and the little Auguste, and the big black dog Pompée—the prime cause of it all, though none but he and Pompée knew it, and neither of them ever told.

He never forgot those long, bright days, when he sat at the helm for hours, with the small Auguste in the bight of a rope at his feet pounding away with his iron spoon and shouting, 'Pom-pée! Pom-pée! Pom-pée!' without ceasing. And the sun glinted on the water as it swirled softly by, and the great brown sail above bellied and swung to the breeze, and all he had to do was to keep it full and a straight course in mid-channel. And in the cabin madame was busy over her pots and pans, and would presently put out her head and tell them it was ready, and whatever it was it was always very good and savoury, for she was an excellent cook. Or she would be washing, and would come out with an armful of things to hang on the swaying boom; while monsieur sat smoking in the bows, with an occasional wave of the hand to port or starboard for the helmsman's guidance, and now and again a bit of more active exertion with the ropes and sails, with which he was more intimate than the crew was.

And as he sat there Jack's thoughts had plenty to feed upon. For the moment he was doing well. Paris was, to all intents and purposes, within his reach. But how he was to get hold of Mavie and get her safely to Sercq was the problem still before him, and it was no small one. Should he—supposing he could arrange matters so far—simply bring her down to the boat as a friend seeking passage down the river? Would it be fair to monsieur and madame to impose upon them unawares the risk of her being found on board? Should he take them into his confidence and win their consent to the venture by means of his money?

They were more than friendly towards him. He decided that he could not betray their confidence by dropping a net over their heads unawares. If Mavie was to return with him on the boat they must be told all about it. If they declined the risk he must arrange things otherwise.

They had shown a very natural curiosity as to his errand, and had sounded him ingenuously more than once. Madame, he was sure, had a warm heart, in spite of her masterful ways, which even monsieur acknowledged had been good for business, and had kept him out of many mischiefs. He conveyed to Jack in secret that he was a *bon diable* of a fellow, who would have cut fine capers but for his consideration for madame, who had all his heart—and kept it, and his character, and the family purse, and things generally—in her own good hands.

Yes, he decided, he must tell them; and he set his mind to the problem of leading up to the matter by degrees and in such a way as would be sure to win madame's agreement.

'What has become of Paul Lebon?' he asked one night when they had drawn in to the shore.

'Ah, you knew the good Paul?' cried monsieur, as though here was still another bond of union.

'I knew of him. Is he still running across to England?'

'The good Paul went off one day with a cargo,' said monsieur, with a doleful wag of the head, 'and from that day to this—nothing!' And he snapped his fingers to show how complete the story was.

'And never any news of him?'

'Never a single word. He is in prison, or he is below the water, or maybe he is serving on some ship-of-war. In any case, an end of the good Paul. How did you know him?'

'He assisted a friend across to England—at the time the doors were first closed on the English who happened to be in France, you remember?'

'*Ma foi*, yes! Some of them tried to get out this way, but they were caught. That is not war, to my thinking; but I suppose Monsieur Bonaparte knew what he was doing. We have never been too good Republicans down this way you know.'

'All the same,' broke in madame with a cautious glance at Jack, 'we do not concern ourselves with such matters. So long as they leave us alone to get on with our affairs that is all we want.'

'Politics are nothing to me either,' said Jack. 'But it seemed to me hard usage to lock up harmless visitors like that. Suppose your little Auguste had been in England, madame, and had been pounced upon, and kept from you for years, how would you have liked that?'

'*Ma foi!* I'd have got him back somehow, if I'd had to go across and steal him myself. I should think so, indeed!'

'You would have been quite right, too;' and for the moment he left the matter there.

It was one night when they were lying off Mantes, and the journey was nearing its end, that he took the opportunity of discussing his affairs with madame.

Monsieur Jolicot had gone up into the town to see some friends with whom he had occasional business, and madame's manner suggested a touch of uncertainty as to the hour and state of his return. Little Auguste was safely tucked up in his bunk, and madame was busy on a little red guernsey which he was to grow up into in time.

'But for you, M. Jaxax, I would not be doing this for the little one maybe,' she said, with a touch of sentiment born doubtless of her momentary anxiety on monsieur's account. '*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!* what should I have done if I had lost him?'

'You would have done, madame, as other mothers do who lose their children. You would have suffered and hoped.' You see, his long, thoughtful days had borne fruit.

'Suffered, without doubt. I don't know about the hope.'

'One always hopes. I could tell you of a mother whose child was shut up by your Emperor two years ago. The mother is very ill—dying, they say—and very eager to see her child again before she goes.'

'And what had he done?'

'It is a girl, and she had done nothing. She happened to be in Paris when General Bonaparte shut the doors, and she is there still, and her mother dying for want of her.'

'That is sad;' and madame stopped work and sat gazing at him with a face full of sympathy. 'And you know her?'

'We were playfellows. I am going to try to see her and tell her of her mother. If I could take her back with me it might save the mother's life.'

'That would be a good thing to do. And that is why you are going to Paris?'

'That is why. I confide in you because I know your heart is good and you would not betray me.'

'You who saved our little Auguste! I should think not indeed!'

'I have told no one else, but it seemed right to tell you; then, if you think well, you can tell me to go. On the other hand, I can pay well any one who assists me in the matter.'

Madame made a gesture repudiating any such consideration, and sat thinking.

'You assure me it is not a political matter?' she asked presently.

'I assure you that, in the name of the *bon Dieu*, madame. Mavie is only between seventeen and eighteen, and knows nothing of politics. She happened to be caught in the net, and there she is, and there is her mother. Ah, if you knew her, so good and so sweet, and longing above all things for a sight of her daughter before she dies!'

'She is ill, then?'

'She has always been an invalid, and this is breaking her down, you understand.'

And madame did some more deep thinking. 'It is not without risks, you know,' she said presently.

'That is why I name it, and ask your help, if you see it possible. When I see Mavie and tell her, she will want to come back with me. If I can steal her away—as you said you would steal the little Auguste in a like case—I will do so. But I could not bring her here to you unless you knew all about it.'

Madame nodded.

'I would not ask you to do it for money; but, all the same, if you see your way to help me to get her as far as Honfleur I can give you a thousand francs.'

'*Mon Dieu!* A thousand francs!' said madame with a sparkle.

'It is worth the money. Her family is well off, and will not grudge it.'

'That is more than we get for many journeys up and down. A thousand francs is a large sum;' and she looked just a trifle incredulous.

'There it is, nevertheless. And if you say you will do it I have confidence enough to leave it in your hands, madame.' And he placed in her hand a couple of bank-notes.

'*Mille francs!*' said madame wonderingly. 'Never in my life have I held so much money in my hand before! It is marvellous!' And she sat gazing at it, fascinated. 'I will help you, monsieur,' she said suddenly at last. 'And this shall be little Auguste's portion. You saved him. *Eh bien*, I will save your friend. For the present we will say nothing to Monsieur Jolicot. It is a matter to be kept to ourselves. He might talk, you see. When men get together one never knows.'

'I shall say nothing, madame, I assure you. You see, it is in you I have confided.'

'You did right, *mon beau*. There are some women who can keep secrets better than some men. Before we get to Paris I shall think out how it is to be done. You may count upon me.'

'I am more hopeful than I have been since I started, madame, and it is because I have confidence in you.'

It was very late when M. Jolicot got home that night, and he had very little to say for himself. What surprised him most was that madame had so little to say to him. In the morning he fancied he could not have been quite so bad as he had believed himself the night before, and his demeanour in consequence was blended curiously of virtue at his own restraint and regret at the loss of opportunities which did not occur too often.

(*To be continued.*)

## MOSQUITOES AND HOW TO COMBAT THEM.

OF all the insects which make life in the tropics a burden, none is more universal, nor on the whole so troublesome, as the mosquito. Neither is he confined to the tropics, for he ranges throughout the whole breadth of the temperate zone, and is even to be found within the Arctic Circle. The British Isles, with a comparatively cool summer, enjoy a certain immunity (not an absolute immunity, it is true, for even here the mosquito occasionally makes his appearance); but when an unusually warm summer affords the necessary conditions for the propagation of the insect-plague, the genus *Culex* appears in a peculiarly venomous form, if we are to credit the accounts occasionally seen in the newspapers of persons having been stung to death by mosquitoes.

The writer, who has travelled in many countries, and made the acquaintance of the mosquito in many parts of the world, has found them most troublesome, not in the tropics, but in certain semi-tropical regions, among which may be mentioned Florida, the North Island of New Zealand, and Paraguay. In certain swampy localities of these countries the pest is so great at times as to make them almost uninhabitable, and we can sympathise with the Frenchman in South America who committed suicide because, he said, life was unendurable on account of the mosquitoes.

Although the tropics are infested with insect pests, it is to be noted that many of the insects which plague us at home are almost absent in the torrid zone, though the climate is eminently suitable for their propagation. Take the common house-fly, for example. In England these are so numerous during the summer that they often constitute a veritable plague, especially in places, such as confectioners' shops, where their favourite food abounds. Though the same species is found in the tropics, they are seldom numerous enough in such latitudes to be troublesome; but in semi-tropical countries they often appear in pestilential swarms. The cause of this apparent anomaly is probably to be found in the great prevalence in the tropics of other insects, such as ants, which are ubiquitous, and which, by consuming the eggs and larvæ of the flies, prevent their excessive multiplication, and so help to redress the balance of nature. It is also said—and the writer's experience seems to bear this out—that fleas are almost absent in the neighbourhood of the equator, and probably for the same reason. The chigoe or jigger (*Pulex penetrans*), a near relative of the flea, escapes the wholesale destruction of its eggs in a singular manner. The female chigoe, as residents in tropical America know to their cost, burrows in the skin of certain animals, man included, where she deposits her eggs in a kind of sac, and unless summarily ejected often produces an ugly, festering sore.

Unfortunately mosquitoes also are safe from the attacks of ants, as they lay their eggs in the water, in which element they are hatched, and here the insect passes the first or larval stage of its existence. Travellers in warm climates may often have noticed small insects, all head and tail, for all the world like diminutive tadpoles, which disport themselves in the water with a wriggling motion, whence the name 'wigglies' or 'wrigglies' applied to them in the United States. These larvæ require air for their existence, and may be seen constantly rising to the surface in search of it. Any obstacle which prevents their free access to the air is fatal to them. On this account, if a little paraffin is poured on the surface of a stagnant pool—the favourite breeding-place of mosquitoes—it forms a layer which excludes the air and kills the mosquito larvæ. But paraffin has its drawbacks, not the least of which is that it soon evaporates in a warm climate. A cheaper, and even more efficacious, remedy is to be found in certain species of cactus known in Spanish as *tuna*, which abounds in a viscid, sticky juice. The fleshy body of the plant is macerated in water, with which it combines to form a gummy substance, which is spread over the surface of the pools where the

mosquitoes lay their eggs. This substance forms a layer which does not evaporate easily, and is impenetrable both to the air and the mosquitoes. The sticky juice is often used as an admirable substitute for glue in a mixture with lime to form a whitewash which will adhere readily without rubbing off when dry.

In an article published in *Chambers's Journal* for 1899, the writer was one of the first to call attention to the fact (since amply demonstrated) that the mosquito is one of the most effective agents in the spread of yellow-fever and malaria, owing to his—or *her*, for the female insect is the principal culprit—habit of sucking the blood of an infected person and so conveying the germs of disease to a healthy victim. The practical application of this theory has been followed by the most beneficial results. The writer lived for several years in Rio de Janeiro at a time when it was a regular hotbed of yellow-fever, the deaths from this cause sometimes exceeding a hundred a day. The disease is now almost unknown in that city. This surprising result has been obtained in a few years by a systematic warfare waged by the sanitary authorities against the mosquito. The cost of this organised attack on the pest amounted to thirty thousand pounds in one year, but it was justified by the results. In the neighbouring city of Santos the case was still worse. Rio was judged a healthy place in comparison to Santos. But the sanitary authorities took the case in hand. The neighbouring swamps were drained and other sanitary improvements effected, with the result that the mosquito was practically exterminated, and Santos to-day is about as healthy as any European city. In Havana during the American occupation, and also in Panamá, similar methods produced similar results. The time is probably not far distant when yellow-fever—at one time the scourge of new arrivals, especially soldiers and sailors, in the tropics—will be practically an extinct disease, in the same way as scurvy, which once wrought frightful havoc among ships' crews, has been virtually abolished by the use of lime-juice.

But to return to our enemy the mosquito, and the best methods of combating him. This is most important, for there are few travellers in warm climates who have not suffered from his attacks. Even where there is no danger from malaria or yellow-fever, the torture caused by the mosquito is in itself sufficient to justify an article such as the present. Where is the resident in tropical climates who cannot remember the sleepless nights caused him by this enemy of mankind? Mosquito-nettings are the general method employed in circumventing him; but they are far from effectual, while they possess the great disadvantage of preventing the free circulation of air so necessary in a warm climate.

Insect-powders are beneficial to a certain extent. Towards dusk, when the insects emerge from their lurking-places and commence to dance in clouds in the air, as is their custom, some insect-powder—it is unnecessary to say that this must be of tried quality—should be discharged by a small bellows among the swarm, which will generally cause their instant dispersal, and even their death if the insect-powder is of good quality. The powder should also be sprinkled plentifully at those points where they rest during the daytime. Of all insect-powders, the writer has found none so beneficial as a brand of local manufacture sold in Buenos Ayres, and known as bufach. This acts like magic in the dispersion of mosquitoes, though doubtless other equally good brands exist.

Where good insect-powder is not to be had, there is another and even simpler remedy, which is to be found in every house—common paraffin. This should be rubbed on the face, hands, and other exposed parts, and if properly applied no mosquito will touch the intended victim for hours afterwards, although they may hum round him in swarms. It is true, the smell of the paraffin is not pleasant, but it is certainly a less evil than a sleepless night of torture caused by the irrepressible insects.

One of the remedies usually employed by travellers is to make a fire of any material which will produce a dense smoke—dried cow-dung for preference. This has the effect of dispersing the mosquitoes as long as it lasts; but the smoke must be dense, and it is doubtful which is the worse evil of the two—to be half-smothered by the smoke or bitten by the mosquitoes. Besides, if the smoke subsides for a single instant the insects return with reinforcements.

Wells and cisterns in close proximity to a dwelling form so many breeding-places for these insects. The application of paraffin on the surface is not generally practicable in such cases, as the water is used for drinking and cooking. In some countries the inhabitants keep frogs or toads in their wells, which devour the larvæ of the mosquitoes, and so prevent them passing into the winged stage. But these animals pollute the water with their excrement, or (even worse) they die, and their decaying bodies are a positive source of danger. Several kinds of fish have the reputation of preying on the larvæ of mosquitoes, among them a small species, a native of Barbadoes; but the employment of fish as sanitary agents is open to the same objection as that of frogs.

It will be seen that all the remedies enumerated have their drawbacks, yet all under certain circumstances may be beneficial, and are worth trying. Thorough cleanliness and perfect ventilation are of great assistance in dispelling the insects, for a close, stuffy atmosphere is their delight, and they have the greatest abhorrence to the slightest breeze. Dirty, ill-kept houses attract them in the same way as they do flies, especially where morsels of food are left lying on ill-swept floors; and sugar and other sweet substances are especially attractive to them.

The spread of malaria and yellow-fever is not the only evil laid at the door of the mosquito. He is also blamed for being an active agent in the dissemination of the dreaded elephantiasis so common in tropical countries, especially among negroes. This is supposed to be induced by the presence in the human blood of a minute thread-like insect. The mosquito is said to act as the intermediate host of this insect, which—or its ova—he absorbs from the stagnant water which it frequents, and eventually introduces into the blood of his human victim in the same way as he brings the germs of malaria. Who knows how many more diseases may be produced in the same way? for pools of stagnant water in tropical countries are simply hotbeds of all kinds of injurious bacilli.

# THE SIGNET-RING.

PART II.

FOR some few days I happened to be comparatively busy, and did not visit Miss Raimes, whose arm did not bother her in the dry, hot weather, and who therefore, from my point of view, did not need to be seen, whatever Sime might have thought. But one afternoon I found myself free; and, feeling sure that Miss Raimes would be expecting me, I started for the Grey Moat. In passing through the village, however, I caught sight of a familiar back, the owner of which was staring idly in at a shop-window. The man turned to move on, and caught sight of me just as I recognised him. It was Banks, Miss Raimes's elderly and highly respectable butler. I returned his salutation and passed on, then turned, and found that he had turned too, and was looking after me.

'I'm on my way to Grey Moat, Banks,' I said. 'I suppose I shall find Miss Raimes at home?'

Banks deliberated. 'Well, yes, sir,' he said at last. 'And I know Miss Raimes has been looking for you to come; but'—— and he deliberated again.

'But what?'

'Well, sir, you see, it's a holiday with us. I was wondering whether I should come back with you. You see, there's no one there except Miss Raimes and Mrs Parrett, and Mrs Parrett goes this evening.'

'So Parrett is really going? Miss Raimes will miss her, I'm sure. But, of course, I mustn't spoil your holiday. Perhaps I had better not go up.'

'Oh, Miss Raimes is always glad to see you, sir,' Banks was kind enough to say, 'and I wouldn't at all object to going back. Indeed, in a place like this it's hard to know how to spend your time enjoyably. I don't hold with public-houses, having as much good beer as I want at home. But when Miss Raimes tells us to take a holiday she expects us to take it. She's our mistress, of course, and I dare say you've noticed she's masterful.'

This was said quite nicely and confidentially, and I nodded.

'I'll go up,' I said. 'I think Miss Raimes expects me, and I know she'll say if I'm not wanted.'

'Miss Raimes will, sir,' Banks agreed, and then bowed half-apologetically and proceeded with decorum to enjoy the remainder of his holiday.

It was Parrett who opened the door to me when I reached the Grey Moat, and I prefaced my inquiry for Miss Raimes by saying how sorry I was to hear that she was leaving, and how much Miss Raimes would miss her.

Parrett, I remember, gave a little snort as she slipped a small present from me into her pocket, and said she thought Miss Raimes *would* miss her. 'But I may tell *you*, doctor, that she is providing for me. It's only that Miss Raimes thinks I've worked as much as I ought to do, and should have a rest. I've nothing to complain about, no more than her. I've sent on my boxes, and I'm staying for the late train to talk things over with her. Between you and me, doctor, Miss Raimes is kind and generous, but she doesn't like things talked about. She says folk want to know too much. I expect she thought I'd talk to the others, and so sent them out; but I'm not that sort.'

'No, I'm sure,' I agreed. 'Now I think I'll say good-bye, and call on Miss Raimes another day.' And while Parrett was protesting about it, down came that charming lady from the stair at the back of the hall.

'Thought you had forgotten me altogether,' she said, shaking hands. 'You'll have to reckon with Dr Sime when he comes back. But I can't see you this afternoon. Parrett and I have some business to settle, and it may take a little while. Come on Wednesday.'

I said that I would, and bidding them both good-bye, I went away. I never saw poor Parrett again.

It was, I think, three weeks later when I heard from Sime that his 'cure' was finished, and that he was on the way home. He sent messages to two or three of his patients, and there was one for Miss Raimes. I made it an excuse for going up to Grey Moat in the summer evening, just when I thought she would have finished dinner.

She was sitting in the library, handsome and handsomely dressed as ever, thoughtfully staring into the wood-fire, which was always lit there at night, summer and winter.

She heard my message in silence, and continued to sit immovable for a little while, after motioning to me to take a cigarette.

'Well,' she said at last, 'I shall miss you. You're more interesting than Sime, though not so polite.'

'Not having met him,' I ventured, 'I don't know whether the first comparison is a great compliment.'

'It isn't,' she said calmly, and relapsed into silence, sitting very erect and still, looking into the blaze. 'About that ring of yours?' she said at last.

'What about it, Miss Raimes?'

'You don't care to sell it?'

'I certainly don't,' I said, laughing. 'I'm a poor man, but I must be even poorer before I sell that.'

'And you won't show me its secret?'

'I can't,' I protested, laughing again. 'I don't know any.'

'Well, so you say,' she retorted, nodding; but somehow her manner was not one to give offence. 'Perhaps, after all, it would be a kindness to demonstrate its properties to you?' she went on, as though she were considering.

'Of course it would,' I replied, much amused. 'It would be a duty, I think.'

'Well, well, we shall see.' And she spoke of other things.

When I rose to go, she said, 'Now, I believe you don't trust me. But I don't bear malice. One must be careful. You must dine with me again before you go away. I'll send you a note, if we don't happen to meet.'

I dined there two nights before Sime's expected return, and a very charming dinner it was—rather early, because there was a travelling circus in the village, and Miss Raimes had presented tickets to all her household.

When dessert was put on the table, Banks the butler was told to go off and enjoy himself with the rest, and he showed the usual prompt obedience.

Miss Raimes made our coffee herself by the library fire, and there we smoked and chatted about all manner of things.

'I'm very sorry to leave the place,' I said at last.

'You've made it charming for me, Miss Raimes.'

'That reminds me,' she said, 'I want to show you something before you go;' and, rising, she led the way upstairs.

In the library the lamps had been lit. Miss Raimes would not allow any light but that of candles or lamps, but the sunset of the summer evening lit up the broad stair and the upper gallery quite well enough.

Miss Raimes went straight to the last door at the far end of the gallery, and opened it.

'About that scent, or smell,' she said, signing to me to go in; 'do you notice it still?' And I stepped in, and at once saw it was the practically empty room which we had visited once before.

'I most certainly do,' I said, and I looked about again for a possible explanation. I saw none. The room was not only still bare, but it was spotless. The panelling shone brightly where it was touched by a ray from the setting sun. Where sunlight touched the floor, that shone too. I rubbed the thin sole of my shoe on it.

'No dust or dirt here,' I thought. Aloud I said, 'The floor is fit for dancing.'

'Ah,' said Miss Raimes, 'if there were only music!' and then stood silent again while I sniffed round the room.

'It seems more pronounced here,' I said, tapping the wall. 'I think you should examine behind this. You said there was a good deal of space behind the panelling.'

'So I did,' Miss Raimes remembered. 'Well, we might look. Sit down here a moment.' She dragged the stool toward the window. 'You don't know this view, I think? I like it particularly. I won't keep you long.' And while I looked out at the sun setting over the distant sea she left the room. I stood with an elbow on the broad window-sill, for I found the stool too low.

It was, I suppose, only two or three minutes later, while I still watched the sunset through the window, which I was surprised to find would not open, that I noticed a little, thin, piping sound, faint, far off, and at first muffled. It was certainly musical, but certainly not what one could call a tune. It was reedy, plaintive, rather enticing, a sound that if I had heard it at night I should have followed out of sheer curiosity. Presently it became distinctly nearer and clearer. It was above me; and, looking up, I saw Miss Raimes's head, set like a portrait in an opened panel of the dark wood. She looked down upon me, smiling, and one long hand, on which some rings sparkled in the last rays of the sun, held near her lips a little reed-pipe, the source of the music.

'What—Miss Raimes!' I exclaimed, staring up at her. 'A music-loft and a musician!'

'As you see,' she replied.

'Go on, please,' I begged her, lounging on the stool, with my back against the wall. 'I am fascinated. Play more, if you will condescend to an audience of one!'

'The sound travels farther than you would suppose,' she said, the pipe just hovering at her lips. 'And more than one may be listening. Do you recognise the instrument? It is the snake-charmer's pipe.'

'And I am to be charmed,' I suggested.

She made no reply, but began to pipe softly again.

The little, thin, searching notes crept about the room, and seemed hypnotic. They held me, so that I listened, not much caring how long they wandered on, always expecting to catch the elusive rhythm.

Under the air presently ran a monotonous, faint rustling, as of silken skirts. I sat with half-closed eyes, and imagined Miss Raimes swaying to and fro in the twilight as she piped.

'Unfortunately,' I said at last drowsily, 'this doesn't charm away the odour. I notice it more.' And Miss Raimes laughed in the shadows above my head.

'See what your ring can do!' she said. 'Look! Quickly!'

I started from my waking dream, and looked first up at her, then across the room whither her arm waved.

That side was in shadow, and twilight was creeping over the whole room; but there was a blacker shadow where another gap now showed in the panel at the floor-level, and there another shadow moved with a rustle as of silken skirts. At first it was as formless as Miss Raimes's music, as liquid, as elusive.

The pipe gave a shriller, harsher call, and the shadow rolled out across the floor towards me like a wave.

I saw a snake's head!

The pipe stopped suddenly as I started to my feet, and the great snake stopped too; the head, with its cold, unwinking eyes, sinking flat on the polished floor, the tremendous bulk of it, coil on coil, half seen in the shadowy background.

'Now,' said Miss Raimes cheerfully from above me, 'don't be nervous. Remember your ring, and you'll be in no danger, I'm sure.'

'The beast's tame!' I said, watching it.

'Tame!' Miss Raimes laughed ironically above me. 'Don't underrate Karma, please. How tame would *you* be if you hadn't fed for a month, and had cast your skin in the meantime? Watch! He's coming!'

So he was. The rustling began again; the shadows stirred; the unwinking eyes slipped nearer.

'The joke is ended,' I said, staring into those eyes. 'I own you've frightened me, if that was your object. Send him back now, please, Miss Raimes.' And all the time the shadows were slowly stirring, and the great flat head slipping nearer over the floor.

The pipe wailed a soft, melancholy little call, and the head lay quiet again, the eyes always watching me coldly.

'There's no joke,' I heard Miss Raimes say above me. I dared not look at her. 'No joke at all. You tell me you don't know the secret of your ring. You asked me to demonstrate it. There lies the proof. Karma is hungry. If you were without that ring I wouldn't give twopence for your chance of being alive ten minutes hence. As it is, I'm sure you're quite safe. Now, don't be nervous; and remember the floor is slippery. Of course you can see he's a python, and therefore not poisonous. He can only crush you.'

Only! She blew a harsh, rousing note, and the snake hissed angrily, and flowed toward me like water. I flung the stool at it, and jumped for the high window. Clinging like a fly to the window-frame, I smashed some glass, which tinkled far below.

'Don't! You'll kill yourself!' cried Miss Raimes. But it was the iron bars, not her warning, that kept me back.

Then, as I tugged frantically at a bar, 'Oh!' said Miss Raimes softly, and at that instant I felt something touch my ankle; the flat head was swaying at the level of my feet on the window-ledge. I sprang down backwards, stumbled over a coil, and struggled up again to the door. It was locked, and the unwinking eyes were already half-way across the room to me, as if on the crest of a wave. There seemed to be stirring coils all about the room, such was the brute's length.

'This is unworthy of yourself and of the ring,' I heard Miss Raimes say contemptuously. 'I'm disappointed. You'll come to grief if you're not careful. Of course I locked the door.'

I said nothing, but balanced myself for a spring in either direction, frantically groping in my right-hand trouser-pocket. There, in ordinary dress, I kept a strong knife at the end of a steel chain. Sometimes, when changing into evening-dress, I happened to shift the knife; sometimes I left it. My own relieved gasp sounded horribly loudly through the room, when my fumbling fingers gripped the knife.

What followed was a nightmare which still sometimes wakes me, panting, in the darkness.

Smooth coils were round me, over me, under me. Sometimes I ran; sometimes I jumped; sometimes I struck and stumbled. If I gripped a coil it slipped from under my hand, too smooth to hold, or else it lay inert, while another and another lashed round and tightened on me. Once the knife clattered on the floor, and I only recovered it by the merest chance, in falling too.

Once or twice I heard a note from the reed-pipe—harsh, rasping. More than once Miss Raimes called down in a most matter-of-fact way, ridiculing my frantic struggles.

'Why don't you use it? Why don't you use it?' she cried twice or three times.

Once, when I had sprung against the window again, and looked, gasping, up at her, though I said nothing, she leant over and eyed me coolly.

'Come,' she said, 'you're surely not beaten yet? Why, poor Parrett hadn't your ring, but she fought it out for quite five minutes.'

I turned without a word, and set my teeth, grimly determined at least to avenge poor Parrett, even in dying.

The smooth floor probably troubled the python as well as me. It could get no grip, nor could I. The smooth coils maddened me, too. There was nothing to hold, and I struck wildly at a surface from which the knife-point often slipped. But at last I had a chance. The next time that the cold, dull eyes rose before me, I gripped once more at the throat, and for once my grip held. The ring on my left-hand little finger had slipped round, so that the stone was underneath. Either that or the rough setting, I fancy, made the difference. For an instant I was able to keep my hold, and twice I drove my knife through the head into the wall behind before I was flung aside. Then there was a lashing, a hissing, a dying flurry.

I struggled to my feet once more, and saw some huge coils tighten about the fallen stool, and heard it crack and break. Then the great snake lay quiet in a pool of blood, and I leant against the wall, panting and staring, incredulous of the end.

'For God's sake, air!' I said, and fell among the coils.

When I recovered Miss Raimes was bending over me, with obvious concern upon her handsome face. Somehow she had managed to get me out upon the landing, and I lay there on the floor, while the fresh night air wandered in through an open window.

'That's good!' she said heartily. 'I *am* so relieved. I should never have forgiven myself if any accident had happened. But of course I *knew* you were safe.'

'I didn't,' I muttered, trying to rise.

'Lie still! I can't think why you didn't use your ring sooner. Now, poor Parrett—— But there, we needn't talk about poor Parrett. She's different, and better where she is, I am sure.' And the futile question, 'Where?' died on my lips, for I quite well knew where poor Parrett was.

'And now lie quiet! You know the use of the ring,' Miss Raimes went on calmly, holding a glass to my lips, while she raised my head with her other hand. I sipped and felt better, but she had to repeat her last observation before I properly grasped it.

'No, I don't,' I said.

'Oh, but surely this is unscientific obstinacy,' Miss Raimes remonstrated; 'though, of course, you were fully occupied. But do you mean to tell me that your action was unintentional? The ring has undoubted power against creeping things. I saw *that* from the beginning. You were distinctly getting the worst of it, till by twisting the ring you pressed the stone against Karma. He collapsed at once. It has been *most* interesting, and the result quite justifies my theory. It's always satisfactory to have one's theory justified, isn't it?'

She showed me to one of the beautiful bathrooms, and left me to refresh and tidy myself as well as I could. Meanwhile she got a tray ready with wine and other things in the library; and, intercepting me in the hall as I came down from the bathroom, she insisted on my taking wine if not food.

It may seem strange, but I had no fear of any further experiment on her part, and I gladly drank, for I was thoroughly exhausted; and I lay back in an easy-chair which she wheeled to the table for me, and listened while she lamented, though not too pointedly, the death of her pet Karma, who, it seemed, was a very old favourite, 'Though I don't talk about him to people,' she said, 'they are so prejudiced. Somehow it never occurred to me that you would kill him, and I was quite sure that he couldn't kill you. I can't imagine what will happen to me now that my old favourite is dead.'

What happened was that as soon as I could get away I telephoned to the chief-constable, an old friend of Miss Raimes's, and in a few hours she was in an asylum.

Those who never met her will hardly believe me when I say that I still have a friendly feeling for poor Miss Raimes. Twice, when near the asylum, I have been allowed to pay her a visit; and I assert that you may dine out every night for a month where you will without meeting another woman of her age as fascinating as she still is.

An unpleasant phase of her malady is, however, developing. The resident medical superintendent of the asylum wrote to me a few days ago that she believes the Soul or Ego of Karma the snake has entered her body. She hisses when angry, and twice has nearly strangled one of the nurses. 'Miss Raimes told me the other day,' he writes, 'that I ought to borrow your ring.'

(*To be continued.*)

## LEGALISED GAMBLING IN FRANCE.

IT is probable that many people in this country are under the impression that, since the suppression of gambling-tables at Aix and Homburg, and the stringent anti-gambling laws recently enacted in Belgium, the only place where public gambling is permitted and encouraged by the State is 'the plague-spot of Europe,' beautiful Monte Carlo. They would be surprised and somewhat shocked to know that the French Government derives a large revenue from the proceeds of the gambling that goes on daily and nightly in the *cercles* (clubs) and casinos. A French writer, in an excellent little brochure on the gambling habits of the French, entitled *Paris qui Joue et Paris qui Triche* (which may be paraphrased into 'The Flats and the Sharps of Paris'), says: 'The love of play has extended enormously in the last ten years among the French; it has permeated every class in different forms—gambling on the Stock Exchange, gambling on the racecourse, gambling at the casinos, gambling at the clubs.' The book is chiefly devoted to the latter form of gambling, which goes on practically all the year round in Paris, Nice, Cannes, Pau, Biarritz, and other fashionable centres, and which consists mainly of the ordinary baccarat *à deux tableaux*. What we are more concerned with in the present article is what may be called holiday-gambling—the gambling opportunities afforded to all and sundry in the casinos of practically all the places where people congregate in the holiday months. The games

played are *petits chevaux* and *chemin de fer* baccarat. Let it be clearly understood that not only does the Government permit these games, but, as has been already stated, actually draws a large yearly revenue. The taxes levied are 15 per cent. of the gross daily profits of the *petits chevaux* and a certain proportion of every other *coup* at *chemin de fer*. What that is we shall see later. There are State officials always in the rooms to see that everything is done in order. It is true that the amount which may be staked, and therefore won or lost, is much less than at Monte Carlo, and especially is this the case with the game of *petits chevaux*, which may be called the 'game of the people.' Still, the fact remains that the gambling instincts which are innate in so many, and perhaps especially so in the Latin races, are encouraged and fostered.

The *petits chevaux* tables are open to all who have paid their entry to the casino, which is as a rule one franc. To penetrate to the inner circle, or *cercle*, as it is termed, where games of chance are played, requires some formality and payment of a season's subscription of five francs, on receipt of which a billet is granted by the secretary, setting forth, with the usual Continental love of detail, the age, sex, profession, and nationality of the recipient. In this way doubtful characters or notorious *grecs* are kept out of the *salon de jeu;* but as a rule no one who is decently behaved or dressed is refused admittance. In some places, however, local tradespeople are not allowed. The public as a whole prefer the fun and excitement, such as it is, of the *petits chevaux* to the more serious *chemin de fer* or baccarat, and it may be as well to try to explain exactly how this game is played.

In the middle of a large room is a kind of big, square box covered with baize. On the top of the box are the *petits chevaux*, nine dummy horses, each with a distinctive number attached. These little horses, which are attached to levers under the table, run in concentric circles varying in diameter according to the length of the levers. Thus No. 1 (*l'as numero un*, as it is called familiarly), which is attached to the longest lever, has the largest circuit to travel; No. 2 the next longest; and so on decreasing, until No. 9 has a very short one. The levers are set in motion by machinery worked by a handle which is turned by the man in charge of the game. With a turn of the wrist he deftly collects the horses into line, rather a difficult operation, and calls out, '*Faites vos jeux, messieurs.*' The players then stake their money. Meantime the starter has given the handle several turns, increasing gradually in force, and away the horses fly. He then lets go the handle, and allows the speed to die away until they all come to a dead stop. As the speed diminishes he calls out, '*Rien ne va plus,*' which means that nothing more can be staked—a necessary precaution, as it is possible to get quite expert in 'spotting the winner.' The winner is the horse which stops nearest to, but short of, a flag-post opposite the 'starter,' called *le but*. In case of a dead-heat the race is run over again, the horse finishing in front winning, but dead-heats are, oddly enough, not common.

The method of staking is very simple. On each side of the central table are the tables on which the money is staked. The tables are covered with a green cloth, in the centre of which are squares on which are marked figures corresponding with the horses—namely, 1, 3, 6, 8 on one side; 2, 4, 7, 9 on the other side; and 5 in the middle. On both sides of the figures is a vacant space in form of a parallelogram. This is called the *bande*.

| BANDE. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| | 5 | | |
| 9 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| BANDE. | | | |

If a player wishes to back any particular horse he puts his money on the square with the corresponding figure. If that horse wins he receives *seven* times his original stake. If he wishes to take less risk he may put his money on either *bande*—that is, back the side next to 1, 3, 6, 8, or the side 2, 4, 7, 9. If any of the horses on his side wins he gets double his stake—even money. If the 5 wins the bank wins from both *bandes*.

It should be said at once, and be taken as a warning, that *petits chevaux* is a game at which the bank must win and the public must lose, for the simple reason that the odds given are ludicrously under the proper odds—only seven to one in a field of nine where the chances are said to be absolutely equal, and one number out of nine being reserved for the bank in the even-money chances. Moreover, the amount that can be staked is so limited that even supposing the even chances were anything like fair, it is impossible to play what is known as the 'martingale' or doubling system. It is said that a skilled croupier can by a dexterous turn of the handle make any particular horse either win or very nearly win, and for an obvious reason especial practice is given to the art of singling out *numero cinq*. The writer has certainly seen the 5 win with suspicious regularity whenever there was much money on the *bande*.

It is, however, so absolutely certain that the bank must win that it is probable that these alleged unfair tactics are not often resorted to. Assuming that there are forty turns of the wheel every hour, and that every number is backed for the same amount, the bank must make one unit every spin,

for they receive eight and pay seven. In the day's play of, say, five hours, the bank must on this assumption make two hundred units over the running of the horses alone. And yet there are days when certain runs come against the bank, times when one horse keeps cropping up first for no apparent reason. On occasions like this, if the stakes were not very much limited, the bank might have a serious loss; but the authorities provide for this contingency by saying that no more than a certain sum can be staked by the public as a whole on any one horse. In the particular casino where these impressions of the game were formed the limit was eight francs, so that the maximum the bank could lose on one *coup* was fifty-six francs (forty-five shillings). When the limit is reached the croupier calls out, '*Complet le cinq*' or '*le sept*,' or whatever number is being favoured, and no more money will be accepted. A still more irritating regulation is that no individual may have more than half the limit if other players wish to back the same horse. For example, a player has staked eight francs; two others wish to put two francs each on the same horse. No. 1 has to retire four francs from his original stake.

The casino authorities 'run' the bank and take all the profit, less, as has been said, 15 per cent., which they have to pay to the State. The books are checked each day by a State official called the *Directeur Français*, who is always in the room when play is going on.

The times for play vary. Generally it is said to begin about five P.M., go on till a quarter-past seven, and then start again at nine P.M. and go on till midnight. There are not, as a rule, many players in the afternoon except on Sundays; but the evening session is always crowded, especially when there is a play going on in the casino theatre, the *entr'actes* being made especially long in order to allow the audience to go out and have a flutter for twenty minutes or so.

It is perhaps difficult for people in cold blood to understand why so many are found foolish enough to throw their money away; but the truth is that the game attracts a good many idlers who want to pass an odd half-hour. The stakes can be so small (for one franc is accepted) that this half-hour's amusement may cost very little, and there is certainly, for a short time, an attraction in watching the little horses whirl round. During the week it is probable that little moral harm is done; it is otherwise on Sundays and fête-days, when the townspeople come in. To many of them a franc means a good deal, and the *petits chevaux* room practically corresponds to the *salon de jeu* at Monte Carlo.

The revenue which the State derives from the 15 per cent. tax levied on the profits of the *petits chevaux* must be absolutely insignificant compared with what the game of baccarat brings in. It is said that baccarat is the fairest form of gambling that there is. It is a game of chance, in the play of which no skill or knowledge is required except that of knowing when to draw a card. On the face of it the chances should be equal for all, and so they would be were it not for the *cagnotte*. The *cagnotte* is the tax levied by the casino or *cercle* authorities on every bank. At baccarat, unlike *petits chevaux*, the bank is taken by private individuals, and the *cagnotte* claims 10 per cent. of every bank; of this amount the State gets 15 per cent. Sometimes when play is high there is as much as a thousand pounds in a bank, so it is easy to see what a large revenue is derived from this source. In the larger and more fashionable watering-places the most of the baccarat played is baccarat proper, or, as it is termed, baccarat *à deux tableaux*. In the height of the season, during the race or lawn-tennis week, there are sometimes as many as forty of these baccarat-tables all crowded, and play goes on from half-past nine P.M. to six A.M. All the time the casino buffet is open, where supper and liquid refreshments can be obtained at any hour. In the smaller casinos the game played is a variation of baccarat called *chemin de fer*, which is more popular in that it needs very little initial capital, and the taking of a bank is within the reach of practically every one. It is played in the following manner: When a sufficient number of players have assembled, the croupier, who is a casino official, puts the first bank up to auction. Probably very little money will enable a player to take it—say, two louis (or forty francs). The players then stake, play going 'with the sun,' or from left to right, the player immediately to the right of the banker having the right to challenge for the whole sum. This is called 'going *banco*.' If the banker wins he is paid the full amount; nothing is taken off his first win. We have assumed that he has put forty francs into the bank; he has now got eighty francs in the bank. Stakes are again made. Assume now that the full amount (*banco*) is not staked by any individual player; then all the others have an opportunity of staking, but only up to the amount in the bank. Again, let us say, the bank wins; this time five francs is deducted by the croupier—who collects the money with a flat piece of wood shaped like a gigantic paper-knife—making what he wins seventy-five francs instead of eighty. This five francs goes into the *cagnotte*, which in material form is a money-box fitted to the under-part of the table, with a slit in the top. The croupier is responsible for the deduction of the five francs, and is furnished with a book of numbered slips, one of which he tears off every time he puts money into the *cagnotte*. The banker has now won three times, and his original stake of forty francs has become one hundred and fifty-five francs. It is in his option to give the bank up to the next man or go on. Being of a cautious disposition, he passes it. The next man may take it or not as he likes, and put in as much as he cares to do over the minimum. This, as a rule, is small—five francs; but there are some casinos where it is much higher, and where, for instance, the lowest that will

be accepted is three louis (sixty francs). So the game goes on, the bank passing every time it makes a losing *coup*. No one refuses to take the bank when it comes to his turn. It is, indeed, the great fascination and attraction of the game, this hope of striking a good *série*, as it is called, when holding the bank. The writer has seen a bank win seventeen times running. The original stake was only ten francs; the amount won must have been well over a hundred louis. Few players, however, have the courage and audacity to hold on to a bank like this. They generally exercise the privilege which every one has of 'passing' the bank after four or five winning *coups;* but the really bold gamblers always hold on till the end. They are practically safe to win something; for, after there is a considerable sum—say more than twenty louis—in the bank, few players at the average holiday seaside resort care to go *banco*, so that often the full amount is not staked. In that case the banker may say, '*Rien ne va plus.*' If he wins, then only the amount that was staked is at the disposal of the table; the difference between the amount staked and the amount in the bank is the banker's; it does not come into play again. A concrete instance will make this clearer. There are thirty louis in the bank; twenty are staked by the table. The banker calls out, '*Rien ne va plus.*' After this nothing more may be staked. The bank wins. If he had said nothing there would have been fifty louis for the next *coup*—thirty plus twenty. As it is there are only forty; by calling out he has made sure of winning ten louis whatever happens. By careful working a man who has started a good *série* may make sure of winning a fairly large sum before the end. It is this continual hope of getting such a bank that lures many people to play. One sees them patiently waiting their turn, never venturing anything against the other bankers, and then adventuring their five or ten francs. These are never fortunate. It is the bolder spirits, those who do not mind losing, who win; but the small men never learn wisdom. They come back evening after evening, ever hoping. This form of gambling is by no means confined to the male sex. Quite half of the players are ladies, and some of them play very high. It is, indeed, the fashionable thing to do in some circles.

To show what a huge profit must go first to the casino (which is as a rule a company) and then to the State, the following is the present gradation for the taxing of the banks at *chemin de fer:* (1) when the total amount in the bank is *less* than one hundred francs, five francs every other time the bank wins; (2) when the amount in the bank is between one hundred and two hundred francs, five francs *every* winning *coup;* (3) between two hundred and three hundred francs, ten francs; (4) between three hundred and four hundred francs, fifteen francs; and so on, increasing by five francs.

It is easy to see what the ultimate result must be; but, oddly enough, during play the man who is having a successful bank does not feel the crushing hand of the *cagnotte*. It is difficult to realise at the time that this system of taxation makes it impossible for any one to win in the long-run.

If public gambling were abolished the casinos would all be bankrupt in a very short time, and the mainstay of the watering-places would disappear, for it is round the casino that the life of the greater part of French holiday-makers centres. It is there that they meet to gossip and listen to the music, at the *anti-déjeuner* parade on the terrace; it is there that they gather in the afternoon, after the post-prandial exercise, for '*le five o'clock;*' but it is especially there that they congregate in the evening. It is the proceeds of the gambling which enable the casino authorities to maintain a good band and a company of actors during the season, and to run lawn-tennis courts and golf-links at a loss. There is no doubt that the system is wrong; but, paradox though it may seem, its abolition would mean ruin to many a town and to many a household who depend for a livelihood on the money dispersed during the holiday season through the casino and the visitors.

## EMIGRATION AS A CAREER.

THE number of persons who emigrate yearly is considerable, and of these a great many emigrate 'on spec.' It is with this latter class that this article is intended to deal. The emigrant with capital can generally look after himself; but the penniless emigrant 'on spec.,' if he belongs to the soft-handed fraternity who have never handled any implement heavier than a pen or ruler, is indeed to be pitied.

The writer of these lines has emigrated 'on spec.' not once, but several times, and his experiences extend to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and South America, not to mention brief visits made to Canada and Cape Colony (which were merely passed through). He may, therefore, be considered to speak with authority on the subject.

Many persons look on emigration as a career, and the motley crowd who fill the steerage of every outgoing emigrant-steamer belong to all occupations and social positions. Here is the young ne'er-do-well or scapegrace, shipped off with a few pounds in his pocket by relatives who are glad to get rid of him and hope never to see him again. Here is the mechanic out-of-work, who hopes to better his position in another hemisphere—a hope generally realised if he is steady and industrious. Here is

the agricultural labourer, disgusted with the miserable pittance which he earns at home, where he can only look forward to the workhouse in his old age; for him also the future is full of hope in our younger colonies, as it is for the female domestic, who can generally reckon on good wages, and perhaps a speedy marriage and rise in the social scale. It is only too true, of impecunious emigrants, that the horny-handed son of toil has an infinitely better chance of success than the man with a university education. The demand in every new country is for muscle rather than brains—or, rather, book-learning.

As my experiences of South America are the most recent, I think it best to give them the first place. It cannot be denied that the southern continent offers excellent scope to an industrious man, who can frequently make a start in farming, commerce, or industrial operations with a much smaller capital and less experience than are necessary in England, or even in our own colonies. But a knowledge of the language (Portuguese in Brazil, Spanish in other parts) is absolutely necessary to success. I have often been asked by intending emigrants, 'How long would it take me to learn Spanish?' This question is most difficult to answer. I have known Englishmen who have picked up a very fair knowledge in six months. I have known others who have lived twenty years in South America and yet could scarcely speak the language.

In a city like Buenos Ayres, with a large Anglo-Saxon colony, it is possible for an Englishman to live and scarcely mix at all with the natives. Here he finds English clubs, churches, shops, doctors; in fact, nearly all his requirements are attended to by persons who speak his own language. There are English daily papers also; and as he associates only with other Anglo-Saxons, he may live for many years in the country and still be a stranger in a strange land—unable even to speak the language. But for persons of small capital who wish to start on their own account, large cities like Buenos Ayres are out of the question. Such persons must seek the country districts—'the camp,' as it is called by English-speaking residents in Argentina; in Australia they would call it 'the bush.'

If the idea of the emigrant is to open a country store, this can generally be done with a fair prospect of success once he has gained the necessary local experience and can speak the language. No large capital is required; if he is steady and honest he can generally obtain credit, and competition is by no means so keen as in England.

In the River Plate district—Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay—the number of Anglo-Saxons who go in for agriculture is comparatively small. Many take to cattle-farming or ranching, but this requires considerable capital. A start in sheep-farming is more easily made, as shepherds are often given charge of a flock of sheep on shares, receiving a percentage of the increase, and an industrious man can advance rapidly and eventually become the owner of a sheep-farm. Sheep, it may be noted, increase in numbers much faster than cattle, and the climate of southern Argentina is very favourable to them. The southern part of the province of Buenos Ayres is studded with prosperous sheep-farms, in great part owned by Britishers. The Irish are especially numerous in this section.

In Paraguay—the northernmost republic of the River Plate—English settlers are not numerous; but it deserves passing mention owing to the New Australia movement which originated some years ago, when a number of Australian working-men, disgusted at the failure of the great shearers' strike, resolved to form a settlement of their own on socialistic lines. Paraguay was selected as the seat of operations, the local Government having offered very advantageous conditions. The association purchased a vessel of their own to convey the emigrants to the promised land, and soon thereafter the first batch of settlers arrived and set to work to clear the virgin forest. But the socialistic regulations which looked so well on paper were not found to work well in practice. Dissensions soon broke out among the settlers, which resulted in a split. One party of the settlers remained on the original 'colony,' termed New Australia; another party, under William Lane, the leader of the movement, removed to a new settlement named Cosme. The New Australia settlers soon thereafter abandoned socialistic principles, and divided the common property among the individual members, and since then they have done fairly well. The Cosme colony continued to struggle along on socialistic lines for some years longer; but they did not flourish, and their numbers dwindled away until only some half-dozen families were left, when they too divided their property among the few remaining members. As an attempt to solve the social problem the whole scheme was a dismal failure.

In Queensland, where the New Australia movement originated, the working-man at that time gained exceptionally high wages, but prosperity was his ruin. There is no country in the world where the Labour Party is so powerful as in Australia. There the labour vote is all-powerful, and politicians of every class bow down before it. When I was in Sydney a number of years ago there was great agitation among the unemployed. They paraded the streets with banners flying, and clamoured for the Government to find work for them. Nor was their appeal unheeded. The Government opened an employment bureau, and found work for those it could. It organised parties of alluvial miners, and provided them with tents, implements, and food, at least one practical miner being in each party. It opened a lodging-house where sleeping and other accommodation was provided at a penny a night, and for those who could not afford the penny they threw open the Domain (the magnificent public park at Sydney). This was kept open all night for the benefit of the unemployed, who could be seen collected in groups in

retired portions of the park, cooking their food over camp-fires, or at night rolled in their blankets on the soft sward with the starry heaven for a canopy.

I cannot help contrasting this with the way I have seen the 'submerged tenth' treated by the authorities in the United States. Frequently, when passing through the public parks and squares in New York, I have seen the police remorselessly eject all persons sitting on the public seats whose clothing was in the least degree ragged. I have seen these gentlemen in blue use their batons vigorously on the prostrate forms of any vagrants caught sleeping out of doors. I have seen groups of these unfortunates 'rounded up' and marched off to the nearest police-station. The Spaniard considers it a religious duty to help a beggar when called on to do so; in New York houses one may notice placards with the inscription, 'No beggars or canvassers need apply.' And yet the citizen of the United States believes that he lives under the most paternal Government in the world!

Many and great are the vicissitudes of the man who emigrates 'on spec.'—or 'goes round the corner,' as they say in Germany. I once knew a man who occupied a lucrative position in London. I found him years afterwards working as a convict on the breezy breakwater at Cape Town. He had been convicted of illicit diamond-buying. Some South African magnates have grown rich by equally questionable methods. But to turn to the brighter side of the picture. I number among my acquaintances many men who have emigrated 'on spec.' with little or no capital, and have in a few years attained a comfortable position—a much better one than they could have hoped to occupy at home. In every case they have been hard-working men, not afraid to rough it, to submit to hardship, or to turn their hand to any kind of work. I know of more than one quondam sailor who has become a successful bush-farmer, though he knew nothing of farming before he took to the life of the pioneer; but he had the 'grit,' the resourcefulness, and the readiness to submit to hardship and privation which characterise the stranded mariner, and these are qualities more valuable to the pioneer in any country than the most liberal education, technical or otherwise. To give another case in point, I know a man of some education who landed in South America practically penniless. After working little more than a year in a bakery (the only work he could find), he commenced the manufacture of biscuits on his own account, on a small scale, in a country town. At first, besides the assistance of his own family, he had only a few boys to help him. About four years later he was able to put up a substantial brick building at a cost of nearly one thousand pounds, and he expects in a year or two more further to enlarge his premises. Of course, this is only a small industry; but it is such small industries which offer good prospects of advancement to a man of limited capital in a new country. In England it would be impossible to start an industry of this kind without large capital, and the case I point out is only a fair sample of many others.

## SOMETHING SAD.

I lie within the pine-shade old beside the mimic main,
And all day long the laughing sound o' the lake is in my brain;
But in the gusts that come and go, and leave the pine-trees sleeping,
I hear the tones of something sad amid the sunshine weeping.

Between me and the mountain-slopes the sparkling waters lie,
Bright as the sheeny sun above, blue as the bending sky;
But near the willows, now and then, I spy a shadow sailing,
And hear the tones of something sad amid the sunshine wailing.

The cushat in the cool recess intones his croodendoo,
The snow-white seagull in the sun is sporting in my view;
But from the sedges by the lake, like sounds for ever dying,
I hear the tones of something sad amid the sunshine sighing.

I hear the cheerful chirrup of the song-bird in its nest,
And hither and yon the hum of bees, in summer's bounty blest;
But in the spear-grass at my feet, too plain for misbelieving,
I hear the tones of something sad amid the sunshine grieving.

The dimpling of the limpid lake into unnumbered smiles,
The grandeur of the solemn hills, the splendour of the isles—
Oh, this were paradise complete, and fit for angels' owning,
But for the tones of something sad amid the sunshine moaning.

Now, who will me tell what it is that, when I would be glad,
Steals through the happy summer air to make my spirit sad;
And why, ere autumn winds are out, and autumn suns are failing,
I hear the tones of something sad amid the sunshine wailing?

Is it the sigh of hasting Time, that comes but to depart?
Is it the cry of wasted Love, that warms but once the heart?
Is it the voice of vain Regret for hopes and faiths declining?
Is it the Fears of future years for present joys repining?

J. Logie Robertson.

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# FOR HIS MOTHER'S SAKE.

By REGINALD HORSLEY.

GENERAL VAN DEN BERGH sat in a small room conversing with his staff, occasionally pausing to receive the report of some incoming scout or messenger. At such times his eyes would wander to the window, where stood Vrouw Dubois—more usually styled Madame, because of her late husband's and her own Huguenot descent.

Whenever the General looked her way the widow's patient, tired eyes turned wistfully to his, and Van den Bergh's rugged face would soften as he sent her a sympathetic glance or murmured a word of encouragement.

In two hours the commando would march to execute one of those lightning swoops for which General Van den Bergh was so famous; and though Madame Dubois would willingly have held back time, she yet longed for ten o'clock to strike. For she would then receive back for one brief hour her son, young Andreas, just then on sentry-go at the northern picket. At eleven he would be taken from her, perhaps for ever, even as this war had already snatched away her husband, who had been one of Van den Bergh's most trusted lieutenants. But in half-an-hour now Andreas would rejoin her for a few all too brief moments of farewell. Then——

The sound of a distant shot came heavily through the rain and wind, and Madame Dubois started, pressing her face against the pane. What was it? The others too heard it, for at a nod from the General they went out.

Van den Bergh rose and took his friend's hand. 'Be of good heart, Hilda,' he said. 'Some nervous sentry has probably discharged his rifle. It may, indeed, have been Andreas.' He smiled. 'Don't look so frightened. I will send the boy to you the moment he is relieved.'

He had scarcely left the house before the door of the room was opened again, and a young man in the khaki of the British entered. His hat was gone, his clothes were soiled, he breathed as though he had been running, and his expression was one of strong excitement.

'Who are you?' Madame Dubois inquired, as the youth, after listening for a moment to make sure that no one was following him, closed the door.

'I must apologise for my unceremonious intrusion,' he said with a bow. 'My name is Richard Winthrop, and I am a lieutenant in the British army, attached to the Intelligence Department.'

'In other words, you are a spy,' put in Madame Dubois, looking with curiosity at him, for he was very young. She added after a moment, 'Why did you come in here?'

'I am not a spy,' Winthrop said calmly. 'I saw General Van den Bergh, with whose face I am familiar, leaving with his officers; and, concluding that the place was abandoned, slipped in to hide until they had withdrawn their men.'

'How did you know that they would not return?' Madame Dubois asked shrewdly. She was a well-educated woman, and spoke in fluent English.

'Some of the burghers were saddling up,' replied Winthrop.

'You have probably been eavesdropping,' the widow said. 'You are, I repeat, a spy.'

'I am not,' Winthrop maintained. 'I was sent with despatches to Sprulfontein, and after nightfall my horse fell and threw me. He bolted as soon as he found his legs, and I was forced to walk. I missed my way and blundered into Van den Bergh's pickets, got through, managed to avoid the bivouac, and slipped in here. Had I supposed the house to be occupied, I should naturally not have entered it. I'll go now. I'm sorry if I've frightened you.'

Madame Dubois was somewhat taken aback. Was this innocence—he seemed very young—or the extreme of cunning? 'Not so fast, young sir,' she objected. 'You came in at your own discretion; you will go out at mine. If I give the alarm, you will find it impossible to escape.'

Dick wondered why she had refrained from at once raising an alarm; but he did not speak, and


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the lady went on: 'Did you overhear conversation relating to the movements of General Van den Bergh's command?'

'Before answering you, madame, I must be satisfied as to your right to question me,' said Winthrop, smiling.

Madame Dubois caught her breath. If Dick Winthrop looked young in a general way, he was positively boyish when he smiled. Her thoughts flew to Andreas, away there in the drenching rain, by the north picket. This boy's fate was in her hands; for if she reported his presence—— She glanced at the clock. Ah, Andreas would be with her in twenty minutes! Before he returned she must decide what to do.

The thought of her son renewed the depression which Dick's sudden entrance had dispelled. Was he safe? He was very young—not yet nineteen—and he was on duty for the first time. This visitor of hers was scarcely much older, she thought, and he was fair too, like Andreas, and tall and well formed like her son. She wondered if he too had a mother, far away, watching and praying for his safe return. Ah, war was horrible—horrible!

She looked at him so wistfully, and her agitation was so evident, that Dick not unnaturally thought that she shrank from giving him up, and began to consider how he should escape when once again outside the house. His exultation at the prospect received a rude check when Madame Dubois suddenly closed the window-shutters, dropped a stout bar across them, and then placed herself between him and the door.

'No one has more reason than I to hate this war,' she said. 'It has cost me my husband, and may rob me of my son. If I have seemed to hesitate with regard to you, it is because I am a mother with an only son.' Dick started, a shadow crossing his face. 'Ah! was I right in thinking that your mother might, like me, be watching and praying for the safe return of her only son—you?' She looked again, wistfully, at him.

'Yes,' Dick answered in a low voice, his lips trembling a little. 'My mother is, like you, a widow. My father was killed at Magersfontein, and I am her only son. But—but I don't wish to trade on'——

He ceased, for Madame Dubois had hidden her face in her hands, and he thought that she was crying. His own eyes were hot, for this sudden reference to his dead father and to his bereaved and anxious mother had momentarily upset him, and he found it hard to control his emotion. A boy not yet twenty, fatherless and aware of his mother's anxiety on his account, is not less brave because he has not forgotten how to feel.

The moment passed for both of them. Madame Dubois uncovered her face and looked coldly upon him.

'I have my duty to my country to think of, Lieutenant Winthrop,' she said. 'I feel for you—for your mother, that is; but you are a spy.' Dick made a gesture of protest. 'Well, you have acquired important information. I cannot let you go.'

Dick bowed, hoping he did not look as disappointed as he felt.

'Unless,' Madame Dubois went on, 'you promise not to repeat what you have—I will say accidentally—learned.'

Dick reddened, but remained silent.

'You are very young,' Madame Dubois pleaded. 'Do not refuse. You will please me greatly if you will give me your promise.'

'You are very good, madame; but you forget that I am a soldier,' Dick said at last.

'And you must remember that I am a soldier's widow, and the mother of a soldier. I dare not endanger my country. You—you know the fate of a spy?'

Dick knew well enough, and was calling all his young manhood to his aid. If he were denounced as a spy, the fact that he had been within the Boer lines, alone and in the darkness, would be proof against him, though he had truthfully accounted for his presence to Madame Dubois. But there was something else which he had not mentioned, and the knowledge that he had entered the house breathless and dishevelled, and seemingly afraid of pursuit, would establish him as the author of a tragedy as yet unsuspected, but which must soon be discovered. If he were not out of the house and in safety when that discovery was made, his fate was certain; for, even if they did not hang him as a spy, the stern Boer code would at once come into operation. 'He has killed a burgher. He must die.'

It was not fear for himself which turned Dick weak, and threatened to break down his power of resistance; for he was no coward. It was the thought of his mother, with her heart still bleeding from an almost mortal wound, if she were now to be bereaved of him. It was this which left him white and irresolute, unable to frame an indignant refusal to Madame Dubois' proposal. He wished that she would give the alarm and be done with it. Anything was better than to stand before that mother, widowed like his own, and dreading the worst for her son. Anything was better than to face that gentle pleader, feeling that at any moment he might, as he would have put it, make a fool of himself.

He flushed suddenly, his head swam, he took an uncertain step forward, and there is no knowing what he would have said or done had not Madame Dubois, pitifully anxious to save him, and to escape the performance of a duty which she loathed, just then inquired, 'Do you think that you were observed by the sentry of the picket you evaded?'

'Yes—no—that is, I—I got past him.'

Madame Dubois started as a memory disturbed her. 'There was a shot out there. Was it fired at you?'

'I—well—yes. I believe so. I'—— Dick was stammering and painfully agitated.

'But are you wounded?' Madame Dubois asked with concern, advancing a step.

Dick recoiled. 'I—oh no. I—I got by. It's no use,' he blurted out desperately. 'Do as you believe right; but for Heaven's sake get it over! If you don't call them in, I shall. I can't stand this much longer.'

Woman's intuition, linked with mother-love, told Madame Dubois what was in the lad's mind. Laying her hand upon his arm, she said softly, 'My boy, promise me—for your mother's sake.'

Then she recoiled with a cry, her fingers wet with red stains; and when Dick saw that, he too recoiled with a smothered ejaculation.

'So you are wounded!' the widow cried. 'Oh, why did you not tell me?'

She broke off as footsteps sounded in the passage. Her mind was suddenly made up. If the boy would not yield, she must; for she could not bear to see him taken before her eyes and led away to——

She seized the arm which she supposed to be unwounded, and fairly pulled him into the inner room, the blood upon her hands coming off upon his sleeve. 'Leave all to me,' she whispered, and slipped back into the larger room just as three Boers entered it.

'A British spy has penetrated into the camp, madame,' said one, 'and all trace of him was lost not far from your house. It is just possible that he may have entered and be hiding here.'

'Here!' Madame Dubois echoed. 'Why, Cornet Blumen, how could he have entered here unseen by me?'

'No, madame; but'—— The cornet by a gesture indicated the inner room.

'That is little more than a closet, and has no window.' She turned indifferently away. 'By all means search. Perhaps you suspect me of concealing the young man?'

She coloured, remembering that not a word had passed as to the age or appearance of the reputed spy. Fortunately the cornet heard without attaching any importance to her words.

'Your loyalty is well known, madame,' he said with a serious air. 'I really came for your formal permission to search the rest of the house.'

'You have it, sir. Forgive me. I am not a little anxious about my son.' She broke off, staring at the cornet.

Was that suspicion in his eyes? No. Oh Heaven, it was pity! Why—why? She strove to speak, but could not, as Blumen, with a grave salute, and with that pitiful expression still softening his stern eyes, led his men from the room.

Madame Dubois stood for an instant more as if turned to stone. Then, with a low cry, she threw herself upon her knees in supplication.

'Oh God, lay not a burden upon me greater than I can bear,' she prayed. 'Be merciful to me, even as I am merciful. See, I spare this boy for his mother's sake. Spare my son, even as I spare hers. Oh, if this deed of mercy find favour in Thy sight, give me my son's life throughout this awful war.'

'Hilda!'

She sprang up, startled, to face General Van den Bergh, who had entered very quietly. As she looked at him her heart seemed to freeze. The hand he took was cold as ice.

'Hilda!' He spoke very softly, caressingly, as to a tired child. 'Hilda, God loves you well.'

'Oh!' It was a gasp of pure relief. 'Then he is safe! I thought—I feared—— But that is all over. Yes, yes; indeed, God loves me well!'

Van den Bergh's voice trembled. 'For whom He loveth He chasteneth, Hilda,' he said gently, and caught her as she fell.

He stood by her until her eyes opened again. 'Hermann, you!' she said weakly. 'What—I don't understand. Ah, yes, I remember. Andreas, my son! Yes, oh yes, God loves me well!'

Her voice had grown stronger with each word, and she finished with a burst of laughter, the wild and bitter ring in which shocked Van den Bergh.

'Hilda!' he exclaimed; but her gentleness and patience were gone. Her mouth set relentlessly; her eyes, as she turned them towards the door of the inner room, were bright and hard. 'Tell me all,' she commanded.

'The worst lies in one word,' Van den Bergh said sadly. 'Andreas is dead!' He went on rapidly, 'As far as can be judged—for none saw the tragedy enacted—the spy, stealing in, encountered Andreas, who fired and missed. The spy returned the fire, and Andreas was killed. There must have been two shots fired, though we heard only one; for the boy's rifle has been discharged. They are bringing him in.' He took her hand again. 'Be brave, Hilda, and be comforted. Andreas died doing his duty. No man can ask a better death.'

Madame Dubois stared at him. Then she laughed again, a hard, unnatural laugh. 'Andreas is dead! My husband first, and now my son! Oh, this is love indeed! I prayed, Hermann. I tell you, I prayed. I made a bargain with God that as I had been merciful, so should He be. And'——

'Hilda!' interposed the General.

'God heard, I tell you, Hermann. I showed Him how I was merciful, and I expected—I had a right to expect'—— Her voice rang hard. 'But why should I spare who am not spared? Why should I give from whom all is taken? Eh, Hermann, tell me that!'

General Van den Bergh thought that she was raving. He feared that her brain was giving way under the terrible shock. He began to soothe her; but she silenced him with another outburst.

'Ah, Hermann the Just, you cannot tell me. What would you do if you had shown mercy, and God requited you by slaying your only son? Eh, Hermann?'

'Oh, hush, Hilda!'

'Why don't you answer? If you made a bargain,

and it was broken, would you keep faith with the breaker? Eh, Hermann, would you?' She was moving all the time, slowly, jerkily, towards the inner room. 'Am I to be bereaved while another rejoices?' she cried wildly. 'Shall I not strike when I am struck? I would have kept my bargain, Hermann, if—if God had not loved me so well.' Grasping the handle of the door, she burst again into a bitter laugh. 'Come here, Hermann, and I will show you how a woman revenges a broken bargain.'

But, with a sudden change of intention, she went back to the General, and said, lowering her voice to a confidential tone, 'Are they bringing him home to me—my dead Andreas? Yes. Well, go and meet them, Hermann, and bring in a file of men along with my dead boy. I've a surprise for you, Hermann—a surprise, I tell you. Bring strong men. Bring them in with Andreas; for I want the boy to know what his mother is doing. Quick!'

And General Van den Bergh, thinking it best to humour her in her present wild mood, went out to meet the men who were bringing Andreas home.

Madame Dubois waited until she was sure that her friend had left the house, when she locked the door leading to the passage, and then, flinging open that of the inner room, called in a low voice, 'Come out!'

Winthrop instantly obeyed. 'How can I thank you?' he began. 'I heard them in here, but could not catch a word that was said. Indeed, I had no desire to do so. But you did not give me up, and—— Why, what is the matter?' he broke off to ask, struck by her increased pallor, the bright spot upon either cheek, and the wildness in her eyes.

'Tell me,' said Madame Dubois, 'and tell me quickly, whose is that blood upon your left sleeve? Tell me the truth. I shall know if you are lying. No protestations now, no mock heroics of indignation;' for Dick had flushed at the imputation. 'The truth, I say!'

'I don't understand you,' said Winthrop. 'You conceal me from those who, I suppose, wish to take me, and then, instead of letting me go, you question me as if you were the provost-marshal. I'——

'Will you speak?' the widow cried threateningly. 'I will have the truth. Whose is that blood?'

'I'll not answer you,' Dick said rather sullenly, for he was bitterly disappointed. 'You are a civilian, and it is no business of yours what happens in war. Call back your men, or I'll make a dash at the window and take my chance.'

Madame Dubois produced a small revolver, which it was quite evident she knew how to use. 'You will stay just where you are,' she told him in a hard voice; 'and you will, if you are wise, at once tell the truth. The men will soon be back. Now!'

But Dick remained obstinately silent.

Madame Dubois bent towards him. 'Do you know what will happen if they take you—murderer?'

Dick started. 'I'm not a murderer,' he cried, his face aflame. 'Are you mad? Don't you know that we are at war? It was his life or mine, and I killed him in self-defence.'

The widow's face grew ghastly, and Dick, thinking that she was going to faint, mentally cast up his chances of escape. But she fought back her weakness, gripping with her free hand the back of a chair.

'Ah! we have the truth at last,' she said in tones whose tension should have told Dick the depth of her feeling; but he had made up his mind that she was either mad or some bigoted Boer eager to display her hatred of all things British. Else, why should she pretend to save him, and then subject him to a species of torture?

'I'm glad to hear you say so,' he said recklessly. 'You admit that I am not a murderer, at any rate. Well, now, I hope you are satisfied. Or would you like to know just how it happened, since you seem to relish horrors?'

His brutality of speech had its purpose. He could not show violence to a woman, despite her revolver; but if she would only behave more after the fashion of her sex, and faint, he could make a rush for it. Her voice broke in upon his thoughts.

'Yes, I should like to know just how it happened.'

'As you will. I see that you mean to detain me until your friends return,' said Dick. 'I told you the truth as to my accident. Then, when I was wandering about in the dark, I ran plump into a man, who said something in Dutch, and grabbed me. I could feel that he was trying to lower the muzzle of his rifle and let me have the charge in my body; so I closed with him, and we struggled together till the rifle suddenly exploded. I felt him go limp, and he slipped through my grasp to the ground. And then'——

'And then you ran, coward, careless whether your victim was dead or only injured!' struck in Madame Dubois.

'I did not,' flamed Dick; 'though I don't know why I shouldn't have. It's what some of your fellows would have done. I was fool enough to stop where I was; and then, hearing no sound of approaching feet, I struck a match to find out what damage had been done.'

'He was dead?' Madame Dubois' voice was so low that Dick only just caught the words.

'No; but he was pretty far through, I judged. I saw no chance for him; but I wrapped my cloak round him, and propped him against a rock. Then, as his friends were coming up, I took to my heels.'

'You succoured the enemy who would have killed you?' The voice was still low; but the sting was gone out of it.

'Of course,' the lad answered with heat. 'We British are not brutes, though you choose to call us murderers. As to his trying to kill me, I don't blame him. It's the luck of war which comes out on top. It might just as well have been he.'

'But it was you.'

'Yes. I'm sorry for the poor chap. I didn't want to kill him. In fact, I'm not sure that I did.

The rifle exploded; but no one can say which of us caused it to go off.'

'You are sorry you killed him?'

'Yes, I am, if I did. One doesn't kill for the fun of the thing, even in war. The poor chap was only doing his duty. It was rotten luck for him.'

The schoolboy slang slipped out; but it was convincing in its way. Madame Dubois laid down her revolver. 'I believe you,' she said with difficulty. 'I believe that you are sorry you killed him.'

'I've said so,' returned Dick. 'And now I've earned the right to ask what you are going to do. As a civilian, you've no right to threaten me with that thing. You could be shot for it, you know,' he added with a wise shake of the head which under other circumstances would have been comic.

'You might have brought him in, if he was only wounded,' Madame Dubois said, ignoring alike his question and his admonition.

'Good heavens! and have got myself caught!' cried Dick. 'His friends were coming up. I tell you, the fellow was as good as dead. I did all I could; but there's no pleasing you. You couldn't make more fuss if he had been your own son.'

'He was my own son—my only son,' Madame Dubois said stonily. 'That was what they came to tell me.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Dick, 'why didn't you stop me? I didn't know—I never'——

He stammered, choked, grew silent. He was a good fellow, clean-minded and loyal where women were concerned, and his love for his mother was intense. He was absolutely shocked into silence; for his very fears for his own mother, were he, like his father, to be taken from her, told him what this woman must now be suffering—what he, all inadvertently, had made her suffer. For he had not only killed her son, but he had related the episode in an apparently callous manner which, if it had had its purpose, was nevertheless informed with a brutality which he would never have shown had he had the least inkling of the true state of affairs. He tried to think of something to say; but as he watched Madame Dubois, leaning with clenched hands upon the table, pale, tearless, agonised, words again failed him. He was horrified at what he had done and said.

Then, as he kept his place, all thoughts of self gone, his mind centred entirely upon that lonely figure, tears suddenly stung his eyes, and—he scarcely struggled against it—a sob escaped him.

Madame Dubois raised her head and looked at him, and Dick, his tongue loosened by his manly grief, sprang to her side. 'Forgive me!' he cried. 'Not for what I did—you are too just to blame me there—but for what I said. Forgive me!'

She did not answer, though she heard him; for she knew that if she tried to speak, if she once let go the grip she had taken of herself, what she meant to do would never be done in time.

With averted face, apparently heedless of Dick's appeal, she moved away from him, and the young soldier hung his head, feeling more shame than ever in his life before.

A jarring sound caused him to look up, and he started in sheer amazement. Madame Dubois had unbarred the shutters and flung open the hinged window. She said no word, but pointed to the open window. Her forgiveness, it was clear, was to be expressed in something more substantial than words.

But Dick held back. 'I can't, madame,' he said. 'You are too generous. You make me ashamed.'

Madame Dubois still dared not speak. She inclined her head towards the outer air, and the gesture said eloquently, 'Go!'

'I can't,' Dick said again. 'It's too mean. I feel as if I were leaving you to bear all the'——

Sounds were borne through the closed doors of the room and passage. Madame Dubois knew what they meant, and her pale face flushed and again grew deathly in its pallor. She put out a hand towards Dick, drew it back, as if the horror of contact unnerved her, extended it again, and pointed to the window. Then she found a voice, hoarse, strained. 'Go!' it said. 'They are bringing—they are coming.' As Dick still hesitated, she closed her eyes, grasped his shoulder, and, impelling him towards the window, said in a dry whisper, '*For your mother's sake!*'

Dick looked at her, but her eyes were obstinately shut. In that moment he realised all the heroism of her act. The outer door opened. He hesitated an instant. Then the remembrance of his mother overbore him, and he vaulted through the window.

Madame Dubois swiftly closed it, for footsteps were coming slowly, heavily, through the passage. With a cry she flung herself upon her knees, hiding her face in her hands. She could not bear to look upon that which was coming in.

She shed no tears, but trembled violently as the shuffling feet halted in the passage. She could not pray, for her heart was hot with rebellion; but as the handle of the door was turned a sob shook her, and her head went down upon her arms.

But no one entered. The handle of the door was gently rattled, and then the stricken woman remembered that she had locked the door. It was useless. She must open it and face that dreadful thing which they were bringing in.

She leaned her head upon her arm against the post and flung open the door. She could not look upon her dead. But still no one entered. The bearers, she thought, had gone, leaving the bier, unwilling to intrude upon her grief. It was kindly done. Ah, well! she must look sometime. In dumb agony she opened her eyes—opened and fixed them in a wide, staring gaze.

Against the outer post, his face as white as her own, a reddened bandage round his head, his limbs flexed as hardly able to hold him up, leant a boy. His weary eyes, drawn by hers, opened.

'Mother!'

'Andreas! My son! my son!'

Fiercely, as if even then afraid that he would be torn from her, she gathered him in her arms and with momentary strength almost carried him to the sofa. 'My boy! my boy!' she wailed, 'have I found you only to lose you?'

Oh, the joy of it! Andreas again opened his eyes and smiled at her. 'Scalp wound,' he murmured. 'Only loss of blood.' Then he fainted.

The mother clasped him to her bosom as when he had been a little boy; the blessed relief of tears came to her, and she cried aloud her thanks to God.

'Oh Andreas,' she sobbed, 'my son that was dead and is alive again! Oh God, forgive me the sin of my bitter words! Oh Andreas, my son! Thank God! thank God!'

Outside, Dick Winthrop, lurking at the window, saw and rejoiced. 'Thank God!' he echoed, and stole away, light-hearted, through the darkness and rain.

## ON THE LOVE OF CHANGE.

By F. G. Aflalo.

THE degree in which change of scene and occupation is a condition of human happiness is a matter of temperament. There are enviable and unprogressive beings who prefer to live *unhistorically*, like Nietzsche's ox. They live for vegetable ideals, and for them change has no charms. Ruskin considers that those who love change are hard-hearted and weak-minded. But great minds are privileged, as five minutes spent in the company of a dictionary of quotations will convince the most enthusiastic hero-worshipper, to postulate propositions which in the mouths of commonplace men would sound absurd. This axiom of Mr Ruskin's will not, at any rate, bear the test of its converse; for if those who detest change are endowed with the opposite qualities, then the ex-Sultan of Turkey, who for thirty years rarely showed himself outside Yildiz, must have had a heart that melted with tenderness. Unfortunately, recent history does not confirm this estimate.

Not all great writers have endorsed Ruskin's opinion of those who love variety. Tennyson's passionate plea for the 'ringing grooves of change' will live when Ruskin's verdict is forgotten, and Meredith's tribute to change as the 'strongest son of life' makes virile appeal to minds attuned to such sentiments.

The value of change as an element of happiness varies already in the schoolboy. One lad collects moths or birds' eggs; another spends his pocket-money in keeping silkworms. Here, in epitome, is the whole conflict between those who love change and those who do not. The one, having acquired unchanging things of beauty, is content to have them always as they are, a feast for the eye and a monument perhaps to his patience as a collector. The other's pleasure lies in going every morning to see his living treasures undergo those metamorphoses which are the law inviolate of their being. His happiness consists in the breathless interest of watching the worm grow to full size, then fall asleep in its paper bag, and finally emerge from the bran as the perfect insect.

Love of change, then, as a condition of happiness, is temperamental, and can no more be lived down than love of colour or of music. Poets regard it as peculiar to women and the wealthy, but it is not. That *gratæ divitibus vices* is another of those classical remarks lacking foundation, for the *vices* (this is Latin, not English) would be equally welcome to the poor had they but greater opportunities of enjoying them. It is often just the question of opportunity, the distinction between Mrs Howard Gould, with her nine daily changes of clothing at Palm Beach, and the veiled Turkish ladies, whose retiring modesty and wifely obedience make one wonder whether, after all, the Wise Men are come out of the East, or whether they have not rather stayed there.

Can there, I wonder, be any gain in discussing this love of change, with Ruskin, from the moral standpoint. There are some of us to whom travel is the A and Z of happiness. To see a new city, to dwell among strange peoples, may mean more to such than the handling of money, or power, or horse-racing. Yet can it be seriously laid down that they are either better or worse than their neighbours who love their town-house or their country cottage, and hate travel for its discomfort? It is not that the new should always look green, for he who shuns monotony will on occasion welcome a change even for the worse, like Washington Irving, who liked another seat in the stage-coach, if only to get bruised in a different place.

The sportsman loves change as an inseparable condition of happiness in the open. The full days shine more brightly for contrast with the blank. A good shot, well brought off, is more satisfactory if it follows a bad miss. A heavy fish brought to the bank looks still heavier if others have been lost that morning. Philosophers, treating of the delicate matter of matrimony, compare people with caged birds: those, they say, who are in try to get out, and those that are out try to get in. This is the sentiment of the angel in Tosti's song when he sings to the maid on the balcony:

> Dammi i dolor' del mondo;
> Io ti daro degli angeli l'amore.

For some, then, change of food, of work, of pleasure, of dress, of company, and of opinions must always be the salt of life, the secret of happiness. They

read with pleasure such tributes as those paid by Mr Lucas to 'Her Infinite Variety.' Swinburne put this delightfully with his

> You've forgotten my kisses,
> And I've forgotten your name.

Like every other taste, the love of change may be abused, and, so abused, it is probably responsible for more troubles in this life than most other preferences. Something of this notion doubtless suggested to Ruskin his harsh verdict.

Thus, then, it remains. Those who can find happiness without change, who, early in life, have found their ideals and can realise them without the fret of movement, are to be envied, much as, on a lower plane, Nietzsche's unhistoric ox is to be envied, though without any comparison between the two, since the beast knows no other condition until it is led to the slaughter-house, whereas the most restless of men unconsciously looks forward to peace in the sunset. For youth, however, in its normal healthy condition, change is a precious asset of happiness. The very beauty of the humblest garden lies in its transformations between the seasons, in the death of one flower and the birth of another. The amaranth must have been a boring blossom!

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XLIV.—HOW JACK WAS KIDNAPPED INTO THE RIGHT WAY.

PARIS—apart from obtrusive recollection of the stories he had heard of wholesale slaughterings, of streets running with blood, of the guillotine, and heads old and young tumbling like apples into the baskets, while terrible women sat knitting and laughing at the sight—struck Jack as a very much brighter and livelier city than London. He was glad of the chance of seeing it, and looked with observant eyes upon so much of it as came within his purview.

There were no guillotines about, the streets were full of life and colour, and the people seemed lively and anything but bloodthirsty. Their costumes and their manners alike struck his sober insularity as somewhat ridiculous, they were so very different from what he had been accustomed to.

Although the Emperor with one hundred thousand men was away fighting the Austrians, the city seemed full of soldiers. No matter what street you turned up, you met a regiment or part of one before you got through it. Gaily clad officers clanked and pranced everywhere, and the ordinary citizens all seemed in the gayest of spirits and full of business.

He had no difficulty in finding the De Montessonnes' house in the Faubourg St Germain. Sir Charles had given him full and clear directions. It was only a walk along the quays from where they were moored, and a turn to the right; and he passed and repassed the gloomy mansion many times a day in hopes of a sight of Mavie.

His common-sense told him not to attract attention by lingering there. And what he would do if he did see her would have to depend upon circumstances. For Sir Charles, knowing Bonaparte and his ways, had impressed upon him the supreme desirability of getting her away in such a manner as should leave no possible grounds for reproach against Monsieur and Madame de Montessonne. But though he took, as he thought, every precaution, and hardly dared to look at the house except out of the corners of his eyes, it was out of the question that he should escape unobserved.

The thing that roused his suspicions was what appealed to him at first as the extraordinary facial resemblance among the frequenters of the Faubourg. The same type of face came under his eyes time after time, till he began to wonder if all the inhabitants of that *quartier* were close relations. Then, with a shock, the idea suggested itself that these were not many faces, but several faces constantly repeating themselves. The incidental bodies might vary in shape and costume; the faces themselves were not always quite the same; but through all such changes it seemed to him that the personalities were the same, and the idea naturally followed that, if he were frequenting that street with a particular object, these men might be doing the same; and, finally, that their particular object might quite possibly be himself.

Arrived at that conclusion, he found some amusement in putting it to the test by walking quickly along the street, and turning suddenly and walking back again, when invariably the suspected one plodded straight on with absolute unconcern, and disappeared without even a backward look; by walking slowly along the street and away into the purlieus of the *quartier*, whereby he more than once lost himself completely and ran risks which ignorance of his surroundings kept him blind to.

On more than one such occasion he had to inquire his way back to the *Belle Marie* from the decentest-looking individual he could find, and even in this it seemed to him that he discerned a certain family likeness among those who so courteously put him right.

But whether he was being spied upon or not, no other way of communicating with Mavie seemed open to him, and he continued his oversight of the De Montessonne house with the dogged pertinacity which was a part of himself.

In his simplicity he had proposed handing to the concierge the letter he had prepared, with one from Sir Charles inside it. But madame enlightened and shocked him by such sweeping condemnation of concierges in general, and such explicit declara-

tion that every concierge in Paris was notoriously in the pay of the police, that he shuddered at his own innocence and felt himself in a den of thieves.

'Is no one in Paris to be trusted, then?' he asked, scandalised.

'Well, there's me—and Jolicot, to an extent, and as long as he doesn't know too much. If you take my advice you'll be very cautious with any one else.' And Jack went like a lamb in a land of wolves.

His patience was rewarded one day by a sight of Mistress Honeybun, who came out arrayed in what seemed to him quite unwonted splendour, and the sight of her brought Mavie appreciably nearer. Why, she might even have spoken to her within the last half-hour. She was greeted on the street with much effusion by an equally sumptuously dressed man, and as they passed the young bargeman in his blue guernsey and stocking-cap Mistress Honeybun was in such a state of blissful confusion that she would not have recognised any one less poignant to her feelings than, say, Jerry MacClootie. Jack wondered what any man could possibly want with such a piece of acidulated decorum as Honeybun, but gave it up as beyond his understanding. From the look on her face he thought Paris must be having an effect on her.

On another occasion his heart jumped into his throat when, mingling with a little crowd of onlookers, he saw the heavy wooden doors of the gloomy arched entrance roll back, and the great family carriage came out, and in it were Monsieur and Madame de Montessonne, and on the front seat Etienne in the uniform of a sub-lieutenant of artillery, and—could it be Mavie, that radiant beauty in white, with pearls round her neck and in her soft brown hair?

Mavie without a doubt. That something kicking in his throat and just below it would have told him so even if his eyes could have doubted it. But two years of absence and of Paris had made mighty changes in her. She looked quite grown-up and wonderfully beautiful. He felt himself suddenly small and humble and of incredibly coarse texture in comparison with her dainty sweetness.

He wondered momentarily if she could have changed inwardly, as undoubtedly she had outwardly. But he thought not. Mavie would be Mavie to the end of her life. For Etienne, there arose within him the old inclination to punch his head, he looked so much better satisfied with himself than he used to do; so much as though the world were made for the De Montessonnes.

One more sight of her was the sole result of ten days of as close and continuous a watch as he dared to keep. And again she was in the carriage, gleaming like an exquisite jewel in a sombre case, and again Etienne sat beside her, with monsieur and madame opposite.

The *Belle Marie* had discharged her cargo and was quite ready for the return journey. M. Jolicot took advantage of so unique an opportunity to assume a virtue which was not in him. No man more regardful than he of the delights of the metropolis, it was, as a rule, all madame could do to get the good man and his boat's blunt nose turned coastwards. Odd bits of business would keep on turning up, occasioning another day's delay, and of course further opportunity of enjoyment to M. Jolicot. And madame never could say quite as much as she thought about it, for there the bits of business undoubtedly were, and that they had not been got through before always seemed anybody's business but monsieur's. Madame, without doubt, had her own ideas on the subject; but whenever she ventured to express them, having no proofs to the contrary, the only results were wordy wrangles and discomfiture.

Now, however, monsieur found his chance. It was high time they were off; not that he wanted to go, but that he saw that madame wished to stay, knew therefore that she would stay, and so made great pretence of business-like eagerness to depart as cover for unlimited past and future lapses in that respect.

'*Tiens! tiens!* we wait still then!' he would virtuously growl. 'It is all very well to expect a passenger; but what will they say at the other end? And the passenger, *ma foi!* where is he, and why doesn't he come?'

'Patience, *mon beau;* patience! He will come all in good time,' madame would reply. 'Another day or so maybe. Go you and enjoy yourself, then. It is not often you are in such a hurry to depart.'

'*Ma foi!* I? Always, the moment business permits, I am ready—always!'

'Well, well! if this passenger comes, you understand, there will be fifty francs into your pocket to spend as you please, and fifty francs don't tumble out of the skies every day in the week.'

'*Eh bien*, my little one! if you say so'— and monsieur departed for another evening's joviality, well pleased with himself.

You see, madame, of her wisdom, had deemed it best to say as little as possible, and monsieur had accordingly but a limited comprehension of the facts of the case, and little Auguste's portion would be intact, since she would provide the fifty francs from her own little savings.

As the days passed, and M. Jaxax returned each night dispirited at the fruitlessness of his quest, she too began to grow doubtful and depressed at prospect of the possibility of that thousand francs slipping through her fingers in spite of herself.

Each night she anxiously discussed matters with Jack, and advised him to the best of her powers. She offered to do her best to convey a letter from him to mademoiselle by means of some of the servants of the house. But the concierge was too much for her, and she returned in despair. The De Montessonne mansion seemed impregnable.

Jack, when he found Mavie unattainable by any other means, had suggested posting his letter with the enclosure from Sir Charles inside it. But madame promptly negatived that idea also.

'Just as well go at once to the police and tell them all about it,' she said with energy. 'No, I don't trust their posts, not a bit. They open and read every letter they wish to.'

Then, when he was at his wits' end how to proceed, the matter was solved for him in a way he had never dreamt of.

Within such limits as he dared permit himself, he haunted the Rue de l'Université like an anxious ghost, passing through it at all different hours of the day and night on the chance of some means of communication with Mavie presenting itself; and as the days passed fruitless he said to himself that he was not one step nearer his object than the day he arrived, and was simply wasting his time. He could think of nothing else to do, however, and so stuck to it with growing anxiety lest M. Jolicot should at last insist on departure, and that fine chance be gone.

He was returning to the quay one night, disheartened as usual, and racking his brain for ways and means of compassing his ends, when the well-directed whirl of a leg from behind swept his feet from under him and laid him out flat on the cobbles. Before he could make an effort for liberty two men were sitting on him, lashing his feet and hands.

He had barely time to understand that he was in the toils when he also became aware of the strange fact that his captors were apparently in fierce dispute on top of him. The two who had sat on him had suddenly multiplied, and many dark figures were struggling over and upon him. He rolled over on to his face so as to present as tough a surface as possible to the combatants, and presently he was picked up, hurriedly but not ungently, carried a short distance, and laid in a coach, which set off at speed. Then a knife cut his bonds, and he was able to sit upright in a corner of the carriage.

'What is all this?' he jerked.

'It's all right,' said a man who sat alongside him. 'You're among friends now.'

'You have strange ways of showing friendliness in Paris, monsieur. Where are you taking me to?'

'A friend.' And that was all Jack could get out of him.

The carriage stopped at last at a small door in a high wall, and drove off at once when they had descended.

'Follow me!' said his guide, as he unlocked the door. He locked it again behind them, and led the way through gardens and more doors, and at last into a house, up a narrow staircase, into a room where a man of striking appearance lay on a couch before the fire.

His face was colourless, but attractive by reason of its profound sagacity. 'A man who has seen much and done much, and who knows more than most. I have seen him somewhere before,' said Jack to himself, and sent his wits in search of the clue. That pale, striking face, with the blue-gray eyes and long wavy hair and bushy brows, and the faint smile that hovered about the firm, well-shaped mouth! He was sure he had met all these before.

'We got him, monsieur, just in the nick of time,' said his captor. 'They had him down and were tying his hands when we saved them any further trouble.'

'Well, well, my good Jean-Marie, one moment sooner and we might have saved monsieur the indignity of the tied hands. However—— Wait below, and presently you will see him safe home again.'

Then he turned to Jack with a friendly smile at the puzzled set of his face. 'So you have found no means of communicating with mademoiselle yet, my friend?'

But Jack was not going to commit himself, and made no answer.

'A prudent messenger is worth his weight in gold. You do my friend Lauriston credit, *mon beau*. You may, however, discuss the matter with me without reserve. See—read that!' and he picked up a letter from a table at his elbow and threw it across to Jack.

A strange letter, typical of the times in which it was written:

'My good Friend,—Permit me to recall your promise of many months ago as to the forwarding of certain goods detained in your city by the embargo of circumstances. I am now in most urgent need of same, and shall greatly appreciate any assistance you can render to the messenger I am sending for the purpose.—With every assurance of my highest esteem, . Charles Hamilton.'

'You know the writing?'

Jack nodded.

'That reached me only two days ago, and by very roundabout means. It had been opened, of course; but as it was addressed to a third party, my good friend the Minister of Police was, in this instance, probably not much the wiser. Well, do you know me now, and are you prepared to trust me?'

Jack's plodding brain had been following back filaments of memory. 'You must be M. de Talleyrand,' he ventured.

'I am M. de Talleyrand. I could not well disguise the fact if I would,' with a whimsical shrug and a glance at the inefficient leg on the sofa.

'I remember monsieur's coming once to visit M. de Montessonne at my grandfather's in Queen Street.'

'Quite right! Have you seen Miss Lauriston yet?'

'In her carriage only, monsieur.'

'You have not been able to communicate with her?'

'I've begun to be afraid it is impossible.'

'The post? A letter and a fee to the concierge?'

'Madame Jolicot assured me that in either case the letter would only get to the police.'

'And who is Madame Jolicot?'

Jack explained.

'Madame Jolicot is discretion itself, a treasure in these days when woman spells frivolity. I will

make a note of her. Well now, M. Sax, here is how I can assist you—that is, my good friend Sir Charles. On Friday I give a dinner here, and a ball afterwards. Monsieur and Madame de Montessonne and Miss Lauriston will be present. Suppose you have your boat all ready to start down-river at a moment's notice; suppose mademoiselle could slip away and come to you. She will need a disguise, by the way. A demoiselle in ball-costume on a canal boat'——

'I have a sailor-boy's costume for her, monsieur.'

'Capital! My payment shall be a sight of her in it. But the boat may be searched. Can you conceal her on board?'

'Madame Jolicot will be able to do that, I'm sure. We have a good cargo of bales and boxes—light things. She could perhaps get inside one of them.'

'I must leave that part of the business to you and madame. My man shall take you back now and bring with him the costume for mademoiselle. You will leave with me your letter, and I will place it in her own hands. She will know nothing until the dancing begins. Then I will speak to her. She shall slip away to a room, change into a sailor-boy, and Jean-Marie shall bring her to you by the ways you came to-night. How will that do?'

'I cannot thank you, monsieur. Sir Charles will do that—and my lady. It is for her sake we need Miss Mavie home. She is pining away, they say, for want of her.'

'I understand. You go—where?'

'Down the river to Honfleur. Across Cotentin to Sercq.'

'Good! That is the safest way nowadays.'

'And those others, monsieur, who knocked me down?'

'Fouché's men, most likely. They had no doubt been watching you, and wondering what you were up to, and were going to find out or end the matter. When I received Sir Charles's letter I expected his messenger would be hanging about the Montessonne house. My men had been watching you for two days. Keep close quarters now, and attract as little attention as possible, and be all ready to start on Friday night.'

He pulled a bell, and Jean-Marie came in.

'You will see monsieur safely to his boat, Jean-Marie, and bring back a parcel he will give you. —*Au revoir*, my young friend! And a safe and pleasant journey to you!'

And Jack found himself threading his devious way back to the outer world at Jean-Marie's heels.

*(To be continued.)*

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# IN NOOKS IN OLD CHURCHES.

By SARAH WILSON, Author of *The Romance of our Ancient Churches.*

THERE are many old-world relics in our ancient churches that have been put into secluded places to be out of the way. We see nothing of them on entering a sacred edifice; but when our first gaze is satisfied, and we can turn our eyes away from the arcades of pillars opening into the calm, cool aisles, and from the arrestment of the windows and attraction of the dim distance beyond the chancel arch, we see them in various shadowy nooks and remote corners.

Among these minor items must be classed the stone altar-slabs that were removed for the substitution of the communion-table. These slabs were generally inlaid with small brass crosses, one in each corner and a fifth in the centre, which represented to many pious minds the five wounds inflicted on our Lord at Calvary. Though removed according to orders, they were not always destroyed, but merely laid down among the paving-stones and memorial slabs on the ground. In one instance, at Westham, Sussex, a fine example with five crosses can be seen on the threshold of a turret stair in the north aisle. In the Church of St Mary, Wiggenhall, there is another with the five crosses on the floor of the sacristy. Another may be viewed in Lincoln Cathedral; others in St Clement's Church, Sandwich; St Giles, Oxon; and at Asthall, in the same county. In All Saints' Church, Stamford, there is a fine slab eleven feet long which has the five crosses; and there is one in St Peter's, Bywell, that has not been removed. In some cases, as in the parish church on Holy Island, though the slab has disappeared, the stone supports have been left.

In a few churches we find a re-use has been made, in long-past days, of the old grave-slabs ornamented with floriated crosses. This is the case in the ancient parish churches at Alnwick, Morpeth, and Middleton. Stones of large dimensions being wanted for lintels, these memorials of individuals of long-forgotten identity have been economically, though perhaps inexcusably, made use of for the required purpose. In Nevern Church, Cardiganshire, there are two much older stones that have been used in a bygone century in the construction of a staircase leading from a chapel on the south side of the nave to the chamber above it, one of which is an Ogam stone, and the other sculptured with interlaced ornament. Occasionally items of one century have been obscured by others of a later date, as at Shustoke, Warwickshire, in which that prince of antiquaries Sir William Dugdale lies buried, where a porch has been built in some old time that obscures half of an older sundial incised on the wall behind it.

The dedication crosses anointed by the bishop in the consecration service may be found preserved in several churches. Crosthwaite has them on the

western jambs of the south window about eight feet from the ground. Tideswell Church in Derbyshire, St Giles in Oxford, Westham, Wrexham, and Cleatham, among other places, possess these relics. They give us evidence of the service of consecration in this country as far back as Anglo-Saxon times, for we may see them on the chancel arch of the Saxon church at Escomb, near Durham, and on the exterior of the east wall; and they assure us they were understanded of the people, so to speak, in those days. One of these Saxon relics was recently found built up in a Norman window in the chancel of Llanbethian Church, near Cowbridge, showing the same kind of appropriation on the part of Norman masons as that of the workmen who inserted the grave-slabs in the windows at Alnwick, Morpeth, and Middleton. This stone is eleven inches square and four thick. We are told in the legend of Edric that there were twelve of these crosses made for the dedication of St Peter's, Westminster. There are twelve on the south side of Cannington Church, Somerset. In Jarrow Church, now built up in the walling over the chancel arch, is a Saxon dedication-stone in two parts, setting forth in Latin that the building, called a basilica, was founded by Abbot Ceolfrid on the ninth of the kalends of May in the fifteenth year of the reign of King Egfrid.

The greater number of holy-water stoups have been removed, but here and there we come upon one that has been perhaps overlooked or left untouched from a desire not to injure the building. There is one in Herne Church, Kent; another in Westham Church, Sussex; another in the porch of Somersby Church.

With a little search we may often see the old masons' marks on the stones they 'dressed.' For the most part those on the exterior sides of walls have become obliterated by disintegration, but here and there they may be noticed on the walls in interiors. When we come upon two that are alike we may be sure they are the work of the same mason, hundreds of years ago. Much ingenuity is displayed in the desire to make sufficient difference between these marks. Curiously, this custom seems to have prevailed in most countries.

In rare instances we find a piece of old needlework of exquisite workmanship either framed and hung up, perhaps in the vestry—as in the example in St Saviour's, Southwark, where there is a piece in a black frame, dated 1696—or else folded carefully and kept in a safe place, and either never used or only at long intervals. At Stoulton there is an altar-cloth made out of an ancient embroidered cope; in Alveley Church there is a frontal on which is embroidered a representation of the souls of the faithful reposing in the bosom of Abraham; in St Mary's, Conway, there is a lace altar-cloth of sixteenth-century workmanship; in Hollingbourne Church there is needlework showing pomegranates and grapes, understood to have been wrought by the daughters of Sir John Culpeper in the seventeenth century. Lutterworth has an example under glass. In Winchester Cathedral we may see the hooks in the walls from which tapestry used to be suspended on occasions; and in York Minster and Wells Cathedral we may look upon the chests in which the beautiful needleworked copes were kept. Additions to our scanty store of needlework are occasionally made when tombs are opened, as when that of Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, was opened some time since, and the vestments in which he had been buried seven centuries ago were found to be embroidered with silk and gold, and in good preservation.

In nooks in remote churches are sometimes kept the biers and coffin-stools or rests of old times, some of which are still in occasional use. There are pairs of coffin-stools at Screveton and Skelton, and single ones at Scarrington and Thorpe by Newark. In the church at Culbone there is one of Jacobean workmanship. There are biers in Bamborough and Llanbedr Churches; and in some remote Welsh churches we may notice, affixed to the walls, coffin-plates that have been removed for the purpose. In Easingwold Church the coffin used for the burial of the poor in old times is preserved.

Of more lively interest are the dog-tongs with which the 'dog-whippers' were wont to drag dogs from their hiding-places when it was necessary to expel them from the sacred edifice. They were made to expand to a considerable length. There is a pair of these tongs made of oak, with nails in claws at the end of them, in Cyffylliog Church, Denbighshire.

In many a nook or recess we may see carven effigies of knights and their dames, and of ecclesiastics that have been removed there to be out of the way of congregations or to afford room for more sittings. Their eyes are closed, their hands folded as in prayer, with the exception of a few that clasp a heart upon their breasts. Though most are full-length, others are half-length, and in one case, at Ingram, in Northumberland, only the feet are left. Some have their limbs broken or loose, but for the most part a provident care is now taken of them. Often there are angels on either side of the stone pillows below their heads, and there are animals at their feet. Some of the swords of the knights are represented as sheathed, and some as partly drawn, which difference, doubtless, had its meaning in the sculptor's mind; and some of their legs are crossed at the ankles and others at the knees, which difference probably had its meaning too. Ruskin insisted that the glory of a building is in its age and its presentment of stern watching and mysterious sympathy with 'the passing wave of humanity.' In like manner a consideration of the various items stored up in our old churches may have its use in keeping us in touch with those who have gone before and into whose labours we have entered.

As we take our leave of an old church, having looked reverently upon its general aspect as well

as upon its details, we may observe as we look eastwards that there is an inclination from the straight line in the chancel. Various explanations have been suggested for this fact, both fanciful and practical, as many of our readers may be aware. The inclination is not always in the same direction. Many chancels incline to the north in various parts of the kingdom, as in the churches of St Austell in Cornwall, Middleton in Teasdale, and Bamborough in Northumberland; whilst others bow to the south. One suggestion made for the reason of this departure is the probability that from time immemorial builders commenced their tasks facing the rising sun; and the chancel having been set out at a different time to the nave, the slight difference became inevitable. A more poetical impression flashed into the mind of some medieval worshipper that possibly the declination was meant to represent the drooping of the Saviour's head upon the Cross, just as in our own day the zigzag ornament on Norman work was likened by the Cornish poet, the Rev. R. S. Hawker, to the ripples on the Lake of Gennesareth.

As Pepys turned to leave Rochester Cathedral his scrutinising eyes fell upon another detail: 'Then away thence, observing the great doors of the church, as they say covered with the skins of the Danes.' Hadstock and Copford in Essex were also enriched with these terrible trophies. A few doors are also to be seen riddled with bullet-holes. The south door of Caldecot Church, Warwickshire, is thus perforated, telling of bygone tribulations. This has been carefully lined with new wood to preserve it. The oaken door of Ledbury Church can also show the bullet-marks made in the skirmish with Prince Rupert.

There are many other items of curiosity to be seen here and there in our country churches, such as ducking-stools, fire-hooks, chained books, flags, articles associated with the communion plate (sometimes of silver and sometimes of pewter), fanciful knockers, bread-shelves, and sundials. Perhaps the most pathetic are the faded garlands that still flutter from the roof-timbers of some of them, or hang listlessly from brackets, telling of sorrows that come home to us all.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

### PART III.—THE EXCISEMAN; OR, THE GRATEFUL PATIENT.

IT will be easily understood that my adventure with Miss Raimes could not be kept out of the papers, particularly, of course, because of poor Parrett. The affair became public property in the early autumn, and was a boon to sensational journalists, and anything but a blessing to me.

Alternately and all together I was hinted to be Miss Raimes's lover, a fortune-hunter, an imbecile who couldn't diagnose lunacy, the murderer of poor Parrett, and many other dreadful things. For some weeks everybody knew my name; though, thanks to the ruffianly expression of my portraits in the illustrated papers, strangers meeting me in the street or train did not apparently recognise me. Then, thank Heaven! something else attracted the great energy of the press, and wrung the great heart of the people. Still, I was remembered, as one or two further adventures showed.

Winter had begun, and my fate took me for a month to a northern parish. The practice was poor and scattered, and my professional brother there took a holiday, apparently not because he could afford it, but because he could not afford to do without it. Fortunately I saw by the maps that the parish lay on the west coast. I took a gun, and found it the most congenial company, when I was free to use it, along the shore. Often, however, long distances and bad roads kept me busy from dawn till dark. Sometimes I had to stay, where work had taken me, in some desolate place until daylight helped me home.

One little adventure may amuse you. To tell it is distinctly against myself, but the ring was concerned in it.

I had a telegram one evening from a remote farm inland, and found that by catching the goods train I could be dropped within three miles of the house. There I was met by a messenger with a lantern, and cut across snow-covered hills to my patient. Afterwards I made my way to another point on the line, where there was a hotel, and there I had supper and a bed, no train being due till early morning.

My only companion in the coffee-room was a stout, sunburnt little man, who stamped in just as I sat down to supper, and who seemed well known. He chatted with the landlord, chaffed with Mary the waitress, borrowed slippers and a jacket, shouted for the best they could give him for supper, and started on a stiff toddy by the fire while the meal was getting ready.

He spoke to me of the weather, and consulted the waitress in loud whispers about myself and my business there. She could not tell him anything, and he made me suffer for my obscurity by standing on the hearthrug between me and the fire, and glowering at me, shying an occasional remark which perhaps I did not pay much attention to, as I was very tired. At last his supper came in, he had to leave the fire, and for the time his attention was diverted. Mine, on the other hand, was drawn to him. Never, even in schoolboy or in student days, had I seen such a supper.

Several pork-chops, with a dishful of fried

potatoes, were followed by large hunks of Dutch cheese, eaten with generous supplies of new bread, and literally washed down with glass after glass of toddy. I was fascinated, and must have shown it, for the little man explained semi-apologetically. 'Business is business,' he said across the table to me, 'and I've had no chance of a meal since breakfast.'

I muttered that he must be famished, and presently wished him good-night, and went to my bed, wondering what sort of dreams he would have.

I fell asleep at once, but it was not long before I myself began to dream horribly. I dreamt that I was accused by the stout little man before the General Medical Council of infamous conduct, and was put to the torture—that consisted in having pork-chops pushed whole down my throat, while the council groaned at me.

I half-woke at last, but it seemed to me that the council continued to groan, and I found that horrible noises were really rising from some near room.

The noise was lamentable, and as presently I could distinctly hear some one repeatedly wishing he was dead, I thought it time to offer help, though not, of course, to that end. I found, on following the groans to their source, that they came from the next room to mine, where the stout little man lay doubled up with a violent colic. Explaining that I was a medical, I offered help, and never was gratitude more loudly expressed to me.

I spare you professional details, but I may say that at first I thought the violent disease would need a violent remedy. The little man must, however, have had the constitution and digestion of an ostrich, for a tumbler of hot water and baking-soda internally, and a mustard-poultice externally, brought peace. The little man, quite exhausted, quickly fell asleep, muttering blessings on my name, which he asked for directly he began to recover.

At breakfast the next morning, while repeating his thanks, he explained that this attack was not the first he had suffered after a long day's work followed by a heavy meal. He also swore that in future, wherever he went, he would carry baking-powder and mustard with him. He made no vow of prudence, I observed, in meat or drink.

Repeating my name, he said there was one question he would like to ask me: 'Was I the medical man concerned in the celebrated Grey Moat case?'

'I am,' I said, yawning, and the little man nodded and rubbed his hands.

'There's one thing more,' he said—'only one thing. A ring was mentioned. D'ye wear it?'

'I do,' I said, yawning again, because for a short time these questions had been common, and I was bored to hear them repeated.

'Now, I'd give something to see that ring,' he said. 'I noticed it last night; but—well, the fact is, I couldn't take it in properly as I was then.'

'You can see it on my finger if you particularly want to,' I said, and I stretched my hand across the breakfast-table. He looked at it closely, very closely indeed, and asked me to describe it to him, and to read the motto under the crest.

'Chaste—really chaste!' was the expression he used.

A couple of minutes later I left him scribbling in a fat, well-worn note-book. I confess I did not understand the application of the parting words, which were: 'But business is business.'

I understood better when, in another part of the country a month later, I received an official document summoning me to show reason why I should not answer for infringement of Acts 32 and 33 Vict. c. 14, 51 and 52 Vict. c. 8, 59 and 60 Vict. c. 36, and 3 Edw. VII. c. 36, which enact that persons having armorial bearings painted on or affixed to any carriage, motor, or vehicle drawn by a motor, or wearing or otherwise using armorial bearings, must take out licenses authorising them to do so, under penalty, &c.

It ended in a fine of two guineas, and costs which amounted to another guinea. I was in the wrong, but that did not make the matter any easier to bear. Nor was my temper improved when I learnt that information had been laid by the gentleman whose motto was 'Business is business.' He was an exciseman.

You are mistaken if you suppose that ended the affair, although I heard nothing more of it for over a twelvemonth.

It was in December 1905 that I travelled north again, to take charge of the same practice. The place was by no means an ideal spot in which to spend Christmas; but just then I did not care much where I spent it, and indeed rather preferred to be somewhere where I should not be overmuch reminded of old times.

Christmas Eve offered particularly unpromising prospects for a quiet Christmas Day. Just as I had decided that the deep snow, together with a very light visiting-list, made it possible that I could spend a day with books and my pipe, the inevitable message came.

A 'hurlie' or rough little sledge, used for dragging dead stags in from the hills to the lodge, slipped some twenty miles over the snow for me; and, knowing my patient, I foreboded a night and a Christmas Day in a keeper's cottage. No bad place to be in as a guest if the mistress were not *hors de combat*, but not tempting as things were.

I shrugged my shoulders, took care that a couple of books and a good supply of tobacco were available, and embarking upon the hurlie, slid silently away over the white waste through the dusk of a winter afternoon. After all, there are worse things than a sledge-ride, and the two rolls which we had in the snow *en route* were only laughable.

The Fates were very kind after all. I had decided that I must stay within reach for the night, and was thinking what a horrible nuisance I should be to everybody, idling about in a small

cottage, when an invitation came to me to go elsewhere.

The gentleman-farmer near by, a warm-hearted, forthright Borderer whose acquaintance I had made the year before, came himself, with two romping children to back him, and swore that no friend should spend Christmas Eve so cheerlessly so near his fireside.

I gave way with hardly a decent show of resistance, and half-an-hour later was putting up holly and chasing the children with mistletoe. Finally there were great mysteries over the decking of a Christmas-tree. I was unceremoniously banished, but was allowed, since it was Christmas, to sit by the roaring fire in the kitchen and talk to the eldest daughter, who was busy at the table making scones and cakes with the help of a couple of maids.

It was night now, and as I sat cosily by the fire after expressing my gratitude for being allowed in so comfortable a corner, I watched the frosty stars through the unshuttered window, and then congratulated myself heartily as the wind rose, the stars were blotted out, and snowflakes began to drift against the window-panes.

When a clanging came at the front-door bell I groaned, thinking that I must turn out again; but the maid said it was some one to see 'the master,' and I relapsed with a comfortable sigh into my nonsensical catechism of Jeanie, my host's eldest daughter, on the making of scones. In this I must acknowledge that she, a charming maiden of seventeen, who told me that she meant to 'put her hair up' for the first time for the Christmas dinner, was more than able to hold her own.

It was not long before a sitting-room bell rang, and one of the maids, leaving the kitchen, returned with a snow-covered coat.

'Whose is that?' Jeanie demanded.

'The exciseman's,' the girl replied; adding, 'he's asked for a bed.'

I was not paying much attention, and I watched indifferently while the maid turned out the wet pockets.

A pipe, a pouch, some papers, a sandwich-case, an empty flask, and then a soppy little white packet appeared.

'What'll I do with this?' the girl demanded, holding it up. 'It's fair dripping.'

'What is it?' Jean demanded. 'Let me see.'

She took it gingerly, and spelt out the blurred writing, 'C-a-r-b-o-n-a-t-e;' and I fairly jumped.

'Not carbonate of soda?' I gasped.

'I can't read it,' she said. 'Will you look?' and she handed the messy thing to me.

'Carbonate of soda it is,' I said; 'otherwise baking-soda. It's an awful mess, Miss Jeanie.'

'What on earth does he want it for?' she wondered. 'He isn't even married. Throw it in the fire, please! If it's just that, we've lots here in the tin for him, and my scones are all made.' So into the fire went the baking-soda, and I was fully prepared for meeting my old acquaintance the supervisor when I reluctantly left the kitchen.

'Business is business' were the first words I heard as I entered the room, where he was explaining to his involuntary host that he had been belated by a long search among the hills for an illicit still—an article yet found, I assure you, here and there.

I burst out laughing in the doorway at the familiar sentiment, and the gauger turned and recognised a victim.

'Here's a gentleman,' he said, 'who will agree with me.—Many's the time, doctor, that I've blessed you for the comfort I've felt in having your little *vade mecum*, your valuable *multum in parvo*, in my pocket. Many's the time I've regretted that duty pointed at you. You know what I mean. I was glad to see that the Revenue let you off lightly. You still wear the ring? No unpleasant associations—hey? And no malice, I'm sure? It must be pleasant to you to know that you have a right to wear it—at least, as far as my department is concerned.'

'Say no more,' I insisted, smiling upon him as amiably as I could. 'I shall never mention the unfortunate affair again, unless you do.' And I shall beg you to notice that I strictly kept my word.

The night grew worse, and Elliott, our host, suspecting that some old score lay between me and the exciseman, privately pointed out to me that he was self-invited, but that no Christian could turn away a dog on such a Christmas Eve.

'You are quite mistaken,' I assured him. 'I am very pleased to meet him again, and hope that we shall be better acquainted;' and I watched with friendly interest while the hospitable Elliotts, supper not being for another half-hour, plied the exciseman with strong, sweet tea and hot, buttered scones, with a few mouthfuls of Christmas-cake. Then I retreated again for a while to the kitchen, and for reasons of my own presented the cook with a small Christmas offering.

Supper, half-an-hour or so later, was, like a haggis, fine confused feeding, with something to suit everybody who had been too busy all day for the usual meal. There was tea, I remember, and coffee, hot scones and butter, jam, eggs (which happened to be hard-boiled), new bread, a most seductive cold pigeon-pie, a ham, and some sausages. For myself, I indulged circumspectly in pigeon-pie, with some hot toddy, and vicariously enjoyed the heaped and promiscuous platefuls hospitably and successfully pressed upon the exciseman.

Whisky followed tea; eggs pressed upon the heels of the ham, if I may say so; the pigeon-pie was shied at, but taken on the ground that Jeanie had made it. When a sausage topped all, just about midnight, I raised my tumbler, and, leaning across to the exciseman, wished him a Merry Christmas with the greatest cordiality.

It was not long afterwards that we all trooped to our beds.

It was well on toward dawn when the house was roused by the groans of the exciseman. He had, we heard afterwards, stifled his lamentations for some time, and then worked the bedroom bell till it broke. But no one was awake to hear it, and at last his groans made the night horrible! Horrible, to be frank, except to me. These sounds, 'most musical, most melancholy,' made ample amends to me for my broken rest; and I lay awaiting developments with philosophic calm. I had not to wait very long either. Soon a hurried tread sounded along the passage, and my door was loudly pounded.

'Hallo!' I cried.

'Man,' my host's voice sounded alarm, 'that exciseman's awfully bad! I wish you'd see to him.'

It will shock the more tender-hearted to know that I did not reply at once. I had to bury my face in the pillow to stifle my indecent mirth, and presently the pounding was repeated like thunder.

'Don't smash your door,' I said at last. 'Come in and tell me all about it;' and my host came, and, sitting on the bed in scant attire, hurriedly repeated his melancholy tale.

'So you'll come to him at once,' he concluded, 'and see what you can do for him?'

'Will I?' I said, and almost quailed under his astounded gaze, but I looked at my ring and held firm. 'Has he asked for me?' I demanded.

'Why, yes, man.'

'Are you sure he sent you?'

'Of course! Anyway, I told him I was coming, and he made no objection.'

'Not good enough,' I said callously. 'I make it a rule never to interfere with another man's patients unless in an emergency, *and at the patient's request.*'

Perhaps it was laughter, perhaps it was the sight of my host's astounded face, that made me bury my head in the pillows again.

'You're not serious?' Elliott said severely but confusedly. 'You can't lie there, and stand upon etiquette, and hear the poor fellow groan like that, with deaf ears. Hark to him!'

'I hear,' I said doggedly. 'He must be pretty bad. Has he tried baking-soda?'

'There's none to try,' Elliott said impatiently. 'There's not a particle in the house. He asked for it, and where it's all gone the Lord only knows.'

I privately thought there might be other sources of information, but didn't say so.

'Look here, Elliott,' I said, sitting up in the bed, 'I've met the exciseman before, as you heard, and I know he'd rather do without me if he can. When you can come and tell me on your honour that he himself says he wants me, then I'll rise. Till then I won't move.'

'If you're afraid about your fee,' Elliott said with pardonable stiffness, 'I'll guarantee that.'

'No use,' I replied, and, repeating my ultimatum, turned my back on him, partly to show my determination, and partly to avoid the not very complimentary expression of his face.

Obviously the exciseman would send no such message, and equally obviously his kind-hearted hosts did all they could for him. There were alarms and excursions, lighting of fires and banging of doors, through all of which ran a crescendo of groans. I thought myself beaten at last; and, fearful of possible complications, I was hurriedly dressing, when another bang came at my door, and Elliott had returned.

'The poor fellow sends for you,' he said. 'I hope there'll be no more delay.'

'His fault entirely if there has been any,' I said cheerfully. 'I'll come with pleasure.' And I went.

The exciseman lay groaning piteously, but shut his eyes and gave no sign of recognising me.

Elliott gazed at him with compassion, and then asked whether he had better not go and leave us to ourselves.

'On no account,' I said sharply; 'I need a witness.' And I went to the bed.

'Listen, Mr Supervisor,' I said. 'I understand you have sent for me to attend you professionally. Is that so?'

The sick man grunted incoherently, but I refused to take that for a reply.

'I can't hear you,' I said, 'nor can Mr Elliott.'

'Yes, then!' he muttered. 'Oh dear!' and he knotted himself into a lump with the bedclothes and pillows.

'I shall be delighted,' I said. 'But my fee will be three guineas.'

What the exciseman said, and what poor Elliott evidently thought, I will not repeat, but I was now fully decided.

'Business is business,' I reminded him.

'It's Christmas Day,' he groaned. 'Peace and Goodwill! You're not going to let me die because I once did my duty?'

That shook me, but I remembered his hypocritical thanks of a twelvemonth ago, and I held to my purpose.

'Precisely,' I retorted. 'Since you have brought up that subject again, three guineas is what you owe me—you know what for. I'm not taking the annual tax out of you either, and I'm offering you my help to-night free.'

Elliott's mystified face was a sight, and the exciseman's language made shut doors a necessity.

Fortunately an acute return of his trouble cut his abuse short, made him think his end near, and finally brought him to my terms.

The baking-soda which I had kept for emergencies was of service, but more drastic treatment seemed necessary to ensure complete recovery. If any medical confrère happens to spend an idle moment over these recollections, he will understand when I say that, of course, I had my hypodermic syringe, and used it, leaving the exciseman devoid of all language, and meeker than most children of my

acquaintance, but completely relieved. I also left him the poorer by three guineas, and with something to meditate upon.

'It must be pleasant for you to know,' I suggested as I left him, 'that you have paid the fees which gave me the right to wear my ring—at least so far as *your* department is concerned;' but whether his answering grunt was in acquiescence I cannot say.

Over a glass of toddy in Elliott's private den I wished him and the sleeping exciseman a Merry Christmas, and told Elliott this story of the ring. The exciseman and I shook hands cordially enough when I asked to be allowed to visit him after breakfast, and I think that neither now bears any malice. I trust, too, that the way in which I spent the three guineas earned the forgiveness of the younger Elliotts. Strictly speaking, I admit that the fee belonged to the man for whom I was *locum tenens*, and I offered it to him, with my account of how it had been earned. But when he could stop laughing and speak plainly, he declared that, for anything he knew to the contrary, I had been guilty of 'infamous conduct' in the eyes of the General Medical Council, and that he would avoid all risk of being *particeps criminis*.

After all, the exciseman has the last word, for with the New Year I get an inevitable reminder of him and of the fact that I cannot wear my ancestor's ring without paying for it.

*(To be continued.)*

## TONS OF DIAMONDS.

IT is not, perhaps, within the bounds of probability that diamonds will ever be as plentiful as their non-crystalline relatives, which, if not so ornamental, give us of their best in the form of caloric. Yet the crystalline variety must be with or around us in plenitude greater than most of us dream of. It has been affirmed (whether truthfully or not must remain an open question) that prior to the opening up of the Kimberley mines in South Africa, a bushel-measure would have held the world's supply of the gems under reference which had been won.

Since 1870 the deficiency has been remarkably well made up; for during the eighteen years between that date and 1889 some forty-six millions of carats—approximately, for no estimate of illicitly disposed of stones can be offered—were won in Kimberley and surrounding districts, having the statistical value of fifty-six million pounds sterling. A trifling effort in arithmetic will soon enable the inquirer to think of diamonds in *tons*. When we have become able to grasp this fact, the question which naturally must come to the mind is, 'What becomes of them?' With all this amazing weight in diamonds, our minds are not relieved by the fact that production is still going on at an increased rate. No wonder the De Beers Company are anxious to bring about an *entente cordiale* with German diamond interests! So far, they are still awaiting some *rapprochement*.

In this connection we are forced to the conclusion that the surrender of Britain's protectorate over that part of South Africa now known as German West Africa was an error. We are learning by degrees that the German colony in question is crowded with possibilities. Diamonds are there, by all accounts, in abundance; and should it presently happen that German capital is to be employed in the further exploitation of such possibilities, difficulties will arise and the diamond trade experience a series of catastrophic disasters.

In Bechuanaland, or that part of it known as the Kalahari Desert, are undeveloped resources. There are prospectors now in England who have for years past known of diamondiferous areas in and about the dead rivers Ob and Nosob. In the now dry channels of these old-time rivers much of promise exists, though the country they traverse has an evil reputation for drought. Both the Ob and the Nosob in past ages must have been far nobler streams than any now existent in South Africa, possibly of a magnitude which would have enabled them to bear on their broad bosoms vessels of exceedingly deep draught. In the event of their rich deposits being exploited, to what use, we wonder, would the plethora of diamonds be put? There must be a world of wealth in the cellars of the various banks, as represented by even the present surplussage. Diamonds cannot be said to possess a standard value such as gold has, nor is it to be thought that the huge proportion of the world's wealth represented by Crown and family jewels will ever become intrinsically endangered. Perhaps it is this latter view of the question which keeps heart in those who traffic in these and other gems.

### PANSY AND VIOLET.

Pansies, eyes that laugh, bear beauty's prize
From violets, eyes that dream.—BROWNING.

PANSY of the laughing eyes,
Fairly have you won your prize;
Looking down, your pretty face,
With its happy smile, I see,
Lifted up in fearless grace,
Innocent audacity.
Take, sweetheart, your beauty's prize,
Pansy of the laughing eyes.

Violet of the dreaming eyes,
Sweetness, too, deserves a prize;
Smaller, shyer, hiding ever
Under leaves your eyes of blue,
Yet I pass, unheeding, never,
For your sweetness speaks for you.
Take my love, dear, as your prize,
Violet of the dreaming eyes.

E. ADA TYACK.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

IT is an obvious circumstance that, with what may well be called the terrifically rapid advance of civilisation, the racial and other distinctions of the world are being rapidly thinned until even at the present time in many respects they are of comparatively small account. When the Chinese speak English, and the English people go to Japan for a short holiday, the old barriers between nations and countries have evidently in a large measure broken down; and they are lower now, much lower, than the stay-at-homes who only read the newspapers may imagine them to be. One has only to travel for a month or two about the continent of Europe and talk to the people of different classes to realise what has been done by the steamships and railways and generally increased facilities for travel and intercommunication to bring the civilised peoples of the world more into the same family. But for the ambitious schemes of rulers and statesmen, who do not in their actions and projects always represent the feelings and desires of their peoples, we might be some way farther in this intimacy and co-operation, but it is not to the advantage of the state-mongers. In America a society has been established which, with no timid hesitation, has called itself the World Federation League; and by all accounts it is not a weak society either, but one with some power and determination, which is spreading branches all over the country. Men belong to it who have made an intimate study of international and economic problems for many years, and they have now reached that point in their labours when they think that the time has come for them to persuade the Government of the United States to take some sort of action, with the result that at their instance a senator is about to introduce to Congress a joint resolution empowering the United States Government to take the immediate initiative in the formation of the 'United States of the World,' having for its chief object international unity and permanent world-peace. Each one who considers this scheme will treat it half-seriously or otherwise according to his views, his temperament, and his common-sense; but in any case it is worth while, and is of much interest, to examine the plans for the running of the world from one centre as it were, as they have been most carefully prepared by these clever people who would reorganise the entire system of life on this planet, for it must be seen that it is not an easy thing to draft out a scheme for such a complete centralisation of things.

* * *

The joint resolution which we are told the senator is to lay before Congress will set forth that means of communication now exist which afford the people of all the nations of the earth a better understanding of their common interests than has been possible to them previously, and it is therefore urged that such mutual understanding and its resultant sympathy between the people of all countries provide the moral basis for a citizenship of the world. Nothing less will be asked by this resolution than that the treaty-making authority of the United States Government shall be recommended to proceed without delay to the negotiation of international agreements through which may be established a confederation of the sovereign states. An invitation will be given to Congress to support and give public expression to a form of constitution, which, in the words of the resolution, will be 'a fitting instrument for realising the world-wide aspirations towards the amelioration of harsh conditions now suffered by multitudes, and which, in part, are due to an ever-present fear of international war.' So the first object of the union, according to its proposed constitution, will be the abolition of war. The sovereign Government will be carried on by a body that will be known as the International Court, which is to be made up in a very fair and interesting manner. Its initial membership will be divided into three classes, having members number-


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ing three, two, and one. The nations that will supply three members each to it include Great Britain, the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Spain, Turkey, China, and Japan; all other countries, with the exception of China, will be allowed one member for the Court for every ten million inhabitants that they have beyond a first ten millions. The nations, therefore, will have votes in the ordering of the world's affairs according to their population. The various Governments will select their own members of the Court, and these representatives will be remunerated for their services at the rate of six thousand pounds a year. The first assembly will take place at The Hague, and as soon as the constitution has been signed by Great Britain, the United States, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia, it will become operative. For the first five years the Court may sit at such capitals as it may itself decide upon; but it is expected that by the end of that period the United States of the World will have acquired a piece of land for itself some ten miles square, on which it may erect some permanent kind of government-house. It will be decreed that members of the Court shall be inviolable when journeying to and fro and when in attendance upon the Court. It will be perceived at the first thought that the spectacle of the entire Government of the United States of the World being kidnapped by some component power anxious to deviate from the cosmopolitan constitution, and that without any interfering or meddling by others, would not be at all edifying. According to the scheme, power will be delegated to the United States of the World to demand of member States the surrender within three months from the date of adoption of the constitution of all armed vessels of war and all material appurtenant thereto, while within a year from the adoption of the constitution the standing armies of the member States must be reduced to a basis of one soldier for each thousand inhabitants. Land forces that are maintained solely for service in colonies that are not self-governing are to be included, and the disarmament of fortifications facing on the sea, and frontiers also, will follow in due course. Now, it might very likely be that after the first enthusiasm for this beautiful scheme of peace had been exhausted there would be some nation much inclined to kick over the traces. The United States of the World, or its promoters, have foreseen all difficulties of this kind, and made provision against them. They conceive that it is necessary they should have an army of their own, an Army of the World, which will be raised *pro rata* from the different member States according to their populations, and it is plainly intimated that conscription will be resorted to if necessary for the purposes of this army. The Court will be pledged to enforce by arms the execution of its decrees in arbitration, and to repel any attack or repress preparations therefor by any State against a member State; and at the same time the Court will pledge itself to put down rebellion in any member State. It would appear from this that it would be not unlikely that the army of the United States of the World would be kept somewhat busily employed, and one of the numerous questions that arise in the minds of those who contemplate this scheme, no answer to which is given in the particulars that are before us, is as to what will be done if one of the member States is fought by this army which will include soldiers supplied by that State. However, it would be unkind and wrong, as apart from being fruitless, to dissect the plans of the benevolent Americans who have at such pains and with so much ingenuity set forth an arrangement for the management of the world which, though not being Utopian, is something near it—something, as they might say, which is a little more practicable. If the nations could really bring themselves to the adoption of such a scheme, what would be the first thing that would happen afterwards? A wild scramble, and a most feverish and undignified canvassing for the six-thousand-pound appointments to the Court! They would be among the best things going, and the work would be pleasant and interesting.

* * *

Although the human material will not be worked upon until the second day of April in next year, arrangements are already being fast pushed forward to completion for the preparation of the greatest thing in the way of statistics that we have in this country—that is to say, the taking of the census of the population, which, being done once in every ten years, as in most other countries, falls to be taken next in 1911, the last census having been dated March 31, 1901. It is a business that does indeed need a year's preparation, for the machinery is a little complicated, and there must be no hitch in the working on the day that has been chosen, which is a Sunday. No fewer than forty thousand enumerators will be at work for a week in the compiling of the returns, but it will be a month or more before the Commissioners issue their preliminary report. In the meantime local authorities are hurrying on with the naming of all unnamed streets and the numbering of all unnumbered houses in their districts, in order that the task of the enumerators may be rendered as simple as possible. We really know without taking any census, with all its enormous expense, how many people there are in the land as nearly as is necessary for governmental or any other purposes; but it is not generally appreciated that the actual numbering of the people is only a small part of the census. It is the particulars of the people that are most wanted, and it is a very difficult matter for consideration, and one which from time to time has caused a great deal of trouble, as to what particulars should be taken and what should be neglected. In the first place, there is the fact to be thought of that the people have a curious but instinctive dislike to giving any particulars about themselves

that are to be recorded in official archives. There may be nothing in such particulars that is not already thoroughly well known to many others, and which could not be known to any one concerned at a moment's notice without any direct inquiry of the persons, and the particulars may not be of the smallest interest or significance in any way whatever, but there it is. There is the human reticence, the human reserve, and it is a thing which has endured and comes on to the present time from the most far-off ages. There are, therefore, many questions which the authorities would like to ask, and which the semi-private statisticians who work on the returns with great satisfaction and some interesting results would like to be put, but which nevertheless are not put. Thus, in the case of some censuses in Ireland, inquiries have been made of the persons enumerated as to the religious denominations to which they were attached; but it has been left optional with them as to whether they should make any answer or not. Then, again, it has been found as the result of experience here and in other countries that the more questions that are asked the less reliable are the results, this being due not merely to the confusion of mind into which the people being enumerated and left to fill up forms are apt to fall, but also to the tendency on the part of the enumerating authority when framing a long list of questions to allow them in some measure to overlap, and to be, to some extent not appreciated beforehand, too indefinite. Thus in the case of the very first census that ever was made, this being in 1801, there was an attempt to classify the people under three divisions, the first being for persons chiefly employed in agriculture; the second for persons chiefly employed in trade, manufactures, or handicraft; and the third for all persons not comprised in the two other classes. The returns were found to be highly unsatisfactory because of the difficulty in deciding whether the females of the family, children, and servants were to be classed as of no occupation or of the occupation of the adult males of the family. In the case of the second and third censuses it was made the rule to record only the occupation of the 'head of the family,' but another unexpected difficulty arose in defining the 'head of the family.' Who was the head of the family when there was a grandfather in the house who was taking things easily in his old age, but still doing some little work, while there was his stalwart son carrying on the chief business and generally being regarded as the mainstay of the homestead? Such problems are too much for enumerators. Census-making, it will begin to be perceived, is not by any means a simple matter, and the more it is examined the less simple does it appear. It is, in fact, a very difficult and complex science; and as improvements are only to be gained from experience, and such experience is only added to once in ten years, it will not be in our time that anything distantly approaching to perfection is attained—certainly we are still very far removed from it. All we know is that simplicity, exactness, and comprehensiveness are the chief objects aimed at. The tendency in our country (similar censuses are made in all civilised countries, generally once in ten years also) is perhaps to be rather too restricted in the range of questions in these days, but it is a fault on the right side. In America they go to the other extreme, and it is the fact that the American censuses are generally regarded as most unreliable.

* * *

Another of the important problems of census-making is whether it is better for the enumerators to call at each house, ask questions of the inmates, and themselves fill up the schedules from the answers received, or whether the census-paper should be left with each householder to fill up. Simple as this question may seem, it is one on which there is a great variety of pros and cons to be discussed, and one upon which the entire value of the census depends. Against the former method it is chiefly argued that the information obtained must be confined to certain very distinctly intelligible questions which the householder may answer without asking for any explanations from any one. This is the system we have adopted in this country; but in America they go by the other one, and we say against it that its greater fullness is obtained at the expense of accuracy, and that it is more expensive than ours. Another most important problem is whether the enumeration should be *de facto* or *de jure*, whether it should include all who are actually present in the house or whether it should include all those who ought to be included. For the most part, the statisticians are in favour of the former system, because, although the other is the more ideal, it is attended in practice by too many serious difficulties. At different censuses there have been some novelties in enumeration. Thus in the case of the census of 1851, which was by far the most ambitious that had ever been accomplished up to then, a return was procured of those who were in attendance in the several churches on Sunday, March 30, and it may be mentioned that the attendance throughout thirty-five religious communities in England on that forenoon was shown to be four million four hundred and twenty-eight thousand three hundred and thirty-eight, of which as many as two million three hundred and seventy-one thousand seven hundred and thirty-two were assigned to the Church of England. The Scottish returns were acknowledged to be imperfect; but, such as they were, they showed a total of nine hundred and forty-three thousand nine hundred and fifty-one at places of public worship on that morning, of which three hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty-four belonged to the Established Church. In view of what has been said so often in recent years about the decline in church and chapel

attendance, and the waning of religious feeling throughout a large section of the community, it would be deeply interesting and instructive if similar statistics were to be obtained at the present time, so that a careful comparison might be made and the exact truth realised. The census of 1871, the first imperial census, was a simple thing in so far as the variety of statistics that it afforded, but a very wonderful one in comparison with others in the matter of thoroughness. No fewer than thirty-two thousand five hundred and forty-three enumerators were engaged in it, and they were required to be intelligent, trustworthy, and active, to write well, to have some knowledge of arithmetic, not to be infirm or of weak health, not to be younger than eighteen or older than sixty-five, and to be persons likely to conduct themselves with strict propriety and civility. From the census-office in Craig's Court there were issued six and a half millions of householders' schedules, and it is said that in the aggregate the enumeration-books and forms that were sent out weighed no less than fifty-four tons, whilst in addition to these there were issued as many as one hundred and fifteen different descriptions of printed instructions, forms, and circulars. This time, as never before, the thing was done thoroughly; the utmost efforts were made to get every man and woman and child in the country counted on the schedules. Those who lived in barns, sheds, caravans, or tents, or who wandered about in the open air as tramps, had to be caught by the enumerators with the assistance of the police. Persons who were travelling during the night agreed upon for the census were to be included in the schedule of the proprietor of the hotel or inn, or the occupier of the house, at which they arrived on the following morning. On this occasion, also, Welsh schedules were issued for the use of a certain number of the Welsh people, and the result was that in seventeen thousand two hundred and seventy-six of these the particulars were inserted in the Welsh language, and had to be translated. Surely it is doubtful whether seventeen thousand Welshmen would write their answers down in their own language to-day. The forthcoming census, no doubt, will not be less thorough than its predecessors. Its provisions have been carefully considered for a long time past, and last year the committee of the Royal Statistical Society, after giving the matter their most thorough consideration, recommended among other things that there should be an enumeration of the population by sex and age every five years as well as the full census every ten years as at the present time; that there should be a permanent census department and a standing Census Act; that in the marriage section in the returns 'divorced' should be indicated in addition to 'single,' 'married,' and 'widowed;' and that under 'occupation' persons who were assisting relatives but not receiving wages should indicate the state of affairs by writing the letter A, and that others who were temporarily out of employment, and had been so for more than a week, should put down the letter N.

# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XLV.—HOW THEY PREPARED A SILKEN NEST.

JACK managed to keep his good news to himself till Monsieur Jolicot had gone off to his café next morning, and madame's eyes snapped cheerfully when she heard the pith of it. Little Auguste's thousand francs looked like being safe after all.

'Hide her? Well, I should say so. We'll hide her so that she couldn't even find herself if we weren't there to help her. Now, let me see!' And the big black head nodded thoughtfully, and the quick black eyes snapped again. 'Yes, that will do. See here, *mon beau!*' And she led the way down into the little cabin astern. 'This, you see,' as she slid back a panel over which hung her best dress, 'leads amidships when one doesn't want to go by way of the deck. Now, if we could shift matters just a bit so that one could work one's way among those bales and boxes, it's odd if we can't find one for mademoiselle to curl up in whenever she wants to.'

And they set to work pushing and heaving and straining the cargo back upon itself, and so making by degrees a narrow burrow, which led, by madame's sage advice, not straight in towards the midship hatches, but down towards the darkest part of the hold. So that even if search should be made and the cargo overhauled, nothing less than a complete dischargement would lay bare the hiding-place.

'What's at the end there?' asked madame when the burrow became altogether too small for her bulky figure.

'A big wooden case.'

'See what's inside;' and she pushed an iron chisel towards him.

'It feels like silk,' he said, after an interval of prising and rending.

'Pull out all you need to make a hole for mademoiselle, and strew it in the gangway here.'

And Jack proceeded to pave the narrow way with rolls of silk. And if he could have paved it with beaten gold, he thought it would have been none too good for her who was to walk upon it.

'There,' he said when he came out, hot and dishevelled, 'I've made a nest big enough for her to sleep in. If the silk is spoiled I will pay for it, madame.'

'Tut!' laughed madame; 'it's only going to

the sea.' And in answer to his look of surprise, 'You see, the clever little *bonhomme* who has made himself master for the present requires us to send out of the country as much as we bring in. So our merchants send out all their rubbish, and as the foreigners won't buy it we dump it into the sea for them.'

'That doesn't seem very profitable work,' said Jack, with his business instincts abristle.

'Plenty of profit on the goods we bring in to make up for it all. But it's foolishness all the same. Now, see here, *mon beau;* I've been thinking. We'll say nothing about mademoiselle's coming aboard till we're well on our way. You leave that to me. A matter of this kind is just as well in as few hands as possible. What time do you suppose she'll be here?'

'Between ten and eleven, I should say.'

'*Bien!* I'll see that the good man is out of the way about then. Then if any one asks him any questions he can't tell any lies.'

'That's a clever idea. How will you manage it?'

'You will take care of the little Auguste this afternoon, and I'll see to it all right. Trust Rosalie Jolicot to get round any man when she sets her mind to it.'

And that afternoon Jack played nurse to little Auguste, while madame set traps for monsieur.

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### CHAPTER XLVI.—HOW THEY CARRIED A PASSENGER AGAINST THEIR WILL.

FRIDAY was the longest day of Jack's life. The afternoon seemed as if it never would pass. He could settle to nothing, for within the space of an hour or two Mavie Laurieston would be there. He would have touched her hand and looked into her eyes. Her face, he thought, would be more lovely than ever in the sweet confusion of their meeting and her sailor-boy costume. He ached for the sight of her, and the slow day glowed on as though there were no such things as darkness and the coming of Mavie.

Madame had told monsieur that they would certainly leave that night, and everything was in readiness.

It was after sundown when she began to manifest anxiety about a parcel of clothes she had bought for little Auguste, which she had been expecting all day long. At nine o'clock she expressed the determination to go in search of them herself, but allowed herself to be dissuaded from venturing into that certain *quartier* at that time of night. At ten o'clock, in order to soothe her annoyance, monsieur offered to go himself, but was only permitted to do so on the understanding that he would not tarry on the way or make any other calls, and would convey to the party in fault a piece of madame's mind in the way madame would have done it herself.

The night settled down dark at last. The quays were but ill-lighted with oil-lanterns, and those far apart. To prevent mischance and relieve the tension of his feelings, Jack went ashore and tramped to and fro without ever letting his eye off the boat, behind which the river flowed black and silent.

Eleven o'clock passed and no sign of Mavie.

There was so wide a margin for possibilities that anything might have happened. The one thing that had not happened was Mavie's arrival, and his spirits sank into his boots.

He could not, he feared, prevail on monsieur to wait another day for no assignable reason whatever. It looked as though all his endeavours had gone for nothing.

Perhaps she had fallen ill. Perhaps Monsieur or Madame de Montessonne was ill, and she had not been able to go to M. de Talleyrand's. Perhaps—oh, perhaps anything! What was the good of imagining things? The bitter fact remained that she had not come, and that was all that mattered. And he kicked the cobbles at thought of it.

As he came back towards the boat from the direction in which he thought they would come, a man came quietly along the quay and went down to the *Belle Marie.* When Jack came up to them, so hopeful of news as to drop for the moment the young bargeman's roll and swagger, which he had by observation acquired to perfection, the new-comer was in earnest discussion with madame.

'But we don't carry passengers, monsieur, I assure you. We have no accommodation.—Isn't that so, *mon beau?*' as Jack came up with pricking ears at the word passengers.

'What is it?' he asked.

'This gentleman wants us to take him as a passenger,' said madame, disturbed.

'But we don't carry passengers,' said Jack.

'Who is this? Is it monsieur?' asked the stranger quickly.

'No; it's the crew,' said Jack. 'I assure you, monsieur, we have no accommodation for passengers, and none too much for the crew.'

'You can find me some corner, anywhere.'

'We are full up to the hatches,' said Jack. 'There is only one bunk forward, and that's mine, and I'm going to use it.'

'All the same, I must insist. See, then,' as he drew an official document from his pocket—'if you will look at this, madame, by the light of your lamp there, you will see;' and taking the paper to the lantern, they found it was an authority from the Minister of Police ordering all upon whom he might call to render the bearer every assistance upon the road.

'*Eh bien!*' said madame, with a shrug of angry resignation, 'what must be must be. It's a free country, they say; but—*mon Dieu!*'

'I will trouble you as little as possible, madame, I assure you.'

'I'll see to that, my friend,' said madame sourly. 'When folks push themselves in where they're not wanted'—— and she flopped heavily downstairs to her own quarters.

'When do we start?' asked the agent genially.

'We await monsieur,' said Jack, and left him and went forward, weighted with anxiety. A moment ago he had been aching for Mavie to turn up. Now his one fear was lest she should do so. His mission seemed doomed to failure.

It was not far from midnight when Monsieur Jolicot put in a somewhat shamefaced appearance. His message accounted only for a certain portion of his time, and all the way home he had been fashioning plausible excuses for the rest. It was a most agreeable surprise to him to be received, not with the expected reproaches, but with unexpected news.

'Here is thy parcel, little one!' he cried to madame.

'Good!' said madame, sticking out her head. 'I hope thou didst tell her what I thought of her.'

'I did, *ma belle*, almost as well as thou couldst have done it thyself. Now, do we start or do we wait till morning? I see the good Jaxax is all ready.'

'That is not Jaxax.'

'Not! Who, then?' and he peered at the figure sitting on the side of the boat amidships.

'One sent by the Minister of Police to take passage with us down the river.'

'Ah, ha! The passenger! I understand. So he has turned up after all.'

'See here, then, my man,' she whispered into his ear, 'keep a quiet tongue! This is not the one we wanted, and the less you say the better. This is an agent of police. What have you been up to?'

'*Mon Dieu!* I! The police!' and M. Jolicot showed no little perturbation, for the police in those days were invested with powers beyond the ordinary, and put them at times to arbitrary and capricious uses.

'Go you and talk to him, but say nothing, you understand. He's here, and we cannot help ourselves.'

'And when do we start?'

'When you will. We were only waiting for you.'

'At sunrise, then;' and as he went forward to speak to the unwelcome passenger, with a tied tongue, madame whispered, 'Tell Jaxax I want him.'

Jack came heavily aft at M. Jolicot's summons. His hopes were in ruins and his mind much upset as to his next move. If the *Belle Marie* was starting for the sea he had no choice but to leave her. He certainly could not quit Paris in this fashion. He must stay behind and try again. He must tell madame at once. She would understand.

But when he got to the little companion madame was waiting for him, and beckoned him eagerly in and closed the doors. 'She's here!' she whispered.

'Here! Mavie! Oh, where, madame?' everything within him, bodily and mental, undergoing sudden tumultuous revolution.

'In her nest, the pretty bird.'

'But how'——

'A boat brought her alongside while you were waiting for her ashore, and she nipped in off the water. They feared the quays might be watched. Now, if we could only get rid of this other!'

'I'll pitch him overboard,' jerked Jack with the utmost cheerfulness.

'There might be results,' said madame thoughtfully. 'I see nothing for it but taking him with us. Maybe we can lose him on the road.'

'Let me have one word with her!' pleaded Jack, as madame made as though to show him out.

'A short one, then, and in a whisper;' and she slid back the panel, and Jack crept into the darkness.

'Miss Mavie!' he whispered.

'Who is it?'

'Me! Jack Sax.'

'Oh Jack! Dear old Jack! Do let me feel your hand! Here, where are you? It's like being blind and buried in here.'

And the dearest little hand in the world clasped his convulsively, and he wanted to bend and kiss it, but did not dare to.

'When did you see my mother last, Jack? And how did she seem to you?'

'It is months since I saw her, Miss Mavie.'

'I am Jean-Marie,' said the decided voice which he remembered so well of old, and he wondered if she was shaking her finger at him as she used to do. 'Jean-Marie, and please don't forget! How was my mother looking when you saw her?'

'She was pale and tired-looking. It will do her all the good in the world to have you back again.'

'Oh, I hope so! I do hope so! And how long am I to stop in here, Jack?'

'I don't know. There's a wretch of a police agent on deck. He says he's going down the river with us. I'm afraid they suspect us.'

'Goodness! I thought you'd let me out as soon as we got away from Paris.'

'I'd like to knock this fellow on the head, but madame won't let me. She's a clever woman, though, and perhaps she'll find some way.'

'Well, truly, I hope she will. There is none too much room in here, I assure you. Is it silk I'm in among?'

'Yes, it's silk of a kind;' and he thought to himself that the richest and rarest in the world would be none too good for her. Then a tapping on the panel behind recalled him to duty. 'I must go,' he whispered.

'Do come again as soon as you can, Jack. It's hideous all alone here in the dark.'

'It's the way home,' whispered Jack, and crept back along the silk-paved burrow.

*(To be continued.)*

# ADVERTISEMENTS YOU SHOULD NOT ANSWER.

By T. C. Bridges.

SOME advertisements bear their condemnation writ large upon their faces. For instance, when you see goods advertised at 'less than cost price' surely common-sense should give you pause. What does a man advertise for? Presumably to sell, and make a profit by selling, certain goods. Presumably also he has not obtained those goods for nothing, and most certainly he has not had his advertisement inserted without paying for it. Now, if it is truth that he is going to sell those goods under cost price, there are only two explanations possible: either that the advertiser is a benevolent lunatic, or that he has obtained the goods dishonestly. As neither of these is likely to be the fact, we are logically driven to believe that the statement contained in the advertisement is a lie. Yet there must be numbers of innocents who believe in the 'under cost price' fraud, otherwise advertisements of the kind would not be so common as they are.

Equally unattractive to the experienced reader is the 'given away with a pound of tea' advertisement. Some of these are merely incentives to foolish purchasers to buy dusty rubbish, with some cheap and useless object thrown in; others are swindles pure and simple. Here is an example of the latter taken from a provincial paper: 'G——'s silver 25s. Sheffield Watches. To each purchaser of 1 lb. of excellent tea, post free 1s. 7d., one of the above watches will be given absolutely free and unconditionally, as advertisement. Address . . . This offer is authorised by Messrs G——.' Needless to say, the offer was not authorised by the well-known firm mentioned, and it is pleasing to relate that the swindler was charged with obtaining money by false pretences, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. The magistrate who tried the case wisely remarked that people who answered such advertisements did not deserve much sympathy.

The system of purchase by instalment—which, when properly carried out, has proved such a boon to persons without capital—has been much abused by certain swindlers. The following is a sample of the *modus operandi* of a firm who advertised their 'famous thirty-shilling watch': 'Send 2s. 6d. with the order, agree to pay another 2s. 6d. on receipt, and another 5s. monthly till paid for.' The person who was unwise enough to send the first half-crown received a reply pointing out that the *credit* price of the watch was thirty-three shillings. Of this nothing had been said in the advertisement. An order-form was enclosed for the customer to fill in and return, 'when your order shall have our immediate attention.' If the customer sent the second half-crown—and, amazing as it may seem, many did—even then the watch was not sent, but instead another letter: 'The demand for these watches by cash customers is so great as to cause some delay in executing your order. If, however, you will send another ten shillings by return, the watch shall be sent at once.' The customer who sent ten shillings did at last get the watch, a cheap, foreign-made timepiece, certainly not worth more than ten shillings; so, even if the firm never got another penny, they had already made a good profit.

Another trick of the cheap jewellery vendor is to insert in small local papers advertisements which profess to emanate from 'Ladies going to India' or 'Widows in Distress.' The people who thus play upon the credulity or charity of the country bumpkin are invariably found, upon inquiry, to possess the plate license which is essential only to those who make a business of selling jewellery. The articles sold *second-hand* are dear bargains, for in every case something better could be purchased *new* at less money from any decent jeweller. It is not jewellery only which is thus fraudulently advertised from apparently private addresses. Furs, feather-boas, lace, babies' layettes, bicycles, even furniture, are all disposed of in similar fashion, and of late years a novel development of this swindle has greatly increased. Sham old furniture is 'planted' in country farmhouses, and collectors should be very careful indeed about answering advertisements of grandfather's clocks and old oak chests to be sold at a bargain at Slocum-in-the-Wold.

A dodge which was very popular a few years ago was an announcement to the effect that the advertiser would make valuable gifts to those who sent correct solutions of a most transparent puzzle. A moment's thought would convince any sane person that the tradesman would speedily find himself in the Bankruptcy Court if he fulfilled his printed promises. Yet so great is popular credulity that thousands of replies would be received. Of course each applicant would discover that there was some condition attached to the offer which prevented him from getting the present without paying for it. At last one gang who professed to give away bicycles overstepped the limit. A prosecution followed, and the Press took the matter up and exposed it so thoroughly that the puzzle swindle is for the present out of favour.

'Send no money' is a phrase which the public is gradually coming to look upon with suspicion. Some years ago a firm of 'Wine Exporters and Vintners' hailing from Bonn, in Germany, flooded the English papers with an advertisement of 'Wines from the wood at less than half the usual price.' They ended: 'Send no money, but write for particulars.' Those who sent for particulars received a price-list and a circular in which it was stated that as the wine came *direct* from a district renowned for

its vintages, the exporters were able to give a quality which could not be procured at three times the price in England. Those who sent cheques received in return—absolutely nothing at all! The swindlers relied upon the fact that people in England would not find it worth while to institute prosecutions in Germany.

This swindle brings to mind another which, although it has been exposed over and over again in English papers, yet still catches dupes by the score. I refer to the T. portrait advertisement. Only a few months ago I received a circular emanating from this man, who professes to make, free of cost, large and perfect copies of photographs, however old and faded. Some years ago a friend of the writer sent to T. at his Parisian office a sole remaining portrait of a dearly beloved deceased relative, expressing in her letter her desire to pay a reasonable price for the enlargement. Shortly afterwards a reply arrived to the effect that the copy was now finished and *framed*. If the sender would forward two guineas, the price of the frame, the portrait would be returned. Not unnaturally she remonstrated at the excessive cost, and asked for her original photograph back. T. wrote flatly refusing to send it. At last, in despair, the poor lady sent the money. After some delay the enlargement arrived, a ghastly daub, in a cheap, coarse frame. But the original photograph was not enclosed, and no letters concerning it have ever been answered.

Beware of advertising dentists. Real dentists do not advertise any more than do doctors. These people, who are generally 'companies' or 'firms,' profess to perform every kind of dental operation at ridiculously low fees. But woe betide the dupe who is tempted into their clutches! In the first place, the work is never done for the advertised price. Their assistants are hired with the express understanding that they must get at least double the fees quoted, and most of them are paid a commission upon all extra money they can extort. In the second place, the work done is simply atrocious. Once the wretched patient is under chloroform it is as likely as not that half-a-dozen teeth will be extracted instead of one or two, thus necessitating a case or plate. And if he or she is induced to order a plate, it is absolutely certain that this will either not fit at all or be so abominably made that it simply falls to pieces after a few weeks or months of use.

Home employment swindles have of late been exposed in several newspapers. A year or two ago Scotland Yard was busy hunting down an advertising swindler who had invented a variant of this old trick. The man began by hiring an office in Chancery Lane, and then inserted in various London dailies an advertisement to the effect that he could give young men good situations in Capetown. A large number of clerks and others who answered this advertisement received business-like letters asking them to call. As each kept his appointment he was told that the advertiser was one of two brothers who owned a large clothing store in Capetown, and that he was in England for the purpose of engaging additional salesmen. Those who professed willingness to be engaged were told that their salary would be twelve pounds a month, to rise to fifteen pounds at the end of a year. As to passage, that would cost twenty-five pounds. He would ask them to pay ten pounds towards the ticket, and he himself would pay the other fifteen pounds. At least a dozen of the applicants forwarded ten pounds to 'Mr Hall,' as he called himself. As none of them received their tickets, they all gathered at Mr Hall's office on the day before they were to sail, only to find that the swindler had decamped. The cruel part of the business was that some of the poor fellows had given up situations in the City to take the new one. They had lost not only their money but their employment.

An advertisement which appeared in a London daily was the beginning of a fraud which ended in a police court. It was as follows: 'Wanted, Gentleman, good education and address, abstainer, companion to elderly gentleman, one who does not object to travel abroad, amiable and cheerful disposition, musical tastes, linguist, and some private means. Give fullest particulars. Address' . . . A gentleman who replied received a letter too long to quote in its entirety, but to this effect: 'I am a rich man, but an invalid. I want a companion to travel abroad. My last companion swindled me; therefore I must insist that the one I take deposits in my hands five thousand pounds as a guarantee of fidelity. If you please me and stay with me I shall make my will in your favour.' Cleverly worded as the letter was, the applicant was not to be caught with chaff; and, after satisfying himself that a fraud was intended, he put the matter in the hands of the police, with the result above stated.

About the same date appeared in another daily an advertisement somewhat similar to the last, in which the Earl of —— required a private secretary. Applicants received the following reply: 'Dear Sir, —I shall be pleased to particularly consider your application, provided you purchase and hold ten bonds, at their present value of £1, 1s. 6d. each, which I am offering to the public to assist me in the establishment of my undoubted right, title, and interest to the peerage.' To pay ten pounds fifteen shillings for the privilege of having one's application considered by a would-be earl—who, by the bye, has not yet succeeded in proving his title—seems rather a doubtful expedient.

Premium advertisements should be very cautiously regarded by fathers of families. It is only natural that the father of a large family, especially a middle-class man of slender means, should be very desirous of obtaining employment for his sons and daughters, and it is just for this type of the struggling, respectable class that the premium-swindler lays his trap. He advertises employment of a simple nature at a lucrative salary, the only stipulation being that a premium is required. The father is tempted. He

interviews the advertiser, finds him in a good office, and with every appearance of plenty of business. He pays the premium, often borrowing the money at a high rate of interest. The boy or girl goes to work. For the first week or two the salary is paid faithfully, then the clerks begin to complain that there is no work to do, the next thing the brokers appear for the landlord's rent, and the whole thing comes to smash.

The pupil-farmer invariably angles for victims through the columns of the Press, and he chooses the most respectable journals for his purpose. Now, I will not say there are no conscientious pupil-farmers, for I met one once, and have heard of another. This I will say, that out of ten fathers who trust their sons to pupil-farmers in the colonies or the United States, nine will be bitterly sorry in the long-run both for themselves and their sons. Usually the man who advertises for farming-pupils obtains a heavy premium, and in return makes the wretched pupil work like a slave, and feeds him worse than the prodigal son fared while on his wanderings. Better, far better, when a boy has made up his mind to emigrate, to pay his passage to his destination, and leave him to work out his own salvation, than to trust him to one of the advertising pupil-farmers. The writer has been through the mill himself, and as the result of a year's apprenticeship to a pupil-farmer very nearly died of blood-poisoning.

Money-lending advertisements everywhere stare one in the face. Though legislation has attempted to cope with this evil, the loan-agent still ruins his thousands. There is no advertising harpy whose announcements are so specious as those of the money-lender, none which the reader should more steadfastly refuse to have anything to do with.

There recently died at Ostend a man named S——, who was renowned as the boldest advertising swindler on record. He was the real head of the so-called Miller frauds. William Miller advertised widely, guaranteeing his clients 10 per cent. a week on all their investments. Those who remitted did get their 10 per cent. Some of them, indeed, obtained in this way four or five times the amount of their original investments. They made their good fortune known far and wide, and letters and money poured in by the thousand. Schlesinger & Miller paid the original investors out of the pockets of the later dupes, and presently both the swindlers cleared out. Miller, however, was caught and sent to prison, where he died. Yet the exposure failed to kill this form of swindle. Not long ago a 'blind pool' of a similar description began to operate in Chancery Lane, its managers advertising widely that they would take sums of from five pounds to one hundred pounds, invest them so that at the lowest estimate the investor would get five or six times the amount of his original capital, and charge for so doing merely a trumpery tenth of the speculator's profits. This syndicate might have rivalled Miller's but for the fact that a daily paper turned the searchlight of publicity upon the swindlers. Bucket-shop advertisements become more common week by week; these outside brokers must find many dupes, or they could never afford to pay for so much publicity. Of late it has been seriously mooted that in order to check the bucket-shop boom stockbrokers should under certain conditions be permitted to advertise.

When one fraud is blown upon, the advertising swindler has always a new one up his sleeve. Some little time ago an advertisement appeared in a number of Belgian papers announcing that 'Mr Andrew Carnegie' had decided to send his son to Belgium for education, and asking that schoolmasters would send to him, at an address in Brighton, their prospectuses and terms. Not unnaturally the idea got abroad in Belgium that the advertiser was the well-known millionaire, and scores of prospectuses poured in. To each of the applicants a reply was sent, accepting the terms offered, and fixing a date for the arrival of 'my son John.' A few days later each pedagogue received a second letter, warning him that 'John's' luggage was being sent on in advance, and requesting that it might be paid in his name. Close after this came a third letter, from a pretended goods agent, on properly headed paper, explaining that he had the luggage, and was forwarding it; but, as it was the rule to pay carriage in advance, he enclosed his bill. The bill was for about twenty-five shillings. In every single case, so far as known, the money was sent; but, alas! the Belgian schoolmasters, tutors, and curés are still waiting for 'my son John.'

To advertisements of patent medicine, as such, no one can object; but beware of advertisements of the following type: 'A gentleman having suffered from polypus of the nose for many years, and having been treated by various doctors without benefit, has discovered means by which every person suffering from a similar affliction can cure himself, and will gladly send particulars on receipt of a self-addressed stamped envelope.' The advertiser, who sometimes masquerades as a clergyman, is by no means the whole-hearted philanthropist he would like you to imagine, as you will speedily find if you enter into correspondence with him.

In the United States and in Canada there is a Postal Detective Department which looks after advertisements suspected to be of an improper nature. A Toronto firm advertised that for a dollar and a quarter (5s.) they would send, 'securely sealed, a beautifully bound book full of good things which every "sport" should read.' Scenting improper literature, the department sent the dollar and a quarter, and by return of post received—a shilling Bible.

# SOME NOTES ON THE BOYHOOD OF R. L. S.

By A Lantern-Bearer.

R. L. S. mentions in *The Lantern-Bearers* the digging of a house under the margin of links, and some of its joys; and speaks of the terrible cabin of the lugger where, with his boon-companions, there was wonderful talk and speculation. The writer was not one of the latter conclave, but played a minor part in another episode that might have ended all the games and robbed literature of a famous name. It took place a year or two before the lanterns came into play, when there was less liberty to wander, and a semblance of guardianship was exercised on the younger members of the three families whose boys went a-Crusoeing or lived a savage life.

R. L. S. and others had arranged a tea-party to be given in the minute cabin of one of the brown herring-boats that lay idle on the sand near the bathing-boxes; and, to give the gathering a society flavour, some little sisters were graciously included in the invitations. A severe old nurse, whose love was largely for the whilom baby of her nursery, gave consent as long as R. L. S. and the party 'kept in sight.' Perambulators were in those days considered unhealthy (which was probably true if one remembers their bone-shaking power); hence 'Titch,' as the dowager-baby called nurse, was considerably handicapped by the sturdy infant, too young to be left for a moment. He enjoyed the sea-breezes and fine weather in comfortable fashion on Titch's lap, in a cosy nook close to the edge of the links and in full view of the herring-boat.

'Cookies' and 'parliament cakes' were the ambrosial food; 'yellow tea' was to be the nectar, boiling hot from the fire (a fire R. L. S. must always have) made for this purpose on the high sands close under the margin of the links. This name was invented to mark the difference between the nursery-meal called 'tea,' with only wholesome milk for us, and the scented liquor that our elders drank, said to be bad for our digestions or our complexions. It had, therefore, assumed the rank of the claret-cup and champagne of our later days.

The boat stood high on the beach, fixed in its sea-borne position by stout props slanted to the sand. For the boys to 'speel' these was only the greater fun, but the weaker sex found the ascent impossible without having their arms nearly pulled out of the sockets by willing helpers. R. L. S. suggested from the half-deck that the props might be lowered a little on one side; he had not then sufficient engineering faculty to foresee the result or to realise that it was a very dangerous move. The disaster was rapid; the boat gave a warning creak, a shudder from stem to stern, and heeled over on its side, the boys at the props just escaping in time, while those on the deck took a run and a flying leap on to the soft, warm sand. We were speechless, full of dismay at our work, and the situation was made darker by Titch, who came down like the Assyrian, with wrath and awful Scotch exclamations, denounced R. L. S. and his cohort as 'evil lads,' and carried off her contingent to safer and duller fields of amusement. Our party was spoiled, the afternoon robbed of all its glamour, and a sinking at our hearts as to the fathers' actions was not to be dismissed by any of R. L. S.'s honeyed words or tales. In the 'drear November' of the evening the irate owner of the vessel called in turn on each of the three Fates with a gloomy account of the damage done to his ship. As a matter of fact there was none, although the culprits were not told this, and the matter was quickly settled more to our parents' satisfaction than that of the fisherman. Then the vials of wrath were opened; awful pictures were drawn for young fancy to dream of, of the crushed and bleeding bodies that might have been, and the whole wound up with practical reproof that need not be specified. It was a subdued group that met to plan the next ploy, and R. L. S. needed all his powers of imagination to persuade us that life still held plenty of good things. Then, as later, he had a dauntless spirit. Alas that the keen sword was sheathed in so slight a scabbard; that life was ever for him a battle with the frail body lest the weakness of the flesh should too soon overcome the invisible dweller in mortality! 'Lest I hear (my work untrimmed) the sunset-gun too soon.'

It is curious to remember how little he did in the way of work in those games, and how much we did willingly at his mere suggestion. But he invested everything with charm and glamour, or sometimes awe, such as appeals to childish minds. A drowned sailor he once saw on the beach, and described to us, comes back to the mind in vivid horror, a kind of Edgar Allan Poe gloom and undefined terror; the thing that was not said but hinted at being more fearful than the truth. In all our games—and they were many—the element of dreams and far-off tragic happenings was uppermost. We were castaways, sailors marooned on a desert island, who scaled mountains that were unknown volcanoes to whelm half-way in liquid fire the hapless climber; heard the breathing of dragons that lurked in the caves of the seashores, strange monsters built up by fancy from a feather on the beach or a wave-worn bone, as the great Agassiz did. A sea-anemone was to R. L. S. first-cousin to an octopus, a 'cowrie' the coin of savage Africa. Everything in his alchemist brain 'suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange,' and left in the minds of the children with whom he talked and dreamed the power to see an

ineffaceable glory on the common things of childhood.

The 'loud sea-beaches' of North Berwick are still peopled with the delicate shades of those bygone visions; the mind that in later years spun a web to catch men's wonder and admiration cast upon the endless-seeming, bright summer days of boyhood the magical light that never fades or dies. R. L. S., in the earlier days when the East Bay was haunted by our restless feet, saw—and made us see—the Black Rock as an Alp. It looks very small now! The view-house on the steep mound was a temple sacred to unknown gods, and the names of many fools, our own among them, carved on its weather-worn timbers were mystic symbols, Delphic oracles that still seem quite unlike other senseless disfigurements. The unpleasant smell of the damp cottage near the glen, where we once boiled green potatoes in a tin pot over a wood fire, was incense; the potatoes, yams or bread-fruit. Of the elderberries on the tree in the nettle-garden that belonged to the cottage we were to make wine (but did not).

Children are, as a rule, rather merciless and callous about the small discomforts of their fellows, but there was in the slender, gray-clad figure, the thin shoulders, and bright shadowed eyes something that touched a hidden chord, and we felt rather than admitted that Louis needed homage and tenderness to make up for the many things he could not, must not, would never do.

To look back in that knowledge that comes with years, and recall the head-shakings and expressed doubts as to whether R. L. S. was fool or genius, is, to those who always believed in him, not amusing, but pathetic. The vain efforts that were made to make a common barnyard fowl out of a bird of paradise, to harness Pegasus to a dust-cart, make an engineer of a bookworm, a business man of a 'makar'! There is deep sadness in the recollection of the lonely heart of the wanderer on the plains, with little money and less health; how, later, when his feet were firm on the 'loud stairs of honour,' the sick yearning for 'Home,' for the wind-swept, gray city of his birth, the 'bird-enchanted' hills, and 'wine-red' moors blotted out all joy in the clamour of praise, made discord of the trumpet-blast of Fame. In youth he knew what he could be; he stood aside to see himself as others see him now. The flame of genius burned and consumed him; in his dreams and visions a voice called to him with sweet, alluring insistence; and as one who stands on the mountain-top and sees the 'kingdoms of the earth fade away in unregarded blue,' he looked over the present to what the future held. As in boyish play the bright eye of the little lantern at his belt was hidden from himself, so by others the immortal fire was not seen or even guessed at. Did it cast for a moment a clear, mysterious ray, it was by many mistaken for *Fata Morgana* or wandering-will-o'-the-wisp. The 'many' (cousin to 'they say') thought he was self-conscious or affected, that the 'sedulous ape' was much in evidence. With so great a self he could not but be conscious of difference, all misunderstood by others, and the forces in him that affected the world shook the frail temple where they dwelt. But a master, never a servant save to the dominant powers that ruled his mind, on the Olympian heights he sits now in his own place among the great.

Faults he had—he was very human—and through them saw the way to help others to rise above weakness and error. By his mistakes he learned to point clear and straight the narrow way that a man must walk towards life. Love and honour and hidden virtues he could see under strange disguise, and maimed, broken creatures of higher and lower genus found in him a friend and comforter. A cousin of the writer, one of his dearest friends, said, 'Louis always makes friends with something or some one who has had bad luck, always talks to the least "taking" tramp or wastrel. He once came back from the Pentland walk he loved with an old sailor with a wooden leg, and another time with a lame dog and a semi-idiot blind man.' It was when walking one evening at North Berwick with this young man that R. L. S. preached to a human derelict who had asked alms. 'Yes, my man, I'll give you a shilling if you will listen to a sermon from me;' thereupon he launched into a homily on the vanity of earth and its aims, wide in philosophy, brilliant in language, deep in its learning and higher insight, and rich in the finer thought that lights the gray path of duty. For five or six minutes he poured forth his soul to this audience of two, then suddenly stopped and gave the tramp his reward. The old beggar touched his ragged cap and said in a broken voice to R. L. S., 'Thank ye, sir, for the money, and more for yer words, for I see ye think I'm still a man.'

Beyond all care, all grief, all failure, that strange trio have long passed into the Light. One was struck down in early manhood by sudden and cruel disease before his brilliant mind could stamp the work he loved or bring him full reward. R. L. S., when Fame had meted to him full measure of her rich store, died without slow hours of mortal pain, swiftly translated as became his valiant spirit. He left behind him an imperishable name and the pure radiance of immortal mind which, like the light from the great sea-towers that his forebears built, shines across the dark and troubled ways of men to warn of danger, to guide them safely 'home from sea.'

# READY-MADE CANADIAN FARMS BY EASY PAYMENT.

MR W. S. FERGUSON, of Pictstonhill, Perth, a well-known authority on agricultural subjects, writes as follows: 'Under the above heading, in your March number, is an article which has been referred to by many newspapers, and in regard to which it seems to me that intending emigrants need a word of warning. I have on two or three occasions, as a practical farmer, made it my business to make myself, as far as I could, acquainted with Canadian agriculture generally—the great North-West in particular, including British Columbia—and my opinions may, therefore, have some value. It is far from my intention to endeavour to minimise the advantages and great possibilities of the yet undeveloped portion of Canada. On the contrary, I have taken many opportunities, both public and private, to predict what shall yet be achieved in these great territories; but I have seen enough to be in a position to warn inexperienced emigrants against rushing blindly at it, as some have done to their discomfiture. Some years ago I took the responsibility of publicly contradicting a Canadian Emigration Agent when he told the people in glowing terms of the great "amenities and comforts" they would have in Canada as compared to their condition in the Old Country. "Nothing of the kind," said I. "If you go to Canada to live on the land, you will have to face hardships, privations, and discomforts, to start with, such as you never will have to meet in this country. Only, if you prevail—and everything is in your favour to do so—your compensation will come in a comfortable, independent old age, and a good outlook for those who come after you. But to hold out to young farmers and others connected with agriculture that the conditions for settlers in Canada in 'comforts and amenities' are better than at home is worse than misleading, and has largely been the cause of the return of some disheartened ones who found things not as they were represented to be." These are the words I said and wrote as nearly as I can remember, and I was backed up by all Scotchmen who had examined the conditions of agriculture in the new lands of Canada. Now, in regard to what you say about ready-made farms on the hire-system, it would almost be made to appear that the disadvantages vanish; that a young settler and his wife have only to advance a little money and settle down in comfort at once, and not only comfort but assured prosperity. Well, in the first place, a farmer's balance-sheet even in the Old Country under the best conditions is a very uncertain thing. How much more problematic must this be with a new man in a new country! Moreover, the climatic conditions for agriculture are much more precarious in Canada than in Scotland. Then, again, what assurance has the new settler that he will get a good bit of land? The land in Canada, like that in every other country, is good and bad, some very good and some very bad, and all mixed up together, some of the bad being mixed in amongst the best of it. Through a glowing advertisement I once went to a fertile valley in Canada to buy land, but I found that all the good land was in cultivation and not for sale; only the worthless alkali bits were for sale, and waiting to take in the unwary. Further, what reasonable expectation may the inexperienced settler have, either at the hands of Government officials or otherwise, that he will be fairly treated? Is he to draw the number of his lot from a hat, and take it good or bad? And who is to fix the price? The intending settler will find many men wanting to deal with him *if he has money in his pocket*, and he may as well be warned that he will meet many keen ones who are not safe to "*ride the water*" on. Altogether, in my opinion this ready-made farm scheme is too risky for the stranger; some would land well and some the reverse, and the worst of it would be that the settler landing on the unlucky side would not have experience enough to know it until he had spent too much of his time and money on a bad subject. The advice that all old, experienced settlers in Canada give to the young ones is the safe course—namely, "Stick to your small capital until you gain experience of the country and the varied conditions you have to face, and by so doing for a year or two you will see some kindly bit where you would like to settle." Men who know farm-labour have no difficulty in getting employment and good wages, while even inexperienced hands can find plenty of labour to keep them going until they learn. The most of the Scotchmen I met in Canada began in the way I state, and most of them were on the clear road to success. Some of them were employed on the railways, others were carters, but all were looking out for land and gaining experience of the country. There can be no doubt whatever that the North-West of Canada will be one of the greatest countries of the future, and the unbounded spirit and enterprise of the Canadian Pacific Railway is hastening this on.'

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### A PROPORTIONATE MIXER FOR DRY MATERIALS.

AN invention which should be of extreme value to many industries has recently been perfected and placed on the market. This is a mechanical means of mixing together different ingredients in a dry, powdered state in any desired proportion. It is remarkable that some mechanical means of accomplishing this has not previously been devised, as such sound principles must be far and away superior to the happy-go-lucky manual method. This 'apportioner,' as it is aptly described, produces a mixture of absolutely uniform composition. The flow of the materials from hoppers is regulated by tapering screws, one to each hopper, and the flow from any of the hoppers is controlled at will merely by the adjustment of the screw relative to the hopper, which can be adjusted to the greatest nicety. By means of this device all weighing or measuring is entirely dispensed with. The screw moves axially in a cylinder or container into which the material falls, and as the end of this screw protrudes from the end of the small barrel it brings a certain quantity as desired with it, allowing the material to fall into a receptacle below simultaneously with the ingredients from the other hoppers. This chamber is also rotated, and the result is that a perfectly homogeneous mixed product is obtained. The mixing can be carried out within very extensive limits. Four different ingredients can be mixed together, and then it is possible to associate other constituents therewith merely by passing the previously mixed compound and the further ingredients through the machine. It is one of the most efficient and simple devices that have been evolved; and, being devised for a field of action in which mechanical appliances are conspicuous by their absence, it should be greatly appreciated. The blending is carried out upon absolutely correct lines, and the machine is a great time and labour saver. It can be adapted to mix any desired dry materials together, from the constituents of gunpowder to fertilisers, tea, coffee, cement, and so forth, at any requisite speed ranging from fifteen hundredweight to as many tons per hour; and what is more, it is very compact and occupies but little space.

### A PENCIL STYLOGRAPH.

Slowly but surely the lead-pencil is being driven out of service, so far as ordinary use is concerned—say in the jotting down of notes, pocket-book work, and so on. The pencil received its first blow upon the introduction of the stylograph, and has been banished more and more from the pocket by successive improvements in this writing instrument. The latest development should go a long way towards sealing the fate of the pencil completely, so far as ordinary pocket use is concerned, for a natty little stylograph has recently appeared. It is about three inches in length, and is no thicker than the ordinary lead-pencil. The diminutive barrel contains a goodly supply of ink, and the point is just suited for everyday hard usage. With the 'gnat,' as it is appropriately called, the exasperating breaking of the point so often experienced with the ordinary lead-pencil at a critical moment is no longer encountered, while the record is perfectly indelible. Its small proportions ensure its being compact and occupying but little space in the waistcoat-pocket; while, being manufactured by the firm responsible for the Swan fountain pen, its durability and serviceability are assured. Moreover, it is sold at a price which will especially appeal to those who have to make extensive recourse to pocket-book and note recording.

### A NEW DOMESTIC VACUUM-BOTTLE.

The vacuum-bottle has entered so extensively into the domestic circle as to become regarded almost as indispensable to the well-equipped home. A new bottle of this type has recently made its appearance, the improvements in which cannot fail to impress users. This is the 'autotherm.' It performs exactly the same task as the ordinary vessel of this type: keeping liquids hot or cold for hours at a stretch. The bottle comprises the two glass walls, the annular space between which is exhausted of air so as to act as an absolute insulator and prevent the radiation of heat either from within or without. The glass section of the bottle is slipped into an outer protective metallic case, and the whole is so designed that it can be taken to pieces when required for the purpose of cleaning. The inner glass vessel can then be thoroughly sterilised and the metallic part cleaned in any manner desired. Then, again, in the event of the glass vessel becoming broken one can easily detach it, and secure a new refill for a few shillings. The bottle has the advantage of being not only thoroughly hygienic but inexpensive. Hitherto such receptacles have been somewhat of a luxury, and this is the first serious attempt to bring them within the reach of the masses. In this direction there is considerable room for development, as in America the writer has seen workmen carrying their food with them in bottles of this type, instead of the ordinary can, and they have thus been able to enjoy a temptingly hot or cold meal, according to the time of year, several hours after the same was prepared. In the nursery, too, these bottles have settled a very trying question; for now, instead of the infant's meal having to be prepared in the middle of the night, a task which may occupy anything from five to fifteen minutes, it can be prepared before one has retired, and is ready the instant it is required. There is no doubt but that in a

short time a shilling or two will purchase a flask of this type, and enable the British workman to enjoy the same advantages as are within the reach of his colleague on the other side of the Atlantic.

### A NEW RAILWAY SHUNTING AND COUPLING SYSTEM.

Numerous efforts have been made by ingenious inventors to facilitate the coupling and uncoupling of railway vehicles, and thereby to bring about a welcome reduction in the number of fatalities among railway employés arising from this cause. The latest was recently demonstrated in Sheffield, and was the only one of seven examined by the Railway Employment Appliances Committee appointed by the Board of Trade, because it coupled and uncoupled under all conditions. Moreover, the appliance calls for but little alteration in the ordinary design, and requires no greater skill on the part of the shunter. The ordinary coupling-chain comprises three links. The third or bottom link in this case is fitted with a cross-piece so as to prevent it from jumping off the hook under severe concussions. The ordinary coupling-hook is used; but instead of the buffer being employed as the fulcrum in the leverage, as is now the case, which causes the shunter to stand back somewhat from the track, thereby imperilling his safety by passing trains, a special point of purchase for the pole is provided. This device is attached to the truck-frame itself, near the chain and at a lower level than the buffer, and is somewhat like the elongated link of a chain, and through this the shunting-pole is passed. The chain is picked up and lifted in the usual manner, the fixed attachment serving as the fulcrum. It is so designed as to give the shunter every facility and free movement for manipulating his pole, but the position is such that he stands quite clear of the track on which the trucks are and the adjacent track, so that he cannot be struck by passing trains; while, as it causes him to stand well behind the buffers to secure his lifting purchase on the coupling, he cannot be caught between two vehicles. The device is extremely simple and free from complication, while modification thereto of existing practice would not be difficult or expensive.

### A SIMPLE CHIMNEY-CLEANER.

The soot-clogged chimney and the periodical visitations of the chimney-sweep are worries incidental to and inseparable from domestic life when coal-fires are used. Various chemical compounds have been prepared to disperse the particles of carbon clinging to the walls of the shaft; but the majority of such, being composed of sulphur and salt, are only partially efficient; and as they set up scaling, the last stage is generally worse than the first. A simple and inexpensive chemical cleaner has been devised, however, which is free from the above-mentioned drawback. It comprises a combination of certain chemicals and metals which, when thrown upon the fire and in the process of combustion, emit gases which disintegrate the soot and scale, causing them to be expelled into the air through the chimney like smoke, and leaving the shaft, flue, or pipe perfectly clean. It is also stated to be of first-rate efficiency in the case of a chimney's catching fire, the *modus operandi* in this case being to cast a cleaner on the fire, and to open all flues so as to give a good draught to the chimney. The gases extinguish the fire, and at the same time disperse the offending soot. The compound is non-explosive, odourless, and does not inflict any damage upon the chimney. Those who regard the advent of the professional sweep with deep misgivings should find such a remedy as this distinctly useful.

### A SELF-DUMPING BARGE.

A great improvement on the ordinary hopper-barge, with its automatic discharge through self-opening bottom doors, has been devised by a Swedish engineer, Herr A. F. Wiking, and is being practically tested in the harbour of Stockholm. The evolution of its design was in reality prompted by the peculiar conditions prevailing in this port, where large masses of rock are daily removed and dumped into the sea, for which purpose the ordinary automatic hopper-barge proved unsuitable. In the Wiking barge, the emptying of the contents is effected by heeling the vessel over through disturbance of its equilibrium. The barge in service at Stockholm is of the deck type, and will carry two hundred tons of rock. Overhead, on one side, and extending the length of the barge, is a cylindrical tank which normally is empty. Beneath the deck of the barge, at the lowest point of the hull and on the side opposite to the elevated cylinder, is another tank which in this case carries six tons of water. Alongside this tank is a small reservoir containing compressed air. When the barge reaches the dumping site the compressed air is admitted into this lower water-tank. This forces the water out of the latter up through a pipe into the elevated cylinder, thereby upsetting the craft's equilibrium, so that it cants over, and in so doing shoots the load on deck into the water. At this juncture the compressed air is cut off and the water in the upper tank gravitates once more to the lower tank, causing the barge to assume its upright position. In the majority of cases the load will slip off before the deck is very greatly inclined, but in some cases the barge heels right over, so that the elevated tank is awash. The water now cannot gravitate to its original tank, but flows into another tank which, with the barge on its beam-ends as it were, is at a lower level than the elevated tank now awash. As this backward flow proceeds the vessel slowly comes upright, but cannot become quite perpendicular, because the water has run into a tank which, though beneath the deck, is on the same side as the elevated cylinder giving the barge a list. This latter tank, however, is at a higher level than the normal water-tank below the deck, and consequently it empties into the first tank, through which operation the craft is brought upright. The system is very simple, and,

as the experience at Stockholm shows, highly efficient. The barge is cheaper in first cost than the hopper type, and its maintenance charges are lower. The water is used over and over again, working as it were in a closed circuit, and the only periodical recharging that is necessary is in regard to the compressed-air reservoir, as this latter is used at a pressure of about one hundred and thirty pounds per square inch.

### BUTTERFLY-FARMING.

One of the strangest methods of making money—and there are many such—is surely the raising of butterflies in the same manner as one runs a poultry-farm. Yet in Europe there are several such establishments, and they have attained a degree of great prosperity. One in France rose from very humble beginnings to an extensive industry, while similarly in these islands there is a flourishing farm on the south-eastern outskirts of London. Here in the early spring may be seen as many as forty or fifty thousand caterpillars and pupæ, while in summer there may be thousands of butterflies of every conceivable colour and beauty flitting about the various houses in which they are caged. This novel nursery covers an acre or so, and the strange stock is housed in large cages built around trees, and measuring anything from ten feet square by as many in height upwards, so disposed as to provide inside conditions as analogous to those of nature as possible. In addition, there are numerous smaller cages of a portable character, which with their strange contents can be moved about from point to point as desired, and attached to the trees. In extensive glass-houses are cultivated hosts of plants and flowers of infinite variety on which the caterpillars and butterflies can move about at their own sweet will. The farm is carried out on lines very similar to those in orchid-cultivation, and assistants are retained for scouting various parts of the country for new specimens. The product of the farm is sold to entomologists, and it is nothing to have a stock of about one hundred mounted dead insects ready for market, and ranging in price from a humble copper to several pounds apiece.

### THE ROYCROFT SHOP.

This is the name of a remarkable industrial settlement founded by Mr Elbert Hubbard at East Aurora, Erie County, New York State. The name Roycroft has been carried over from the shop of Samuel and Thomas Roycroft, who made beautiful books in London in the time of Oliver Cromwell. The shop is a workshop in which the employés to the number of over three hundred are drawn from the village and the families of farmers around. The movement was started in the humblest way by the purchase of the plant of a local printer, and has grown from a tiny staff of three boys and four girls to its present dimensions as workers were trained and one department after another was added to the concern. The founder has solved the problem of giving pleasant, healthy employment to the villagers, while developing mind and body, in beautiful and artistic surroundings, and has helped to stem the drift townwards in that district. The products are as remarkable as the man who founded the shop. Beautiful type, initial letters, printing, and binding are the order of the day. Not how cheap but how good they can make things is a motto at Roycroft; another is that art is the expression of a man's joy in work. Three periodical publications are issued: *The Philistine*, which has a circulation of over one hundred thousand a month; *Little Journeys to the Homes of the Good and Great*, of which some seventy thousand copies are printed; and the *Fra*, of which there is an impression of fifty thousand copies. A contribution by Elbert Hubbard to *The Philistine* in 1899, the famous 'Message to Garcia,' caught on to such an extent that some twenty-two million copies had to be printed to supply the public demand. The manager of one railway ordered it in half-million lots, and it was translated into eleven languages, and reprinted in two hundred magazines and newspapers. Hubbard does not believe in a cheap article; the production of beautiful and artistic volumes, and reprints of essays by Emerson, Lamb, Stevenson, and plays of Shakespeare, are fairly expensive. The binding of the books is wonderful, as directed by Mr Kinder, who was trained in Leipsig. Authorship and lecturing are other branches zealously pursued by Elbert Hubbard, who certainly dominates his own periodicals in the way of contributions. Blacksmith and carpenter work, terra-cotta, and weaving are other departments of art and industry practised at Roycroft. Lectures, concerts, and dances are arranged for weekly. The promoter and founder tells us he is content, so we judge that the Roycroft Shop has been commercially successful. The son of a doctor in Illinois, Elbert Hubbard was born in 1856, and has been in turn farm-boy, cow-boy in the West, printer, manager of a soap-factory, and student at Harvard. He tramped over Europe, and met William Morris, by whom he was much influenced. Good specimens of his philosophy and racy and humorous commentary are the lives of Philip Armour the meat-packer and Andrew Carnegie in his 'Little Journey Series.' The United States, with its vast, conglomerate population, needs the work and message of an Elbert Hubbard.

### CHINA'S AWAKENING.

The East is daily drawing nearer to the West. The improvements being made in the Siberian railway are calculated to reduce the journey from Paris to Pekin from fourteen to nine and a half days. The Rev. Lord William Gascoyne-Cecil and Lady Florence Cecil, after a trip to the East, have written *Changing China* (James Nisbet and Co.), in which they say that China is now nearer England than London was to Scotland in the days of Dr Johnson. The journey, too, is infinitely more comfortable. The writers went with an open mind

with the view of reporting upon the prospects of a Western university for China, proposed by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The idea of a united universities scheme, for the establishment of a university at or near Hankow, received a warm welcome there. In Sir Robert Hart's opinion there is room for a hundred universities in China. The yellow race has shown such an adaptability to Western civilisation as to have awakened the jealousy of various nationalities; America, Australia, and South Africa now put a bar upon the free entrance of the Chinese workman. If China continues to advance with the rapidity with which she has begun, the writers think she might easily excel Europe in morals; on the other hand, the world-wide influence of some four hundred millions of people might be all the other way, and might deteriorate the moral tone of Europe and the rest of the world. Therefore, with the university idea in view, the writers plead for a Christian basis on which to graft the education, the science and arts, and civilisation of the West. Europe and America have therefore, they say, a duty, in self-defence, to teach China the power and civilisation that spring from Christian faith. The Boxer Society, with its aim to 'knock the heads of the foreigner off,' has proved ineffective before the spirit of the West; the Russo-Japanese war, with the battle of Mukden, has been a turning-point in the history of China. The awakening has come. The opium decree is being enforced. Railways are being made and projected to tap the virgin wealth of the land, and there is cheap labour, paid at threepence a day, or skilled labour at sixpence or sevenpence a day. Farmers in some parts think they have done well if there is a yearly margin of about thirty shillings over from the purchase of necessaries. While the past Chinese *régime* was in our eyes corrupt and cruel, the Chinaman himself is courteous, industrious, patient, cheerful, contented under adverse circumstances, and obedient and reverent to parents. We have something to learn from them in this respect. On such a stock much may be grafted. So think the authors in giving their report to the world on university education for 'Changing China.'

### RAILWAY-TICKET PRINTING-MACHINE.

Since we noticed the railway-ticket printing-machine in these columns in 1909 it has been introduced into this country from Germany by a Birmingham firm. In the Railway Number of *Cassier's Magazine* its progress is commented upon, and the adoption by a couple of leading British railways of the automatic ticket-printing machine is said to constitute the most important change made in railway office-practice for many years. The change now initiated promises entirely to revolutionise booking-office methods. The ticket-printing machine is an apparatus devised to print an entirely new ticket for every passenger, containing every detail of destination, with number, date, fare, route, luggage, or other particulars. In this matter the Continent has taken the lead, as large orders have already been placed by the German State railways, by the Prussian State railways, and by those of Saxony, Würtemberg, Silesia, and Sweden. The operation of the machine has lately been inspected by several representatives of British railways, and negotiations are in progress with a view to its further adoption. In the same issue the opinion is quoted of Sir William Crookes that the Brennan mono-rail train (described at page 329 of *Chambers's Journal*) is 'the invention of the age.' Modern express locomotives, and a great deal pertaining to railway working, are also described, with abundance of beautiful illustrations.

### THE TRANSANDINE TUNNEL.

The completion of the first tunnel through the Andes has been rightly regarded as one of the greatest engineering achievements of our time, and one well fitted to crown the centenary year of the Argentine Republic. An experimental train passed through the tunnel on April 1. The new railway tunnel, which pierces the Andes at an altitude of over ten thousand feet above sea-level, now gives direct railway communication between the Atlantic and Pacific, and links up Buenos Ayres and Valparaiso. The last part of the third section of the tunnel, from Los Andes to La Cumbre, consists of a great spiral tunnel nearly ten thousand feet long, which has proved very difficult of construction. The distance between western Europe and Australia will be shortened by about a thousand miles, and nine days may be saved in the journey to eastern ports. The Argentine Transandine railway is the sixth highest in the world, the next place being held by the Chilian line, with which it is now connected. On the summit of the pass, on the boundary between Chile and Argentina, at an altitude of twelve thousand seven hundred and ninety-six feet, is the colossal monument of Christ the Redeemer, commemorating the treaty of peace and boundary settlement between the two countries, 1902–3.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### THE OPEN ROAD.

The open road I tramp and tramp
Sometimes, but little distance see,
The winding lane hides close from me
The shadowy leagues to my next camp.
In careless faith I tramp and tramp.

There stretch the downs (beyond is sea),
Or wide lush marshes flat and damp;
And inland, many a flowery lea.

The open road I tramp and tramp,
Uphill and down, o'er moorland free,
Where gorse and heather beckon me;
But darkness veils the last far camp.
The good God guides. I tramp! I tramp!

CONSTANCE FARMAR.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE DUEL.*

## CHERCHEZ LA FEMME.

By MARION BOWER.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

IT was only the coming of night which put an end to the battle of Austerlitz. First, in the mist of the dark morning of the 2nd of December; then, when the sun came out—'the glorious sun of Austerlitz,' as Napoleon called it to the last day of his life; later, when the shadows fell again, and the icy wind began to blow across the two lakes behind the allied Austrian and Russian forces, the battle and the carnage raged. Steadily victory followed the Imperial Eagles. The Austrians were put to flight on the one hand; on the other, manfully as the Russians struggled, they were driven back towards the marshy ground which fringed the lakes. Then, decimated, disheartened, hemmed in, there followed the final catastrophe.

One wing of the Russian troops, retreating in something like order, endeavoured to cross the larger of the lakes (Satschen) on the ice. The little Corsican with the dark-olive face, who held all Europe in his grasp, saw the struggling mass of resolute men; and for a moment, with his marshals about him, with the flags of the enemy at his feet showing him that indeed he was lord wherever he carried his arms, he hesitated. But for a moment only. In war as in war. It was a favourite saying of his; and war knows no pity, no clemency.

The little man in the plain blue coat, with his hat pressed down over his eyes, shut his observation-glass with a snap.

'Let the artillery of my Guard get into position facing the lake,' he commanded; 'and,' he added, 'let it open fire.'

He was obeyed.

The first white puff of smoke was followed by an open lane in the tightly packed mass of living men; another shot followed, another lane; and next the glittering ice was thickly pitted with what seemed to be spots of darkness from the shore, but which were in reality fallen Russians.

Napoleon turned from the scene of wholesale death to the man nearest to him.

'Where is the Colonel d'Abné-Prevost?' he asked.

Lannes—it was Lannes, or his brother-marshal Bessières—replied that the colonel had not returned from carrying the order to the artillery to fire; that he ought to have been back; but—— He broke off, and finished the sentence with a significant gesture.

'A pity!' murmured Napoleon. 'I grieve for him. The Colonel d'Abné-Prevost was a brave man—and a patriot.'

The Emperor glanced over Satschen again, directed that another battery of artillery should be brought up, and sat there motionless on his charger.

The death of the Russians, hundreds at a time, did not move him. The disappearance of one of his own staff had drawn from him an expression of pity, and even so much was rare with Napoleon; but the sympathy was more for himself than for the fallen man.

. . . . . .

Hector Marie Pierre d'Abné-Prevost—Marquis de St Croix, to give him his full title—a man of forty when many of the Emperor's generals had not attained that age, belonged to one of the noblest of the old French families. His father—the old Duc had cast his son off on hearing of his defection—was still chamberlain to the Bourbon king, Louis XVIII., who had taken refuge at Mittau, on Russian soil. Hector had been in the Russian service, was a captain in the famous Muscovite Noble Guard (his

* Marbot, in his Memoirs, mentions that a wounded soldier was rescued off an ice-floe after the battle of Austerlitz.



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sentiments were as fiercely anti-Napoleonic as those of a D'Abné-Prevost should be), when suddenly he threw up his commission, left Petersburg secretly, it was said because the Czar forbade a duel he wished to fight, entered Paris and demanded an audience of the Emperor.

'I am come, sire,' the tall, handsome man boldly proclaimed to the little figure before which Europe bowed, 'to offer my sword to France, to fight in your ranks. I am aware that I have put my life in danger, that my name is on the list of those to be punished with death if they re-enter their native country. I am not dismayed. I leave my fate confidently in your Majesty's hands.'

The Corsican heard, meditated a moment. He was but newly arrived at the Imperial dignity; the world at large had not guessed how it galled him that he could create dukes, bestow the bâton of a marshal on a successful general, could make the wives of his followers ladies-in-waiting, but that he could not endow them with that *cachet* of good-breeding which seemed to have died with Marie-Antoinette and the guillotine. He was just beginning to be aware himself that he desired above all things the submission of the old aristocratic families. Here before him was the representative of one of the proudest names in France.

Napoleon looked up at the big man with that smile which must have had a special charm of its own, since men by the thousand went cheerfully to their death at its bidding.

'I welcome you, Monsieur le Colonel,' he said, with a certain emphasis on the grade. 'You have put France before yourself. You trusted to my being able to recognise a brave man when I saw one. You shall regret neither your patriotism nor your fearlessness.'

Thus Hector d'Abné-Prevost left the Tuileries a colonel in the army of the sovereign he had been brought up to hate as a usurper and an upstart. Soon after war was declared between Austria and Prussia on the one hand and the French on the other, Russia intervened for the allies; and Napoleon, taking command of his forces in person, crushed his adversaries at Austerlitz, and on his staff that day served Hector d'Abné-Prevost.

The Emperor was turning away from the field of battle. He wished to sup—for Napoleon was nothing if not dramatic—in the room where those two monarchs by long descent, Francis of Austria and Alexander the Czar, had supped the night before, when a cry, the penetrating wail of dire anguish from a thousand throats or more, caused him to turn.

The French artillery had broken through the ice on the lake, and the men, horses, wagons, and guns upon it were sliding off into the water, were going down into the icy coldness as swiftly as a stone falls into a pool.

Napoleon looked for a moment. He drew a deep breath and turned away. Indeed he had conquered! Indeed Europe was at his feet!

A last gleam of pale-yellow sunshine, the dying glory of the snow-laden sky, suddenly shot forth.

The Emperor raised his sword.

'Gentlemen,' he said to those about him, 'look! Does not the sun of Austerlitz salute you again?'

As he said that, a man broke through the group of generals and staff-officers and threw himself down before Napoleon's charger. The soldier, a trooper of dragoons from his uniform, was bleeding from a wound in the arm; his head was bare; his sword was broken off short.

Napoleon looked down at him. He never spurned the simple soldier who appealed personally to him. He knew the value—until ambition and success blinded him—of popularity.

'*Eh bien, mon enfant?*' he demanded.

The trooper raised his hands.

'I am Jacques Clements,' the poor fellow sobbed, 'the colonel's orderly.'

'What colonel, *mon brave?*' Napoleon inquired genially. 'You know I have more than one.'

'Colonel the Marquis d'Abné-Prevost,' the man answered. 'He is my foster-brother. He is on the ice with the Russians. He will drown. Save him! Save him, your Majesty! Save him!'

The Emperor bent from his saddle. A man who could inspire this devotion in an orderly had possibilities of command about him. More than ever did Napoleon regret the loss of the converted Legitimist.

'Why should your master be on the ice?' he asked. 'Surely you mistake. They are but Russians there.'

'The Noble Guard is retreating that way,' Clements answered. 'Where the Noble Guard is my master will be. Has he not sought them all the day? Have I not sought them for him? Save him! Save him, your Majesty!'

Napoleon bent yet lower and touched the shoulder of the man's blood-stained tunic.

'I would if I could, my man,' he answered. 'I would save the Colonel d'Abné-Prevost if I could. But, alas! it is beyond me.'

'Beyond the Emperor of the French?' ejaculated the trooper.

'Even so,' answered Napoleon Bonaparte as he shook the bridle of his charger; 'beyond the Emperor of the French.'

. . . . . .

The orderly was right. Colonel d'Abné-Prevost was on the ice.

The night passed—the long night of intense cold, of darkness unrelieved by moon or stars, the night broken by the cries of bitter anguish from benumbed men perishing of wounds, of thirst—and at length the slow, reluctant winter day grew bright again.

But before it was more than a dull-gray glimmer, a man in a French uniform came back to a painful consciousness that he was alive. At first his eyes

slowly opened; he lifted one arm, then the other; raised the right, and pushing a lock of stiffened hair off his forehead, tried to remember where he was.

'*Milles tonnerres!*' he muttered, 'but have I not cold?'

Above him, about him, was a wet, woolly mist. He put his hand down to his side, and found that it touched that which was intensely cold.

'*Mais!*' he murmured, for he did not yet realise that he was lying on ice.

A thousand fancies came and went in his brain. A snatch of song seemed to reach him out of the baffling fog. He put up his hand, this time to wipe the glaze from his eyes; and then, so clearly, so distinctly, that it was impossible it could be fancy, he heard a name—a woman's name.

That hurried him towards a fuller consciousness as nothing else could have done. He raised himself on his elbow and listened. The high, feverish voice came again. 'Nicolette!' it cried. 'Nicolette!' and then followed a snatch of song.

Hector waited until all was quiet again about him.

'*Bon Dieu*,' he whispered as he strained his eyes, 'let the mist lift! The mist must lift!'

He must know who was calling Nicolette, who was singing her song. '*Belle amour*,' he chanted under his breath, '*belle fleur, Nicolette*.' Where was he that he should hear that name, that song? The events of the last twenty-four hours came back to him. Yesterday—at any rate, when he was able to sit a horse, when he could grasp a sword, when he could get up and stand—the French had been fighting the combined Russians and Austrians. All day long he, Hector, had sought for Boris Prince Stanislauski the Pole, who, serving in the Muscovite Noble Guard with him, had once been his best friend, and whom he now hated as only a man can hate another man when a woman comes between them.

(In the early years of the Czar Alexander's reign his sentiments towards Poland were supposed to be so benevolent that many a Polish noble took service in St Petersburg.)

From dawn to midday, from midday on, Prince Boris had eluded his enemy. Then, because the Noble Guard brought up the rear in the retreat over the Lake Satschen, and because Prince Boris was at the head of one company of it, and notwithstanding that he himself had carried the order to the artillery to fire on to the ice, D'Abné-Prevost had pursued.

He had not gone far before his charger fell with him; he had disentangled himself, and hurried on on foot. At least he thought he had.

'I—I was there,' he pressed down into his brain.

For a moment consciousness refused to be fully sure. Was this true? Was it also true that he had seen his enemy, that he had cried out to him to stand, that his hand had been on his pistol, and that—interrupting him—had come a sharp blow which spun him round as if he were a child's toy, followed by stillness—darkness?

'I did see him!' he protested aloud.

It was all true, as true as that he was lying out now in the damp and cold.

His mind somehow fastened on the word 'lying.' It hurried him into an impulse of self-preservation, made him attempt to rise. But after the first struggle he sank back with a groan. A horrible pain running up from his leg told him that something was seriously wrong.

'What?'

He raised himself—very cautiously this time—on his elbow to ask that question. He looked along the ice, put out his hand as if to drive the fog back.

'I must see,' he complained. '*Ciel!* I must see.'

Next, the deduction, the terrible deduction from the pain which went on throbbing into his benumbed body, made him dart his hand to his thigh, made him run his fingers as far as his knee. There they stopped—stopped because there was no farther to go.

With a groan which was more horror than pain, Hector d'Abné-Prevost sank back. The darkness closed about him, seemed to be filled with the sound of '*Nicolette, Nicolette! belle fleur, belle amour.*'

*(To be continued.)*

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# DOWN THE BOCAS.

## A DESCRIPTION OF FIVE ISLANDS, MONOS AND GASPAR GRANDE, THE SEASIDE RESORTS OF TRINIDAD.

By S. Duran.

'FIVE Islands!' Are you one of those fortunates to whom these words suggest pleasant memories of days gone by? Does 'Monos,' 'Gaspar Grande,' 'Chacachacare,' wake a responsive chord within your breast? Does 'Down the *bocas*' flash suddenly before your eyes the vision of a wild, cliff-bound passage, between the grim sides of which the pent-up, chafing waves roll fiercely, battering their way in from the Atlantic's expanse beyond? No? Unfortunate mortal! What have you not missed! And yet you are not so much to blame as to be pitied. Who knows where Five Islands are? Or Monos, Patos, Gaspar Grande, and Chacachacare? For that matter, how many know where the island of Trinidad is to be found? Echo answers, 'Where?'

At the mouth of Venezuela's mighty Orinoco River, nestling close to the mainland, near to that fabled Spaniard-ruled and pirate-haunted 'Main' of history and romance, lies the tropical West Indian island of Trinidad, theme and motive

of Kingsley's famous *At Last*, a shining jewel in England's glittering colonial crown.

Here the balmy winds of the tropics, laden with the odour of frangipani and rhododendron, of tube-rose and lily, of snowdrops, sweet-william, and jasmine, and night-blooming bridal-roses, sweep over the island the long year round, mingling when they reach the coast with the salt sea-breezes, tempering the 'tang' of their brine. And here, in the harbour of the capital city of Port of Spain, is to be found one of the most ideal seaside resorts imaginable. Not the popular conception of a modern seaside resort, not a Brighton Beach, nor yet a Narragansett Pier; not even a Coney Island. None of these. Just a little group of islets set down practically in mid-ocean, nestling together cosily in the curve of the harbour entrance, right at the mouth of the *bocas* or entrances to the harbour of Port of Spain; isolated, free, untrammelled, fanned by the free, brine-laden wind, swept and battered and hammered by the restless, surging waves, yet still within three hours' reach, by the connecting link of the big paddle-wheel steamer *Iere* and a twice-a-day service, of civilisation and the capital.

Each of the islets is crowned with a 'guest-house,' a large, rambling wooden building, many-roomed and many-windowed, with a wide veranda running around its entire four sides—such a veranda as your true Creole adores, shady, hammock-hung, strewn with rockers and deck-chairs—a loungers' paradise. The house is furnished throughout, kitchen and dining-room, hall and bedrooms, balcony and boat-house; and the party of picnickers that enter into temporary possession need only bring with them their clothes, food-supplies, and a maid to look after the rooms and do light cooking. The house, with its furnishings, is leased outright by the owner of the little islet at so much a week, and the figure is always very reasonable. Besides the lease-money, a cash bond or a signed guarantee must be given to cover any possible loss, breakage, or damage caused by the picnickers. This lease includes entire right and control of the island during the term for which it is taken over, and there is always the security that no unwelcome visitors or neighbours can 'butt in.'

Each islet boasts at least a row-boat; two or three place both sail and row boats at the disposal of the visiting party; while fishing-lines and small nets are as plentiful as the sea-cockroaches down at the landing-place.

Here a party of picnickers—lovers of the sea, lovers of boating and bathing and fishing, of basking on shady, wind-swept balconies, of dancing on moonlit verandas—here such a party can cast their tents, secure in the restriction of their visitors to the wild, free winds and waves of the Atlantic. No bothersome hotels here, nor life-savers, nor restricting ropes, nor bath-houses; neither are there set hours for meals or for sleep or for visits, nor vanity's promenade beach.

And, while nothing that is needful for the diversion and comfort of the visitors is lacking—of luxury, of padded chairs and cushioned lounges, of carpets and curtains and highly decorated beds, of rich meals and varied courses, of cooks to cook them and servants to serve them, of menials to do everything for you, fish for you, row for you, pamper you and pet you—of these things there are none. Nor does your true Creole 'Down the Islands' party need them or seek them. Young men and girls, in the charge of a middle-aged matron, they come down to the islands by the morning boat, clad in coarse, strong clothes—knockabout garb—coarse gloved and heavily shod, wide-brimmed country straw hats tied down over their heads, ready—nay, eager to lay hands on gunwale or oar, or to rush knee-deep in water to help to launch or beach their boat; ready to breakfast on black coffee and home-made bread, to lunch on biscuits and cheese and sugared water, and dine on ham-sandwiches and tea. Eagerly they load the caretaker's row-boat, that has put out to meet them from the islands, with their supplies of flour and sugar and rice and crackers, cheese and ham, and bottles and tins, then tumble pell-mell into the rocking boat, and grasping the oars, 'give way' with right good-will. The morning sun sparkles brightly and merrily on the rippling wavelets; the gay laughter of the party, the chattering and joking and peals of laughter, ring just as brightly and merrily on the morning air.

Little they care for the parting scream of the steamer's siren as it gets under headway for Monos and Chacachacare. Little reck they that until three o'clock in the afternoon they are cut off from even that slight link with the capital behind them. That is just what they desire—to be alone with Nature, alone with the wind and the waves. The eight o'clock boat in the morning will bring them meat and milk and ice and bread, and an order on any of the groceries for supplies can be sent back in the same way. So hunger's shadow cannot trouble them. For the rest—well!

Five o'clock in the morning meets them boating out on the waters of the *bocas*, eight or nine o'clock finds them bathing, lunch from eleven to twelve, then out in the boat again, visiting or rowing around the near-by islands, or possibly bowling freely down the Monos Boca before the freshening wind, on a trip to Monos or Gaspar Grande or Chacachacare.

Ay, those *bocas!* Three of them there are in all—the Small Boca, the Monos Boca, and the Big Boca off Chacachacare. They are the entrances to the harbour, the channels through which the entering vessels must pass; and here the Atlantic rollers, suddenly condensed and restricted to one-half or one-eighth of their original volume, surge and sputter and fume, and, rearing and tossing, batter their way through the narrow passage into the harbour beyond. Woe betide the ill-fated fisherman who is caught out on the waters of these *bocas*—ay,

woe even to the schooner or paddle-wheel steamer caught in these narrow, cliff-bound passages during a north-west squall! Long has the menacing blue-black cloud brooded to northward, the wild wind piling the Atlantic's waves before it in ever-increasing volume. Then suddenly, swift as a lightning-flash, fierce as an eagle's swoop, comes the shifting wind from the north-west, driving before it a blinding squall of rain, out of whose cloudy shadow loom the ghostly forms of mountainous waves racing down the *bocas* like an army of besieging fiends. And it is at the islands of Monos and Gaspar Grande, whose cliffs form the boundaries of these *bocas*, and down at giant Chacachacare, at the entrance to the big *boca*, that this sight of the fury of the north-west squall is to be witnessed in all its grandeur.

And for this reason, and because of the beaches and coves and diving-pools, and the room for rambling afforded on these larger islands, they are the favourite resort of the rich, whose plethoric pocket-books can stand the augmented price. These larger islands also contain residences of fishermen, and down at Chacachacare cacao-planters and small fruit-growers have settled upon the land. In fact, few picnic parties ever reach as far as Chacachacare, unless it be to spend a week or two with some friendly family residing thereon. But Monos and Gaspar Grande are the picnickers' paradise. Endowed by Nature with glistening stretches of sand, with a hundred coves and nooks and crannies where from the vantage-point of huge rocks the eyes may gaze straight down into the limpid, crystal-clear, dark-green, unfathomable depths; with natural diving-pools and an artificial diving-platform; with cool, shaded paths over gentle hills, down into leaf-carpeted valleys, through the heart of a miniature virgin forest; with the hum of the wind and the roar of the ravenous waves on the cliffs below as lullaby for drooping eyes at night; with the chant of chanticleer and the twittering, trilling, calling, singing of birds in the woods without as *reveille* at early morning, Monos and Gaspar Grande boast advantages over a Narragansett Pier or a Brighton Beach that every true lover of the wild, free sea must appreciate.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

### CHAPTER XLVII.—HOW MADAME SPED THEM ON THEIR WAY.

WHILE it was impossible to get rid of their unwelcome guest, it was perhaps only reasonable and not unnatural that they should make it quite plain to him that he was not wanted.

'I suppose you wouldn't be inclined to give up your bunk to monsieur?' M. Jolicot asked Jack as he went forward after his whispered greeting with Mavie.

'Not if I know it,' grunted Jack, and went at once and occupied it.

'I'm afraid you'll not find it over-comfortable,' said M. Jolicot to the intruder. 'You see, we don't pretend to take passengers.'

The passenger spent the night seeking soft places on the deck, and found them not. It was the same in the morning. Pleasant odours of coffee stole up from below and tickled his nostrils; but nothing more came his way, and the odours, alone, of Araby go but a small way towards the breaking of one's fast. He hinted that he was prepared to pay for his breakfast. Madame brusquely replied that she did not keep an inn, and did not provide meals for passengers. So Monsieur of the Police provided for himself as well as he could from the shore, and felt himself much out of place, and found the time pass slowly.

For Jack the day went quickly enough to the tune of his glad heart and galloping blood. It was all he could do to keep a stolid and resentful face even to the passenger. He felt like shouting with glee and roaring with laughter at thought of it all—Mavie curled up in her silken nest below, and Fouché's agent (anxious for news of her) up above; and all going down to the sea together.

The only check on his spirits was the consideration of ways and means in the immediate future, and on that he whipped his brain unceasingly, but reposed his faith in madame. Each time he went down for a meal he was permitted a few eager words with Jean-Marie in her nest, and Jean-Marie looked forward to these stolen visits no less hopefully than he did. She found the time long, but bore it stoutly, though not without impatience.

'Oh Jack, how much longer? It's hideous to be cooped up here in the dark. I feel like a prisoner in the Bastille; only I don't suppose they gave them silk to lie on. Can't you knock that horrid man overboard?'

'I'd like to; but, you see, Monsieur and Madame Jolicot would have to pay for it, and without them I could never have got you. Madame has some plan in her head, I'm sure. She told me to tell you to keep your heart up and she'd have you out before long, if she had to poison him.'

'I wish she would! I'm getting old and stiff lying here, and I'm sure my hair's going white.'

'We're on the way home, anyway,' said matter-of-fact Jack.

In the afternoon the passenger, obviously weary of himself and the sluggishness of things in general, but with undoubtedly a deeper intention behind, obtained a bottle of cognac from a waterside inn, and proceeded to extract solace and comfort therefrom. He surreptitiously invited M. Jolicot's assistance; and M. Jolicot, such times as madame was busy down below, accepted the invitations and fell in with a humour which chimed so admirably with his own.

They grew quite friendly, and madame noticed it, but said no word. She nodded her head sagely, however, and congratulated her own wisdom in keeping the goodman in the dark concerning some things. For that which is not in a shallow brain cannot come out, even under the influence of cognac.

Jack overheard snatches of their talk as he passed to and fro on his duties.

'You don't make your passengers any too comfortable, M. Jolicot,' said the agent.

'We don't carry passengers, you see, monsieur. That's why.'

'Oh, come now! For a price I'll be bound you'd take any one who offered.'

'See to that sail, Auguste,' came the deep voice of madame; for in the longer reaches, when the wind served, the great red-brown sail was in constant requisition.

'It would have to be a big price,' said monsieur as he came back to his place; 'and he'd have to talk to madame about it. What with the little one, and the cooking, and the washing, her hands are pretty full, you see.'

'A clever woman, and good-looking too! You're a fortunate man, my good Jolicot. Help yourself! Now, if the Minister wanted to get a friend out of Paris—on the quiet, you understand—couldn't you manage it for us somehow, eh?'

'Naturally one would wish to oblige the Minister,' said monsieur with a grave wag of the head. 'But, all the same, if the little one did not take to the business'—— More portentous waggings suggested depths of discomfort for all concerned beyond the power of words to express.

'And you really want to make me believe you never carry passengers, Jolicot? Do help yourself! There's no strength in this stuff, but it helps to pass the time. It's not what you gentlemen of the coast are accustomed to, I know. We of the towns have to put up with what we can get, you see. Well, now, to get a friend out of the country on the quiet, what would you say, and how would you advise him to go?'

'Slack off that rope, Auguste!' from madame.

'*Ma foi*, monsieur! I would not advise him to try this route, anyway. The English ships have stopped all the trading this year and more. See now! Let me tell you! Of all the boats that used to run across and do good business not one is running now. For why? *Ma foi!* Because the last time they went they never came back, and no one else cares to risk it. It's better to be in France with an empty pocket than to be in an English prison with nothing to eat and no clothes to your back. Yes, indeed!'

Madame's wise head had been working. That night she unbent so far as to offer the passenger a portion of the family *ragoût*. She also gave monsieur some very precise directions, and made no objection when he scrambled ashore one time, and presently came running after the boat with a bottle under his arm. She even carried her complaisance so far as to take it into the cabin to uncork it, and presently handed it out with a couple of glasses. And monsieur and the passenger proceeded to make merry as the night fell.

But there must have been something odd about that bottle, or its contents were unusually potent. For presently the sounds of good-fellowship died away into murmurs, into silence; and after waiting some time longer to make sure, madame bade Jack at the helm draw in to the shore.

'Now, *mon beau*, here is your chance. Get your things, and get away. I will call mademoiselle. When they wake I will tell them you deserted in disgust at having two such drunken pigs on board, and having to do all the work. I'll take the boat a few leagues farther on, so that Monsieur Fox would have difficulty in getting on your track if he tried to. But he'll have a very bad head in the morning, if I know anything of what was in that bottle.'

As Jack hurried forward to get his few belongings, madame went to look at her victims, and then went down to call mademoiselle. As he came hurrying back, Mavie's merry face, with a rare colour in it, greeted him with one quick glance above the sliding hatch, and then a sudden shy veiling of confusion at the eager comprehensiveness of his gaze. And truly the sight of her, with the blue stocking-cap drawn down into the white nape of her neck, and the lissomeness of the slim figure in its fortunately full blue guernsey and wide trousers, was enough to make any man want to look again and again and again.

'Yes, *ma foi!*' said madame appreciatively, 'she's too pretty by half for a sailor-boy.—Take my advice, mademoiselle, and rub some dirt on your face and hands as soon as you get ashore.—Take this,' to Jack. 'It may be of use to you;' and she thrust a folded paper into his hands. 'And here is some bread and meat. You'll get hungry walking. And now, get along as quick as you can. Make for Bernay, then Lisieux, then Caen, then St Lô. This is my own country and I know it. God bless you both! I hope you'll manage to get through all right. Anyway, I've done my best, and would have done better but for that cunning M. Fouché.'

'Madame, you're an angel!' said Jack, brimming with gratitude. 'Here is another something for the little Auguste;' and he put another couple of bank-notes into her hand.

'Another thousand francs!' gasped madame. 'But you are positively made of money, Monsieur Jaxax!'

'You have earned it and all my thanks as long as I live.'

'And mine, madame;' and Mavie flung her arms round the big, honest neck and kissed madame heartily.

'*Ma foi!*' said madame with a laugh of pleasure, 'there are some folks, I can imagine, would give many thousand francs for that. Now, *allez, mes enfants*, and God keep you!' And they stepped over the side.

Jack helped madame to get the *Belle Marie* under way again, and they waved her a last adieu, and stood watching till she mingled with the other shadows down-stream and drifted out of their lives. And if you are young and gifted with imagination above the ordinary, you may come within a thousand miles or so of Jack Sax's feelings as a small, throbbing hand clung to his because of the loneliness and the growing darkness, and the strangeness of the whole proceeding, and they disappeared together into the unknown.

(*To be continued.*)

# TO OUR OLDEST READERS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS IN PERPETUITY.

GOLDSMITH was delighted when he saw 'the gay Grandsire skilled in gestic lore, Frisking beneath the burden of threescore.' How mightily would his genial spirit have been refreshed had he in vision seen some of the first subscribers to his literary venture *The Bee* still subscribing to it, still reading it with unabated assiduity and pleasure, more than three-quarters of a century after the first number was launched!

Such a rare honour it falls to our lot gratefully to acknowledge and record. Amongst those who in 1910 were still reading *Chambers's Journal* there were at least six who have read it constantly and regularly all these seventy-eight years; ever since the first number was issued on the 4th of February 1832. Some months ago we gladly published a letter from Mr Wyles, Cross House, King's Newton, Melbourne, Derby, who, having begun to read the *Journal* in 1835, not unnaturally thought he was probably the oldest reader at the present day. His communication has brought us not a few letters establishing still higher claims. And we are sure he will rejoice with us when we congratulate him on being in good company; on his not being the only one of whom we may say, as was said about Nestor of old, that after living with two generations they are now lording it over a third.

From this correspondence we learnt definitely of six readers who had actually stood by us for fully seventy-eight years; and we hope that with them the full tale of our oldest supporters at home and abroad may not be fully exhausted. But if in February 1910 there were even six who had read for seventy-eight years, how many may there be who have read seventy-seven, seventy-six, seventy-five? And in comparison with their achievement, to have read our magazine for seventy years must seem but a trifle!

Some occupations and professions are notoriously favourable to longevity. Must we not in future reckon the habitual reading of *Chambers's Journal* a passport to health, happiness, serenity, and a green old age? May we not in the very best sense of the words say of our venerable subscribers that their

> Silver hairs
> Will purchase us a good opinion,
> And buy men's voices to commend our deeds?

We should be strangely callous and ungrateful were we not profoundly touched by evidence of such rare loyalty. It would be false modesty did we not at the same time accept the implied tribute to the insight and foresight of our forebears who founded deep and wide the foundations of the *Journal*, and drafted the plan which has ever since been carefully followed. And we should be inconsiderate did we not, by publishing the following letters, enable all our readers, however long or however short their standing, to join with us to-day in giving all our oldest readers a warm and grateful greeting.

The first letter is a testimony from the widow of an eminent man of letters, who made his name in the first half of last century, though his most famous book is not superseded to this day. Mr A. C. Bartlett writes from Pencarrow Gardens, Washaway R.S.O., Cornwall:

'Almost certainly your oldest reader is Mrs Ford of Pencarrow, who remarked to me a few days ago, "I was practically brought up on *Chambers's Journal*. My mother (Lady Molesworth) bought the first number, and I have read it ever since." Mrs Ford (*née* Mary Molesworth) was born on January 25th, 1816. She is the widow of that brilliant writer Mr Richard Ford, who, amongst other things, wrote the classic *Handbook for Travellers in Spain*. Mrs Ford's elder brother was Sir William Molesworth, Bart., the illustrious Cornishman who as first Secretary for the Colonies gave self-government to Canada. Mrs Ford always speaks of *Chambers's Journal* as being "the best of all the monthlies," and after she has read it most kindly passes it on to me, a courtesy which I need hardly say I greatly appreciate.'

Alas! we are compelled sorrowfully to comment: *morituri salutant*. The young may die to-day, the very old cannot long be with us. Only a week or

two after we received this letter, Mrs Ford, who had been a widow for upwards of half a century, followed her husband into the silent land (4th March 1910)—he died in September 1858. Mrs Ford's mother, who was a daughter of Patrick Brown of Edinburgh, came thither with her two daughters about 1828, when William Molesworth was a student at Edinburgh University. The Molesworths had been settled at Pencarrow, near Bodmin, Cornwall, since the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Another letter is dated from Glasgow:

'DEAR SIR,—I have just been reading in this month's *Chambers's Journal* a letter from a Mr Wyles claiming to be the oldest reader of *C. J.* now living. I suspect there are still some who have a better claim. I am eighty-five years of age, and remember *Chambers's Journal* from my youth up. Without a break we have taken it regularly all the years since it was first published. My father was one of the original subscribers; and I remember well how, along with two brothers a year or two older than myself, we watched for its delivery on the Saturdays. If I remember aright, it was at first a sheet, probably a double one, like an old *British Weekly*, and was published weekly. It was the first paper of the kind, and so greatly prized by us juveniles, for whom small provision was then made in the way of entertaining reading.

'For a long time there was nothing serial in its contents; the one story was generally complete, seldom even extending over two numbers. But the great charm of the paper then, as always, was not the fiction, but papers of general interest and information, narratives, and incidents. By the bye, Stevenson's story of *The Bottle Imp* appeared first in *Chambers's Journal*, and except in names of places and people there seems little change in the modern version. I have never seen this fact alluded to in Stevenson's works.*

'I have a number of bound volumes of the earlier series, and until the last few years often enjoyed a dip into them; but now my eyes find the type too small. It is wonderful how it has held its ground and high merit all these years. I may close by saying that I have two sisters, both now over ninety, who have also been constant readers of the *Journal*, and one of them is still able to read and enjoy it.—Yours faithfully, A. B. C.'

Another of our oldest subscribers is Mr W. G. Eavestaff, No. 2 The Avenue, Brondesbury, London:

'I have bought it from the first number until now. I was a pupil at the University College School, at the time called the London University School, and before it was held in the University College buildings in Gower Street. It must have been about the year 1832 that a schoolfellow sitting at the next desk to me showed me the first number. There was at the time hardly any good and cheap periodical to be bought. I took in *Knight's Penny Magazine* from its beginning; but, unless my memory fails me, it had stopped before yours came out. I was so pleased with your *Journal* that I inquired where it could be bought, but on my going to the shop they declined to get me the first number unless I would undertake to be a regular purchaser of it. This was owing to the difficulties of transport, most goods coming up by boat in those days. I willingly agreed to their terms, and before long I induced several near relatives to subscribe for it. I kept to the three-halfpenny numbers for a long while after you issued it in monthly parts, but I have for many years taken the latter in preference. The long support I have given it is a more solid testimony of my opinion of its worth than any additional statement in words.'

Mr Thomas Johnston, Gardenside Villa, Uddingston, thus records his long-standing interest in the *Journal* and other publications of the house:

'I may mention that I was born in April 1820, and can remember reading the *Journal*, in its original shape weekly of eight pages, in the year 1832. My father got it regularly from that time, and I continued to read his copies of it until I set up house for myself in 1843, when I began to buy it, and have continued a subscriber ever since.

'I still look forward eagerly for each monthly number, and when it is read pass it on to the second and third generations, who seem equally pleased with it. I may say that I have read a good many magazines of all sorts and sizes, but none of them has given me so much satisfaction as *Chambers's*, and even in my ninetieth year it is my favourite for reading. I may not be the oldest *subscriber*, but I believe myself to be the oldest *reader*.'

Mr Henry R. Martin, Fawsley, Caterham, Surrey, tells us of another faithful ally:

'I am writing on behalf of Mr Robert Crichton of The Mardens, Caterham Valley, Surrey, who will be ninety-eight years of age on 3rd April next. Mr Crichton has been a subscriber and reader of your *Journal* for seventy-eight years—namely, since the first number was published in February 1832, when he was a resident in Edinburgh. Mr Crichton still enjoys good health, and expectantly looks forward each month for the receipt of the *Journal*, from which he has always derived so much pleasure and instruction.'

Mr R. Paxton writes from 23 Thomson Street, Dundee, about an old friend we have lost by death:

'The *Journal* has come to our home since No. 1, Saturday, February 4, 1832, price three-halfpence, which we have. My father died in 1903, so he would have been one of the oldest readers when Mr Wyles wrote you in the end of last century. We now always get two copies of the *Journal*, and have no hesitation in saying it has no equal, and never had.'

Mr John Hawkins, writing from 35 Avenue Road, Grantham, thus notes his reminiscences:

'I may claim (perhaps) a long reading of the *Journal*. I read *Chambers's Information for the*

* We have not, up to this date, been able to verify the previous statement as to Stevenson's *Bottle Imp*.

*People* when it was published, and have read *Chambers's Journal* every number, from its first inclusive. I also sent to it a poem, which was entitled "The Nightingale at Belton," and also two others in 1859. Unfortunately my copies have been given away from time to time to relatives and friends. You will not wonder, therefore, when I tell you I was born in Newark in January 1820.

'The articles by Hugh Miller, the self-taught geologist, did me, as I do not doubt they did others of that time, much good. Indeed, I hold that the *Journal* has been a literary and educational influence wholly good, never failing in this quality for the long period of its existence; and personally I read it, and, what is more, still learn from it, as month by month it comes to hand. Perhaps it may please you to know that I stood and heard Mr Gladstone's first speech as a political aspirant, in Newark market, where he stood and for an hour replied to the speech of Serjeant Wilde (afterwards Lord Chancellor Truro). It was a marvellous display of intellectual power, never lacking a word or missing a point, as against the most finished special pleader of the day.'

Mr William Parlane, writing from Crookston, near Paisley, represents a younger generation of our supporters, and has heard of the *Journal* in unexpected places:

'In 1873 I was chief engineer of a Hong-kong steamer, and had been for some years, as I am still, an interested reader of *Chambers's Journal*. Anchored in the harbour one afternoon, I was visited by a Mr Mentaply, an esteemed engineer of another Hong-kong steamer. When he came into my cabin my last-received number of *Chambers's* was lying on my table. He picked it up, and said the sight of this *Journal* reminded him of an incident of 1845, when he was chief of the West India Royal Mail steamer *La Raba*. He said, "We were crossing the Atlantic, when, one fine day, we sighted a ship with all her masts gone As we got nearer her she appeared to be abandoned. As the sea was calm, our captain decided to send a boat alongside the derelict, and asked if I cared to go—which invitation I readily accepted. On boarding her we found her timber-laden, without sign of life, and that apparently she had been frozen in the Arctic regions, for some years had drifted southwards with the ice, and finally been released from it. When we entered the saloon, of which the doors were gone, the first thing which caught my eye, lying on the table, was a copy of the familiar monthly part of *Chambers's Journal*."'

These are but a selection of the letters we have received; others testify with not less kindliness to a steadfast friendship for the *Journal* of sixty, of fifty, of forty years' standing. Cognate in subject and of like interest to our readers are another series of communications that have lately reached us. Through the courtesy of Mr Andrew Carnegie we are able to print letters received by him in connection with the address given by him last autumn at Peebles on the occasion of the jubilee of the Institute founded by Dr William Chambers in 1859. Mr Carnegie has kindly placed the letters at the disposal of the Editor. The great ironmaster, who had a subject quite after his own heart, with enthusiasm and dramatic force drove home the lessons of independence, perseverance, industry, and personal well-doing which led to business success in the career of William and Robert Chambers. Twenty-five years later than Dr Chambers, Mr Carnegie had founded a similar institute at Pittsburg, the precursor of other unprecedented gifts of libraries and endowments for scientific and educational purposes all the world over. He admitted that it was a delightful surprise when he heard of the Chambers Institute and found the pioneer a brother-Scot. In the course of his address he made this kindly reference: 'It says much for the work of the two brothers, and their descendants now in charge, that *Chambers's Journal* continues to occupy the proud place which, as pioneer in the field, it so rapidly won, and that it is still in the family, and still *Chambers's Journal*. The publications of the firm, as a whole, have no rivals, as far as I know, either in Scotland or elsewhere.'

The first letter suggested by Mr Carnegie's address is from Mr Angus Sinclair, who in his career presents another object-lesson on the lines of the address. Mr Angus, who was born at Laurencekirk, Scotland, in 1841, worked as a fireman, as he relates, and after he went to the United States took special studies in chemistry in Iowa University. He has been engaged in literary and editorial work since 1883, and is now editor of a monthly periodical, *Railway and Locomotive Engineering*. He has published books on *Locomotive Engine Running, Twentieth Century Locomotives, Combustion in Locomotive Fire-Boxes, Combustion and Smoke-Prevention*, and *Development of the Locomotive*. A Mallet articulated compound locomotive built for the Erie Railroad is named 'Angus Sinclair.'

'"Railway and Locomotive Engineering,"
114 Liberty Street, New York,
*February 3rd*, 1910.

'My dear Mr Carnegie,—I have received so much enjoyment from reading your address on William Chambers that I regard it as my duty to tell you something about how much I have been personally indebted to the Chamberses.

'I began work as ticket and telegraph clerk at Laurencekirk Station when I was only thirteen years old, having received a very defective education. Two years later I went to be telegraph-clerk for the locomotive superintendent at Arbroath, with the agreement that I should be worked through the shops. After about a year I entered the boiler-shop as an apprentice, then the machine-shop, with lots of breaks to do office-work. The first boiler-shop work I did was carrying the tool-box for

Willie Laurie, a celebrated firebox-patcher. I remember on the first morning, when I was assigned to the boiler-shops, the men lounging about the gate waiting for the bell to ring began discussing the alluring subject of what they liked best to drink. All sorts of mixtures were discussed, when Laurie's preference was asked. "Well, men," he said, "when I have my option I prefer a glass of whisky mixed with another glass of whisky."

'That was my first mentor, and curiously enough he exercised a wonderfully good influence upon me. When we emerged from the first firebox we worked in, he asked, "How many fire-bars are in that box?" Of course I could not tell, and he made me guess, jeering at my poor estimate.

'That was the beginning. Every job we worked on he had some questions to ask—the number of stay-bolts, the size of the different parts, &c., till I was forced to observe all kinds of details as a sort of self-protection. The habit of observing things grew upon me, and I have found it very helpful.

'My connection with the office brought me into contact with officials whom I believed to be perfect in engineering knowledge. "How can I come to know theories of engineering?"—that became a burning question. There was an old dominie in Arbroath who kept a night-class for teaching sailors navigation. To him I went, and he wished to enrol me in his navigation-class. I steadily refused, and he conceived the idea that instruction in moral philosophy would help me. The result was that I devoted two winters to the study of Dugald Stewart's *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*. At the time I was getting discouraged over Dugald Stewart I found a copy of *Chambers's Information for the People*. I went at once to the public library and examined the back-numbers. Then I managed to subscribe for it. I began trying to study an hour every evening; but that was beyond persistence, and I finally settled down to twenty minutes every night, which was kept up for years. After a time I went firing, and was fearfully overworked, but I kept up my study of *Chambers*. I have come in after being out more than twenty hours on the engine, and when washing and preparing for bed did my twenty minutes of study. So you see that I have good reason for thanking William Chambers and his brother for part of the capital that raised me from the footboard to the editor's chair.

'I am ashamed of my long screed, but I look upon it as a testimony to the friend whose life-story you have told so well.—Your old friend,

'ANGUS SINCLAIR.'

To Mr Carnegie the Right Hon. James Bryce, H.M. Ambassador at Washington, wrote thus: 'Thank you for your address at Peebles on William Chambers, which I read with the greatest interest, remembering what pleasure and instruction the Chambers' publications, and perhaps most of all the *Chambers's Miscellany*, in the white covers, gave to me as a boy. I didn't know what a remarkable character and career his was till I read your account.'

Certainly not the least interesting of the letters to Mr Carnegie is the last on our list:

'72 EAST SEVENTY-SEVENTH STREET [NEW YORK],
*Jan. 21st*, 1910.

'MY DEAR MR CARNEGIE,—I have been reading the reprint of the address on William Chambers not only with gratitude to you for keeping me on your list, but with very tender reminiscences of Dunfermline and my childhood. My earliest recollection of the outdoor world is of a long, long journey—perhaps a mile—to "the foot of the parks" to see the "flourishing." A dear surprise it was when I went back to find that you had saved that park, perhaps those very trees, to be a joy to the town. Indoors I remember many, many books, many paper-covered "numbers," for my people subscribed to all the Chambers' publications that you mention, as well as the *Book of Days* and the *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, a valuable book even now. And those good Dunfermline folk not only took in the numbers week by week, but they read them and talked about them, so that from their earliest days the bairns learned something of the joys of knowledge. There was nothing sordid about such poverty; come what might, life could never [be] empty after such a beginning.

'Would the standard of culture in Dunfermline have been so high if the Chamberses and Cassells had never lived? I doubt it, and I have always felt a personal gratitude to these good men as well as the respect due to benefactors of mankind. Only the other day I touched the backs of the old *Chambers's Encyclopædia* which my father still keeps on his shelves, and said, "I owe more to these ten volumes than to any other teacher."

'There is something interesting about these particular books. My father and an elder brother came to this country a year before my mother and the two youngest of us. How she managed to do it I don't know, but out of the money which my father sent her my mother saved enough to pay for the binding of the *Encyclopædia*. Those beautiful half-morocco volumes were to be a fine surprise for my father. But, alas! the binders were slow, and the books were not ready in time. We were going over with some cousins, our home was broken up, so we could not all wait; but the idea of risking those treasures to the mercies of packers and forwarders was not to be entertained. In this emergency my fourteen-year-old brother bravely offered to stay behind for a week and bring the books, crossing the water alone. And he did. No wonder we treasure those faded green volumes. No wonder Chambers is to us an honoured name.

'Are we not fortunate who come of such good stock, who were born into such an environment? Happy you who have been able to make such a return, happiest of all in that you find your happiness in making it.—Ever yours,

'MARGARET B. WILSON.'

# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

FOURTH STORY.

## THE CONNOISSEURS.—PART I.

MANNINGTON, whose practice in Somerleigh I worked for one month, was a good-tempered, elderly bachelor, with that tendency to cynicism, seldom expressed, which is not uncommon in medical men. He had private means and a very comfortable house, with a large, well-sheltered garden. His practice was among a very pleasant class of people; and although he was by no means of the pushful type, and apparently was not greedy for fresh patients, he was very considerate and careful with those he had. For that reason I saw more of him than I have usually seen of the men whose practices I have undertaken. I was struck by the careful inquiries he made—in the most courteous way—before engaging me; and when he decided, after a personal interview, that I should suit him, he engaged me to spend a week with him, so that we might see some patients together before he left.

I had, then, many opportunities of discovering the man's tastes and hobbies, which, of course, he had the leisure and the means to cultivate. His roses were his children, and I remember that, June being the month, I got up early after my first night in Rosedene (as his place was called), and, strolling into the garden before breakfast, found him already there enjoying a contemplative pipe among his Gloires de Dijon and Maréchal Niels. He confessed to me later that tobacco, to his mind, was never so sweet at any other time as it was in his garden among the roses while they still sparkled with the dew. I apparently tickled him by saying that, although I smoked, the roses alone at such a time seemed quite enough without a pipe.

The next night, over our dessert, I discovered other sympathies between us. I had read the more widely, he the more deeply; and we fell into hot argument and flat contradiction over the merits and demerits of certain authors. But that particular hobby of his which really mattered, as far as this story is concerned, did not come to light until the evening before he left.

We had dined, and Mannington directed, as dessert was put on the table, that Mearns the groom was to come in for orders as soon as he finished bedding-up the two horses. He then proceeded, in honour of his commencing holiday, to open a bottle of very particular white port. The port was excellent, and I said so, and Mannington sipped and sighed comically, saying he feared he would taste little as good for the next month. At the end of the first glass he declared that he must leave out two bottles of it for me to use at my discretion, either to celebrate any happy event or to gladden my heart if worries came. I laughed and thanked him, promising discretion *ad lib.* in every sense.

At the end of the second glass we were talking over his holiday and the various places he was likely to visit. His plans were not made for the latter part of the month. 'But,' he said, 'in any case, on the 28th of June I must be in London, and at Christie's.'

I was holding my glass to the lamp and enjoying the play of colour. I sniffed the wine and looked across. 'The auctioneers?' I asked.

'Yes, the auctioneers;' and he nodded. 'The fact is, I've a hobby,' he said.

'Another?' I asked, smiling.

'Pooh! My roses, my books, and my few dozens of wine are merely fancies, and fancies which I keep in their proper place,' he said. 'I should never ruin myself over any of *them*. If need be, I could drink marsala, read sixpenny and sevenpenny reprints, and manage without a gardener or a glass-house. My craze is a more serious matter altogether.' And he laughed and tugged thoughtfully at his gray, pointed beard, staring past me as he did so.

His stare was so marked that involuntarily I twisted in my seat, almost expecting to see his hobby in some form at my shoulder.

Now, we two were sitting at opposite ends of a small table in the centre of the dining-room. On my left, and therefore on Mannington's right, was the door. Opposite the door was the fireplace, with a window on either side of it. Behind Mannington's chair were book-shelves; and when I twisted round I saw nothing but book-shelves behind me also—books from the floor to the ceiling.

'What are you looking for?' Mannington asked.

'Well, your hobby,' I said. 'I almost expected to see it behind me.'

But there the matter was dropped, for Mearns stood at attention in the open door, and Mannington broke off to give him directions about the geography of a new case to which I must be driven in the morning, after Mannington himself had been taken to the station.

There was only one further reference made to the hobby. When Mannington was in the four-wheeled dogcart, giving me my last instructions and imploring me not to write to him unless it seemed absolutely necessary, I reminded him that, since his whereabouts would be uncertain, he needn't fear correspondence.

'Of course,' I said wickedly, 'a wire would find you at Christie's on the 28th.'

'Heavens!' My shot told at once. 'For mercy's sake, don't be so inconsiderate! I'll let you see

something of my hobby when I get back if you'll leave me in peace for Christie's. Let's see! You've not met Calthorne?'

Never heard the name,' I said.

'Ah, well, he's a bit of a fanatic, like me. We'll have him in to dine the night I get back. I'll write to him. He's away just now. That ring of yours will amuse him, too.—Let her go, Mearns, or we shall be late!' And Mearns gave the fretting mare Polly her head; Mannington waved a friendly hand, shouted, 'Don't you meddle with me on the 28th,' and went spinning down the road in a little cloud of dust.

I watched him out of sight, and then turned back into the house to wait for Mearns and to start my month's locum-tenancy.

Here I might give you some idea of Mannington's *ménage*.

Mearns you already know. His cottage was at one side of the square stableyard, and there I had once or twice seen his wife, a childless woman, who seemed quiet, neat, and clean.

In the house Mannington had what I suppose would be called a cook-housekeeper, Mrs Binns, a martinet with a hot temper and a genius for *entrées* —or, at least, so Mannington said. She had two cheery maids under her, and I believe the groom donned livery and waited with them at table when Mannington gave his occasional dinners to people about. If Mearns was as good at table as I knew him to be in the stables, then Mannington must find it easy to have friends in whenever he chose, and be sure of satisfactory results, from *hors d'œuvres* to the coffee and liqueurs.

Mearns not only understood horses, but he loved them; it could be seen by the way he handled them, spoke to them, and groomed them. I noticed it the more because I got a vague impression that his behaviour to his wife was not so exemplary. 'A merciful man is merciful to his beast;' but I have seen more than one instance of a man being more merciful to his beast than to his life-partner.

I meditated a little upon this that very morning as Mearns drove me round. Polly the mare was fresh and fractious; but Mearns humoured her, coaxed her, petted and scolded her, as if she were a child or his sweetheart. His dark, clean-shaven, saturnine face was much brighter than usual, and more attractive.

'You're keen on horses, Mearns,' I said.

'Nothing like 'em, sir,' was his opinion; and from Polly's points and pedigree he wandered on to other kindred topics—hunters, racers, and chasers, winners and losers, till I was amazed at his lore, and said so.

'I've seen a lot of 'em in my time,' he explained shortly; and later I found him almost equally well up in doggy matters, where I was more at home.

For the first week of Mannington's absence everything went smoothly. I was busy enough, but there was nothing very complicated or serious in my cases. Sometimes I drove, sometimes I rode, both cobs being very good fencers, which made occasional short cuts possible, and the country lanes in fine June weather were very pleasant.

After about ten days of this my troubles, in a small way, began. Mearns got a nasty, lacerated wound from a piece of broken glass. It went deeply between the thumb and index-finger of the left hand, and to ensure proper healing I felt bound to put his hand on a splint.

The amount of work he managed to get through with one hand, and his strong teeth to help, was surprising. He showed temper when I spoke of getting help in, so I let him go on alone, with a lad under him whom he chose for himself, and I eased matters by very seldom using the trap, and so leaving him at home. There, I understood from Mrs Binns, he did his best to help with the grand cleaning up by which she always celebrated Mannington's holidays.

It was a week before I could let Mearns use that left hand for driving or for anything else; and as during the week I went in once or twice at night to dress it in his cottage, I also saw a little more of Mrs Mearns.

I was fated to see more yet; for two days or so after Mearns was in full work again he reported that she was laid up, and of course I visited her. Her condition for some few days was certainly bad, and worried me the more because I could not discover the origin of it. She grew rapidly bloodless, had one or two fainting fits, and seemed to be losing all vitality. I could not gain her confidence or get her to talk freely. I insisted upon her keeping entirely to her bed, arranged with Mrs Binns to supply her with well-cooked and nourishing food, and dosed her with strychnine and other tonics.

Polly the mare was suffering from a drunken blacksmith's bad shoeing just then, and one morning, when annoyed, I told Mearns that he seemed to be thinking more about the mare than about his wife.

His respectful answer was very much to the point. He said that he was quite satisfied his wife was in good hands; and that, while I was responsible for Mrs Mearns, who, he thought, was a little better, Polly was his particular charge.

Meanwhile Mrs Binns arranged to give him breakfast and dinner in the kitchen; and when his wife began to pick up again, as she did slowly in seven or eight days, it seemed best that this arrangement of meals should continue in force for a while longer.

It was about this time, when I had ceased to have any particular anxiety on Mrs Mearns's account, that I got a pleasant surprise in the shape of an informal visit.

On the previous night it had happened that I was kept in attendance a few miles from Rosedene, and only got back at breakfast-time, to find another urgent call awaiting me. My breakfast and toilet had both been a trifle hurried; and once on the

road, in order to economise time and horseflesh, it was necessary to stay out and clear my visiting-list. This I did, and had the reward of a quiet cup of tea in the garden about half-past five, and the prospect of a lazy evening. To enjoy this thoroughly I had a good bath before dinner, and a change of clothes. It happened, therefore, that I dined in evening-dress. I remember that I was rather pleased to be presentable when my visitor came; for if I rode late in the afternoon, I generally lounged about afterwards in my breeches and gaiters, another turn in the saddle being always on the cards.

I dined late and leisurely, and Mrs Binns did me well, having, I think, been won by my honest admiration of her skill in cooking some trout which I had deluded before breakfast a few days earlier.

After dinner I strolled into Mannington's favourite room, and smoked sundry cigarettes at his desk while going over the notes which I kept for him of the cases I had seen.

It was a beautifully calm, hot evening in the beginning of the last week of June. I went into the room about nine o'clock; and when one of the maids brought in a reading-lamp I said that was all I wanted—which was always understood to mean that I should not ring for anything else, and would answer the door myself if any one came.

The French windows of this room opened out on to the lawn at the back of the house. They were wide open now, and close to my right hand as I sat at the desk. I could hear the trout-stream babbling away softly at the foot of the garden; and when my notes were finished I lit another cigarette, lugged out my fly-book from one of the drawers, and began to wonder what fly would be most tempting for a fat trout that always fed under a certain overhanging willow. He needed a left-handed under-hand cast to reach him, and I was sure he was well over a pound. My heart was set upon that fish, and there were fragments of two or three casts already dangling in the willows above him. I sat and plotted, wondering what fly would fetch him out, and whether I should try the left-handed cast again up-stream, or hide myself far above and try to float a red spinner down.

'I'll see first if I can get a red spinner down to him,' I thought; and I must have thought aloud, for a high-pitched voice close at my elbow said, 'I fancy you're right. *I* don't believe Mannington has thought of that.'

I turned, and found a man smiling blandly in upon me through the open window. 'Let us waive formalities, and allow me to introduce myself,' he said. 'You're Dr Carvel, of course, and my name is Calthorne. You've heard of me, I think? May I come in?'

'Pray do,' I said, rising; and he stepped in through the open window, and threw himself into an easy-chair, while I returned to my seat at the desk and twisted round to face him.

He was a man of rather remarkable appearance. Of middle height, with a little roundness of the shoulders and a comfortable middle-aged waist, he was quick in his speech and movements, and alert in his look. His face had a fresh, healthy colour, shown off by thick white hair and a white moustache and imperial. He was in evening-dress, without overcoat or hat. His clothes seemed rather particularly well cut, and the gold-rimmed pince-nez seemed a finish to the slightly foppish *tout ensemble*, rather than a necessity.

'Pardon my interruption,' he said; 'but when you spoke I was sure I knew what you were at. If it's that fat villain under the willows you're after, I think that's your best chance. It's well worth trying, anyway; but you'll have to be a long way above him.'

And so our acquaintance began. In two minutes we were deep in fishing-lore. Wet fly, dry fly, Spey cast, steeple cast, salmon and trout. Calthorne had fished for both, in the Highlands and Islands, in Norway, and in Iceland.

It was not long before I was smoking one of his excellent cigars, and then I had the happy inspiration of opening one of the two bottles of Mannington's white port.

We got on excellently, and passed the pleasantest evening which I had spent since Mannington's departure. Calthorne told me that a letter from Mannington had reached him, warning him of the approaching dinner, and had mentioned me. It had also hinted at the particular entertainment for the evening, but Calthorne refused to treat that seriously.

'His blessed hobby—his mystery—I suppose he means,' Calthorne sniffed. He had a peculiar twist to one side of his face, a one-sided smile which gave a sarcastic point to his most friendly remark.

'What *is* this hobby?' I asked.

'Well, I might guess,' Calthorne said; 'but I might be wrong. If he didn't tell you, I'll leave it for that night's entertainment, as a surprise. But, mark you, my surprise will be if you see anything.'

And this prophecy I particularly remembered later.

'Do you mean to tell me you don't know all about it?' I asked. 'Why, he said you were a connoisseur.'

Calthorne sniffed again. 'Of what?' he demanded. 'Cameos, intaglios, ivories, coins? I've a fair knowledge of them all, besides having picked up a little information in different places about painters and etchers. But Mannington has been mysterious about this before. It came to nothing. Now'—he grinned sardonically at me from behind his pince-nez—'I am ready to lay you an even fiver that you'll never get one glimpse of Mannington's treasures.'

'Not even at the dinner?' I asked.

'Not even at the dinner—if that comes off,' he repeated. 'Do you take me?'

I laughed, perhaps a little awry. 'My dear sir,' I said, 'you must know the doctor better than I do. Then, too, a *locum* can't afford to bet fivers—or, at any rate, I can't.'

'You'd lose,' Calthorne said with decision, and there that matter ended.

*(To be concluded.)*

# THE AMERICANISATION OF CANADA.

By ROBERT L. JEFFERSON, F.R.G.S.

IT is but a few years ago that educated Canadians of all classes openly discussed not only the possibility but the advantages of annexation to the United States of America. This was before the great immigration boom, and before the two great trans-continental railroads had got into their stride in the development of the vast regions of the middle and far west. At the time of the Alaskan boundary controversy the people of British Columbia chafed at the aggressive tactics of Washington, and immediately after the treaty made no secret of their disappointment at the result. In the delimitation of the border between the United States and Canada in the neighbourhood of Puget Sound, British Columbians assert to this day that the British Government showed a pusillanimity in regard to the American demands which was little short of supine.

If one travels in the United States, the average thinking American, when discussing Canada, makes no secret of his conviction that eventually Canada must come under the domination of the United States Government. He is not disposed to make such assertions in any spirit of aggressiveness or boastfulness. He views the situation calmly and without dogma. The absorption of Canada is to be the natural outcome of America's development, in much the same way that Mexico, in his opinion, must eventually become a state or states of the great republic. No suggestion is made that this condition of affairs will be brought about by the disruption of friendly relations with Great Britain. On the contrary, economic and geographical considerations will make for the advisability of such a course, inasmuch as, with the growth of Canadian population and the development of Canadian resources, the Dominion must necessarily work in close harmony with the United States in her commercial and industrial affairs. On the subject of the relations between Canada and the mother country, the American is generous enough not to question the existing loyalty of the Canadians to the British flag; but such patriotism, he asserts, partakes rather of the character of chivalry, and the survival of hereditary impulse to gather around a flag which bears such noble and such glorious traditions. But there are forces at work—silent forces, the forces of economics, environment, climate, character of population, and the development of resources—which slowly but surely are making for a change in the thoughts and the aspirations of the Canadians. With the gradual decline of bureaucratic elements in government, the phenomenal growth of commerce, and the rapid increase in the prosperity of the people, so has Canada awakened to an ambition. She is no longer the Land of Silent Places, known to the world only by her province of Quebec, with its half-English, half-French population, and with a vast north and west exploited solely by the factors and the trappers of the Hudson Bay Company. The Canada of the future is to be a commercial and an industrial Canada, dominated by an aggressive energy, in which the almighty dollar is destined to be as great a lodestone as it has been, and is, to the people of the great country beyond the lakes.

And in this respect it is of more than passing interest to note, in Canada's progress towards material prosperity, how great is the influence of the United States in matters commercial, industrial, and social. I know no country over which the British flag flies which displays so few British characteristics as does Canada. No greater insult can be offered to the Canadian by an Englishman than to call him American; yet in almost every walk of life the American 'atmosphere' is manifest, and overwhelms all others. The very accent of the man in the street betrays his close association with the neighbouring country; the colloquialisms, the slang, and the idioms of speech peculiar to the American middle and lower classes are part and parcel of the vocabulary of the Canadian of similar social status. Such words and expressions as 'stunt,' 'cinch,' 'gee!' 'made good,' 'right here,' 'what is it anyway?' 'down town,' 'son of a gun,' 'dago,' 'skiddoo,' 'glad rags,' and many others, which would be more or less meaningless in London, are common to everyday Canadian speech. In matters of dress the American fashions are the fashions of Canada, and in male attire the difference between that and the English is sufficiently pronounced to make the Englishman, in his English clothes, conspicuous. Walk down the principal streets of Montreal and Toronto and one will find articles of attire prominently labelled 'Latest New York Style' or 'Latest Boston Style,' but never once will 'London Fashion' meet the eye. In the restaurants the British visitor will invariably be confronted with the possibilities contained in 'little neck clams,' 'clam chowder,' 'planked steak,' 'egg plant,' 'corn-on-the-cob,' 'deep apple-pie,' and

so on. If he be thirsty, the 'drug store' (not the chemist's shop, mark you) offers refreshment from the soda fountain in the shape of a sundae—a mixture of ice-cream, soda-water, and raspberry-juice. Cocktails before luncheon and ice-water with the meal are the fashion. One's hotel is like a barrack. The guest is a number; he is waited on by a bell-boy, who must be tipped for each service. One can live on the American or European plan. The former is to pay so much a day for board and lodging; the latter is to hire the room and pay for everything else as one goes. Each hotel has its rotunda, in which a newspaper-shop and cigar and tobacco shop are often supplemented with jewellers', dressmakers', souvenir, and other establishments. The rotunda is the resort of all and sundry. People who do not spend a cent in the hotel make it a common meeting-place, where to transact business. The stranger is warned not to leave his door unlocked, and urgently requested not to put his boots out to be cleaned. As a matter of fact, the hotel will not be bothered with boot-cleaning, that service being performed by the 'shoe-shiner' in the basement, who shines your boots on your feet for ten cents a time, with a five cent tip for an extra polish on the toe. The Canadian hotel apparently abjures privacy; anybody can come in and wander all over the place. The door-locking injunction has, therefore, its explanation.

The newspaper press is frankly conducted on American lines; it is sensational to a degree, and in some cases, I am sorry to say, is prone to those practices which have given some portions of the American press rather a bad name. The 'write-up' and the interview are prominent features. One can buy any amount of publicity or notoriety at a dollar or less a line. In the matter of interviewing, the Canadian newspaper-man has copied all the imaginative enterprise of his American compeer. The overseas visitor is his particular quarry. Peaceable, law-abiding British citizens, who have never had their names in print in the whole course of their life, are waylaid on the stairs, in the rotunda, or in the street, and are asked all sorts of questions, to discover afterwards that they are credited with dogmatic opinions on the state of the German navy, the best way to cure tuberculosis, or how to deal with the unemployment problem in Britain.

In addition to the Canadian press, the newspapers of the United States have an enormous sale in the Dominion. The effect of such widespread sale may be easily imagined. The great and the trivial happenings of America assume an importance almost co-equal to those of Canada. On the other hand, the newspapers of Great Britain have but a meagre sale, and are confined almost exclusively to the British immigrant, who, for a time at least, loyally endeavours to keep up his interest in the Old Country. But the British papers are rarely less than a fortnight behind time, and it is difficult to conceive a sincere desire on the part of the Canadian public to rely for mental pabulum on such a press, with a virile and up-to-date press like that of the American so close at hand. We must also take into consideration the enormous influence that the American magazines and periodicals have upon Canadian thought, and what a part they play in the moulding of opinion, and the aspect by which life is viewed. Compared to the great circulation of American weekly periodicals and monthly magazines, the sale of British papers of similar character may be said to be of negligible quantity. The consequence is that gradually but surely the British emigrant begins to see things through American spectacles, his outlook on the world is through the American window. The born Canadian has no use for the British periodical. He does not understand it, because he has never been in Britain, and British ways and the mode of describing British life are strange to him; American conditions of life and the American method of describing that life are more understandable. We must also bear in mind that more than half the emigrants to Canada are people who not only know not Britain, but do not know the English language. Drawn from the very lowest strata of European society, these people are, in the main, densely ignorant. In the process of Canadianising them their mental development is invested with an American atmosphere. Their knowledge of Britain is *nil*. When they are able to read at all they read the periodicals of America, and their notions of men and matters are moulded thus to American pattern.

And in business matters the American press plays an important part. Few British manufacturers advertise in the American press; consequently the advertisements read by the Canadian are mainly the advertisements of American goods. In this way American productions assume proportions of importance in Canadian eyes. British goods, which are very meagrely advertised in the Canadian press, achieve little publicity. This wide advertising of American productions in Canada, brought about by no fault on the part of the British manufacturer, but solely due to the geographical situation, gives the manufacturer of the United States an enormous advantage; and, therefore, it is not to be wondered at that, in spite of a preferential tariff in favour of Great Britain, the bulk of the manufactured goods sold in Canada are of American origin.

If one looks at the map of Northern America it will be seen that all the chief Canadian cities lie adjacent to the American border, and the majority of the principal manufacturing cities of the States are within a few hours' train-journey of Canada. New York, Boston, Pittsburg, Rochester, Cleveland, Buffalo, Toledo, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Duluth are all important industrial or distributing cities, and all are well within a day's run of the nearest Canadian business centre. American railway trains have running facilities over the Canadian lines; consequently goods sent from any of the American cities mentioned

above can be run without transfer right to the door of the Canadian consignee. The advantages of such facilities over the British or European shipper as regards time, cost, and trouble are such as to place the latter under a severe handicap. Supplementing these facilities, the American 'drummer,' or commercial traveller, has the Canadian field at his elbow, as it were. He is not faced, at the outset of his journey, with a three thousand miles sea voyage before he can start work. The American drummer is backwards and forwards over the border as if no such border existed. He is as much at home in Canada as he is in the States. The goods he sells in Canada are the goods called for in his own country; he does not have to specially adapt for special requirements. The Canadians have harmonised their desires to the standard set in America; consequently the manufacturer of the latter country possesses an enormous advantage over his British rival, who, in order to win trade in Canada, must adapt his British productions to the American standard of style and mode.

That the Canadian market is an important one is evidenced by the manner in which the Americans regard it. Apart from the activity which has been displayed in canvassing for trade, a considerable amount of money has been sunk by American industrial houses in the establishment of branch depôts or assembling factories in Canada. The province of Ontario, which is geographically advantageously situated, is especially favoured by the American manufacturer in this respect. The Canadian authorities naturally welcome such enterprise, because it brings capital and work to the country; but it must not be overlooked that the profits go to the American capitalist.

In the development of the vast prairie lands of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, one of the most significant aspects of the situation created is the wholesale manner in which American farmers have crossed the border and bought land in large quantities. I was very much struck, when I was last in the United States, at the frequent statement which was made to me that the States were 'overcrowded.' To one coming from Britain, with its forty-five millions of people congested in so small an area, the statement appeared rather ludicrous; but I am assured that the American is beginning to feel the want of elbow-room. Land is advancing in value, and the enterprising farmer or rancher of the Middle States has perceived in Canada possibilities for the advantageous exploitation of his capital impossible to him in his own country, where all land is steadily enhancing in price. Selling up at a big profit on his original outlay, he has, with the capital so raised, been enabled to purchase and equip farms and ranches in Canada of a size it would be impossible to acquire in America at the same outlay. And these men have not migrated in ones, twos, tens, or hundreds. They have crossed in their thousands, the computation for 1909 being that no fewer than eighty-nine thousand farmers crossed the border to settle on Canadian soil. Now, these men are all employers of labour. To them will come the Italian, the Hungarian, the Swedish, the Galician, the German, and the British agricultural labouring men and women. This American farmer will have imported all his American notions and prejudices, and will run his farm or ranch on American lines. Here, again, will the atmosphere be entirely American, and in this atmosphere will his farm-hands and cow-punchers gradually develop into future Canadian wheat-growers or ranchers.

I am convinced of the loyalty of the Canadian to the British flag, but I am not blind to the overwhelming preponderance of American influence in the Dominion—an influence which is seen in all walks of life, and which is gradually but surely relegating to inferiority the original Canadian atmosphere or character associated with the early days, when Quebec was all-important and the Hudson Bay Company a power in the land. That this influence makes for the material prosperity of the country and for the greatness of its future almost goes without saying. The old Canadians were certainly unprogressive, when compared with their American cousins only a few hundred miles away. The new Canadians are all progressive; their energy and their enterprise are remarkable; but in all this energy and in all this enterprise one sees the indubitable sway of American example and American character.

## THIS STRENUOUS AGE.

Since time began—at any rate
  Since man came on the stage—
There never has been up to date
  So strenuous an age.

The proofs may seem too slight in kind
  To indicate a law;
But wisdom says, to tell the wind
  There 's nothing like a straw.

One solitary incident
  In old days might suffice;
This age can hardly be content
  Unless it happen twice.

In ages past one man might seek
  The Pole, or what was round it;
Last year within a single week
  We heard of two who 'd found it.

At distant intervals, they say,
  One comet might appear;
But now with decent luck we may
  See two within a year.

In politics this thought, we trust,
  Need not a law be reckoned:
'One general election must
  Be followed by a second.'

It may be in some future age,
  More strenuous than this,
We shall ourselves have reached a stage
  When nothing comes amiss.

C. J. Boden.

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# FISH ON FOREIGN TABLES.

By F. G. Aflalo.

FOREIGN cookery is not often judged by English palates without prejudice. I have known Englishmen who, when asked to partake of breakfast with Orientals, made a point of having a 'good square meal' before starting; and I have asked myself whether even a Fishmongers' Company's livery-dinner would stand so severe a test. What stay-at-home folk never realise is the preference for hot dishes in hot climates. A curry at Colombo, a rice-tag at Batavia, or a pepper-pot at Trinidad seems to them an indication of eccentricity on the part of tropical islanders, and they would as soon expect to hear of Captain Scott's party eating ices at the South Pole. The real object of these highly spiced dishes is not, of course, their heat so much as a stimulus to jaded appetites. Even in England there are hot August days on which portly people find little appetite for their food; and, with the thermometer continually bettering eighty degrees and an atmosphere saturated with moisture, the freshly killed meat of those lands about the 'line' is not appetising without the piquancy of peppers. An eminent medical journal has, moreover, lately sung the praises of the cruet from the hygienic standpoint.

It is more particularly in the fish-course that English artists of the kitchen break down. One does not perhaps expect them to take their art so seriously as Vatel, *chef* to the Grand Condé, who stabbed himself to death, so Madame de Sévigné tells us, because the fish came too late for dinner. Nor do we ourselves prize fish so highly as to pay, like the Roman epicures, fifty sovereigns for a red mullet, or two hundred for such a lake-trout as the Swiss presented to Cambacères. There is, however, a wide margin between such extravagant gluttony and the other extreme of perennial contentment with a fried sole, a boiled slice of turbot or salmon, or a dish of whitebait. Indeed, there is something reprehensible in the apathy with which, for want of a little art, we waste all the fresh-water fishes of which our neighbours make delightful dishes.

Of all the famous concoctions of fish none has a higher reputation than the famous *bouillabaisse* of Marseilles, the ingredients of which Thackeray has somewhat loosely set down in a rhyme as

> Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffern,
> Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace.

'Dace' was, no doubt, needed to rhyme with the French word for this agreeable chowder; but why not 'plaice'? That, at anyrate, is a sea-fish, and the national dish of the Marseillais is essentially marine in character, red mullet and sea-scorpions being more employed in its preparation than all the other fishes of the Mediterranean put together.

If *bouillabaisse* does not perhaps touch the high-water mark of the fish-cook's art, it is at anyrate a very pleasing dish for a cold day, and I never spend more than a few hours ashore at the gayest port of France without sitting down at one of the little tables at Isnard's Café des Phocéens, tucking my table-napkin *à la Française* under my chin, and eating a large portion of the dish. To enjoy it the traveller must forget his table-manners, if he has any, for you cannot devour a mess of broken fish, with slices of bread steeped in saffron broth, with the graces of a Chesterfield, and I have always on such occasions been glad that my acquaintance in Marseilles is very limited. It is not a dish to please all tastes. Those Englishmen who prefer a slice of cold beef and a pickle, just as they would rather read Miss Emma Jane Worboise than Balzac, sometimes turn with disgust from this semblance of salvage from a submarine earthquake. Nor is it, like olives and caviare, an acquired taste, or one to inspire love at first sight. Most visitors try it out of curiosity, and try it again because they like it. If the Marseillais would but restrain their culinary pride to this ingenious preparation few would blame them. Unfortunately they fondly regard their cuisine generally as the last word in the art which made man the greatest of the animals,


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whereas in truth much of it is the crudest conjuring with onions and garlic.

As a change from this *pot-pourri*, in which the ingredients are as mysteriously disguised as in a Turkish *dolma yalandji*, memory harks back to the flying-fish of Barbadoes, the one island in all the world where these butterflies of the ocean are daily caught for the delight of epicures. There is no mystery about a fried flying-fish, for it is a straightforward appeal to be accounted the most delicious fish on earth. Yet it must be cooked and eaten straight out of the sea. The bloom is soon off it. I once ate a small shoal in the Bridgetown Club, and found them so alluring that I sang their praises for two years. At the end of that time I embarked on a second shoal, but got no further than one bite of the first fish. To add to my own chagrin, I was surrounded by disgusted shipmates whom I had enthusiastically prepared for a delightful surprise. They got the surprise.

One of the best fish-dinners of my travels was served at Antoine's, a well-known tavern in the old French quarter of New Orleans. Gourmets in New York speak slightingly of the cookery of the South; but they could not, for all the dollars in Wall Street, furnish a more attractive fish-dinner than you can get at Antoine's, where the boiled pompano and the river-shrimps, garnished with red peppers and dished up on powdered ice, are verses of a poem.

Trout are often overrated, and those of lakes are sometimes condemned as muddy. Yet I have eaten none better than those of Lake Tahoe, in the Sierra Nevada on the frontier of California; and their only peers were some that I caught in Fish Lake, just beyond the western foothills of the Rocky Mountains, the very apotheosis of trout, and superior in flavour to hundreds I have caught in running water.

Two fish take precedence of all others in the Near East, and these are the red mullet and the bass. The latter, which there fetches a shilling the pound, is held of no account in this country. Other skies, other fish! The red mullet is prized yet more highly, and I recollect feeling mingled annoyance and amusement at an hotel on one of the Princes Islands, in the Sea of Marmora, which has been burnt to the ground since I was there. Both bass and red mullet were being served at dinner; and on asking for the latter I was audibly informed by a too zealous waiter that red mullet did not go with a room on the second floor! There was something novel in the notion of a surmullet as the red badge of respectability; but for the rest of my stay that waiter avoided my table by request.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XLVIII.—HOW THEY WENT AFOOT AND ON HORSEBACK.

NEVER, sure, was homely knight-errant more favoured by fortune than was this trusty Jack of ours.

All the dull years that had dribbled past so slowly since the old far-away days of happy comradeship he had thought of Mavie, missed the sight and sound of her most sorely, and longed for her fellowship again with the hopeless longing of those who mourn the dead. He had said to himself a thousand times that their lives were set on different planes, and that he would think of her no more; and had then proceeded, in spite of himself, to think of her more than ever, to recall her impetuous sayings and doings, her inexhaustible energies, her great and glowing imaginings, her whole radiant, joyous self.

And here! God help him, he prayed in his heart, with tight-set jaw and impassive face up above, to carry through this great trust worthily. Sir Charles trusted him. Mavie trusted him. It was something to be trusted by such as these.

'Do you know where we are, Jack, and which way to go?' asked Mavie.

'If we're not in Normandy we soon will be, and all we've got to do is to avoid the police and keep due west. The Empire is not very strong hereabouts, and the people are honest.'

But they did not talk much that first night. The strangeness of their circumstances tied their tongues. Sometimes when one cannot speak one thinks the more.

And Mavie was mightily grateful for the darkness which gave her time to accustom herself to her new rôle of sailor-boy. 'I always did want to be a boy,' she said one time, boldly enough and yet not without a nervous catch in her laugh. 'But truly I never expected to have to be one in spite of myself.'

'You are much safer so,' said Jack soberly, and would have liked to tell her what an adorable sailor-boy she made, but found his tongue more tied even than usual. For it was Mavie's light foot that kept time with his on the stony road; it was Mavie's blue-guernseyed shoulder that bumped up against his arm; it was Mavie's throbbing little hand that clung lightly to his, with pretence of carelessness, yet found him solidly comforting, and in return thrilled him through and through.

'You are getting tired,' he said at last, after they had plodded long in silence. 'It's with being cooped up in that box so long.'

'I am a bit stiff, but it will wear off. Let us get on!'

'If you do too much at first you won't last out,

and we've a good long way to go.' And he cast about for a resting-place.

A long range of buildings loomed up through the darkness on their right, and Jack quitted the road and made for them at once. From the number of its outbuildings it was evidently a farm of unusual size, and after a little cautious prowling they found a ladder leading up to a loft, climbed it softly, and sank gratefully upon the bundles of sweet-smelling hay. From below there came a homely smell of horses and an occasional snuffle and brief rattling of chains.

'Oh, I am tired!' whispered Mavie. 'And my feet burn like hot coals.'

'Take off your shoes—and your stockings too. They're not what you're accustomed to. I'll go down and see if I can find some water. That would rest them more than anything.'

'Oh Jack, don't go and get lost!' with naïve anxiety.

'I won't get lost;' and he went off like a shadow, and was back in a trice with a wooden bucket half-full of water.

'There's a horse-trough just below,' he whispered. 'If you would put your feet in this for a minute or two I'm sure it would comfort them.'

'Oh, it's delicious!' and he could see the white feet slip into the bucket even in the darkness. 'How far do you suppose we've come, Jack?'

'We must have been walking over four hours, and we've not loitered. We must have done fourteen or fifteen miles, I should say. I hope your feet will be all right in the morning. I ought to have stopped sooner.'

'We must get on,' said Mavie stoutly, and made no more of the fact that her feet felt like one huge blister. 'I'm sleepy, Jack. If you would cover me over with hay'—— and she sank back into the soft, sweet cushion, and was fast asleep before he had finished strewing it over her.

For himself, tired though he was, it took him longer to get to sleep. He lay listening to the blowings and snufflings below, and the soft sound of Mavie's breathing in between, and thanked God for the faith she had in him and for the success of their enterprise so far.

When he woke up the sun was driving long, thin spears of light through the holes in the roof and walls, and down below in the farmyard was an uproar which had wakened him. Mavie was still fast asleep. Her white feet gleamed through the tumbled covering of hay. Her face was pillowed on her arm.

With a momentary touch of romance that was foreign to him, he thought how very well satisfied he would be to go no farther, just to spend the rest of the time watching her and looking after her. For here was the sweet old camaraderie of the Red Indian days at its best and in actual fact. Here they were comrades true. Here she was Jean-Marie and he Jaxax. And he could not but remember that when they reached home she would be Miss Lauriston and he young John Sax of the bank.

But the uproar below continued, and called him to investigate, and Mavie turned in her nest and opened her eyes, and then sat up, with the hay hanging all about her. 'What's all that noise, Jack?' she asked with a yawn and the sleep-mists still in her eyes.

'It's horses,' said Jack, from a hole through which he was peering. 'Such a lot! It must be a horse-farm, surely.'

Mavie was at his elbow and her face close to his; she peered out alongside. 'What beauties! But what are they doing with them?'

'Looks as if they were all going away somewhere.'

They counted eighteen of them, noble beasts all, and every one all alive with the joys of youth and strength, and showing the exuberance of it in every graceful movement of curving neck and swishing tail and restless limb.

Half-a-dozen men were busily at work on their toilets, combing and brushing them with vehement hissings, and plaiting their manes and tails with wary eyes for flying heels and inquisitive muzzles, while a burly man in a blue blouse stood looking on with approving eye, and half-a-dozen goats and kids ran bleating among their stable-friends as though making their farewells.

'They're going to market, I should say,' said Jack. 'How are your feet this morning, miss—I mean Jean-Marie?' as a warning finger shot up after the manner of old.

'They're as sore as sore. I'm afraid I can't do a very long stretch to-day, Jack.'

'Eat something,' said Jack, as he opened Madame Jolicot's parcel; and they sat in the hay and munched and listened to the noises below.

Out of his pocket with the parcel had come the paper madame had pushed into his hands at parting. He opened it now and read it carefully, and a slow smile spread over his face.

'What is it?' asked Mavie.

'It's the authority of the Minister of Police to that fellow on the boat to require assistance of all shapes and kinds from everybody he asks. Madame must have taken it out of his pocket. It might be useful to us;' and he folded it carefully and stowed it away again.

A sudden shout and a cry of pain took them hurriedly to their crack again. Down in the farmyard the men were bunched together round one of their number who lay on the ground and groaned, while the horses squealed gleefully. The stout man pushed his way through and looked at the fallen one, sympathy and annoyance struggling in him.

'*Ma foi!*' they heard, 'I should have thought you were old enough to know better, you, Pierre. And we short-handed already. *Nom-de-Dieu*, what are we going to do without him?' And he looked round on the rest. 'You, Jacques, you'll have to take his place and ride the roan.'

'Not me, master! As well kick me in the stomach or break my neck at once. And me a married man with five children!'

'*Nom-de-Dieu*,' said the stout one once more, scratching his head in perplexity, 'what are we to do? We must get 'em to Lisieux to-morrow. If we go slow, Jacques'——

'A man with only one leg can't ride horses like that, and you ought to know it,' growled Jacques stolidly. 'And I'm not going to try.'

'Come!' whispered Jack hastily. And Mavie got into her coarse blue stockings and heavy shoes, and followed him painfully down the ladder.

When the stout man looked round again in his perplexity they were leaning on the gate looking at him, and he stared hard at them.

'Something wrong?' asked Jack.

'Yes,' said the other, with the simple directness of the peasant. 'He's got himself kicked, this fool of a Pierre.'

'Should have thought he'd have known better. Fine lot of horses you've got there. Taking them to Lisieux? They should fetch their money.'

'They'll fetch their money. Going to Lisieux, you?'

'We're going. Can we ride with you?'

'Can you ride horses like that?' with a look of surprise.

'Of course. Ride anything.'

'And he—the little one?' nodding at Jean-Marie.

'Ride anything. Loves horses.'

'Come in, you. Let's see you mount.'

Jack grasped the mane nearest him and flung himself over, and found Jean-Marie already up and looking at him with a very red face and eyes that brimmed with laughter.

'And you're going to Lisieux? Come in and eat, and we'll settle the matter.—You others carry Pierre into the stable and rub him with liniment till he can go home.—Come along, then, you two;' and he led the way into the house.

But only Jack followed. Jean-Marie hung round the horses. Jack looked back at her, and she shook her head and touched her cap significantly, and left him to find a way out of the difficulty.

'*Tiens!* where's the little one?' said the burly horse-master when he found only one of the newcomers with him in the kitchen, where his buxom wife and daughter were busy spreading the table.

'He's all right. You'll not get him inside when there are horses such as those to look at outside.'

'Good! He likes horses? I like a man that likes horses.'

'And horses like him. He can do anything with them.'

'And you're going to Lisieux, anyway? What do you say to a couple of francs each, and your meals? We travel slow so that they may arrive in good condition.'

'It is a bargain.'

'To table, then! We start within the hour. If the little one won't come in we'll send him something out there. I can feel for a man that thinks more of horses than of his breakfast, though one must eat all the same.' And truly, from the size of him, it was evident that his tastes on both points must have been fairly equalised.

When Jack took out a big plate of ham, with a slice of omelet and a chunk of bread and a chopine of cider, Jean-Marie was busily plaiting the mane of the lively young horse that had given pause to Pierre.

'How did you manage it?' she whispered.

'Told them you'd sooner have a horse than your breakfast any day,' he whispered back. 'But we must talk French all the time, and no slips into English.' And he added aloud, 'We help with the horses as far as Lisieux. It will save our feet, anyway.'

'*Dieu merci!*' chirped Jean-Marie, well pleased with the prospect, for her feet were sore and swollen with yesterday's unaccustomed walking. 'What am I to do with all this cider, Jack? I can't possibly drink it.'

'Pour it into the trough when no one's looking. You can manage the riding all right?' he asked anxiously.

'A great deal better than the walking. I only wish Jerry MacClootie could see us!'

Within the hour the string of horses was ready for the road. There were in all six riders, each in charge of two beasts beside his own, and handfuls some of them proved.

'A good-looking lad yon,' said the master's wife as Jean-Marie rode past them, where they stood at the door watching the start.

'That's not a boy!' said her daughter, gazing after them.

'He rides like one, anyway.'

'All the same, it's a girl. She rides like a boy, but she walks like a girl, and she's got a girl's neck.'

'Well, maybe she is. I've seen queerer things than that in my time.'

'I wonder what they're up to, those two.'

'None of your business, anyway,' said her mother, prompt to check any tendency to romance. 'You get on with those dishes.'

The led horses wore only rope-halters; and, not being given to forethought, and so unaware of the fact that playtime was over and all the troubles of life ahead of them, they were all in the best of condition and the liveliest of spirits, and the route was not wanting in incident. But our two very soon learned to handle the ropes, learned too that firmness and sympathy soon established good relations between leaders and led, and they got along with fewer arguments than some of the others, whose only explanations of unaccustomed sights and sounds were angry jerkings of abominated ropes and unsoothing curses.

The master was pleased to express his approval

of them when they halted for midday rest. He questioned them as to whence they came and whither they were going, but not overpressingly. In those times a man's business was his own concern and that of the police, and the master had come across many strangers whose affairs he could only guess at. He hinted, however, that if they had no urgent call to go elsewhere he might be able to find work for them.

Jack thanked him, but said they must go into Cotentin. If they found nothing doing there, and they came back that way, he promised to call.

That night they put up at a roadside tavern which had a large courtyard with a gallery round it, off which opened the sleeping-rooms. There was a great range of stabling behind, and the master secured a building for themselves; and when they had supped he locked the door on the inside, and they slept on bundles of clean straw within sound of their charges.

They made an early start, and reached Lisieux before midday, and found it packed with country people from far and near.

Their string of fine horses attracted much attention, and certain knowing-looking individuals followed them as they were sent from pillar to post till they found their appointed stand, and then began bargaining for them at once.

But the master was of a wary disposition, and had a mind of his own in the matter. He declined even to name a price until he had had a look round and saw how the land lay, and neither exhortations nor curses could move him. He sauntered off into the crowd, leaving his head-man in charge, and the would-be buyers hung about discontentedly. One especially, a little, rat-faced man, made himself unpleasantly prominent, badgering the stolid head-man with questions, and offering to take the lot on anything like reasonable terms.

When the master at last came back there came with him one somewhat like himself, a burly man with a face at once shrewd and open. He examined each horse carefully, while the rat-faced man fastened on to the master like a small dog on to a bull.

Then the burly one nodded to the master.

'The lot?' said the master.

'Yes, the lot;' and the lot were sold, to the immense disgust of the rat-faced one.

'*Nom-de-nom!* I'd have given you five louis apiece more than he's giving, whatever it is,' he cried.

'I don't breed horses to be ripped open by cannon-balls,' said the master curtly. 'I'd have taken 'em all back home sooner than let you have a hair out of one of their tails.'

'Bravo!' jerked Jean-Marie, who had been hanging on this discussion with eagerness.

Then Rat-face turned on the purchaser. 'See then, my friend, ten louis a head on your bargain! One does not get one hundred and eighty louis for nothing every day in the week.'

'One does not buy a Norman for one hundred and eighty louis any day in the year,' said the burly man. 'Away, man, and do your devil's business elsewhere! You'll get no food for powder here.'

And Rat-face took himself off discomfited.

The master and the burly man went into an adjoining inn to settle their accounts, and when they came out the master walked over at once to Jack.

'You're set on going on?'

'We must go on home.'

'Into Cotentin, you said. didn't you?'

'Yes, into Cotentin.'

'If you care to keep on this job, Monsieur Dupont will be glad of your help. You see, he'd no idea of buying so many. Bought 'em all to save 'em from the cannon-balls, and he's only got three men with him. He's bound for Torigny. That's not far from St Lô. What do you say?'

'We'll go, and thank you!'

'You'll be doing him a service. If you come back this way I'll be glad to see you.'

And so, once more, these two found the way open before them as though by the compelling touch of a mightier hand, and they went along it with grateful hearts and full of cheer.

(*To be continued.*)

## DAY-HOSPITAL TREATMENT OF CONSUMPTIVES IN GERMANY.

THE great necessity of treating consumption in its very earliest stages has long been recognised by authorities. In fact, nearly all are agreed that the most successful cases are those treated immediately the disease becomes evident, a large percentage of the cases dealt with in hospitals being already too chronic before admission to benefit much by medical aid. Consequently the modern tendency is to concentrate more attention on the initial period, and in this way help to reduce the great annual wastage caused by the disease. The two most serious difficulties to contend with are how to get at the right people and how to meet the expenses. Various plans have been put into execution, but so far none of them has proved so successful as a scheme adopted in Germany soon after the introduction of open-air treatment for consumptives. It is estimated that there are over a hundred thousand consumptives in the country, of whom only a small minority of the very worst cases can be treated in the hospitals.

In order to deal with the milder cases, temporary cure-stations have been erected in the vicinity of large towns, especially in the neighbourhood of Berlin. Suitable ground has been granted by the authorities in the pine-forest within twenty minutes by rail from the town. On each of these plots a long wooden shelter open on one side, a kitchen, and one or two necessary outhouses have been erected at a nominal cost. Male and female cure-stations are entirely separate. These places are open from dawn until dusk, no one being permitted to remain in them over night. Specially cheap tickets are issued by the railway authorities, enabling patients to travel by the early morning trains, and to return to their homes late in the evening. District doctors recommend for admission all cases of consumption coming under their notice which are not sufficiently serious to find admission to the hospitals.

Most of the patients belong to the working classes and to such as live under conditions calculated to assist the disease in its ravages. The whole day is spent in the open air. During wet weather the patients lie on camp-stools in the shelters. A trained nurse and assistant are responsible for the management. A cook and two kitchen-maids complete the staff. Only one warm meal is prepared daily, consisting of five ounces of butcher-meat, or a similar quantity of fish, and potatoes and vegetables without restriction. The price in summer is approximately fourpence halfpenny, and in winter sixpence. *Belegte Brote*, German sausage, and meat-sandwiches, also eggs, milk, coffee, and cocoa, are supplied at cost price. Though no charge is made for admission, the fact that patients have to pay for their food shows that it is not a charity organisation entirely, but a scheme for encouraging independence and enabling needy people to help themselves in a measure. This, however, is within the reach of all workers earning less than two pounds a week, who are compelled to contribute a weekly sum to the State sickness-fund, from which they are supposed to draw sufficient to cover their medical expenses during sickness. Patients remain under the charge of the district officer responsible for their admission to the day-treatment hospital. To him the honorary visiting-doctor, who is charged with looking after the hygienic arrangements, reports such observations as he considers may be of particular importance.

During the ten years the scheme has been in existence the number of day-hospitals has steadily increased, so that instead of taking only one hundred and fifty, as at the beginning, they are now able to admit two thousand men, women, and children. Special places are assigned to the latter, where they are given plenty of good, wholesome food and have nothing else to do except to play games all the day long, having a thoroughly good time of it, and making the woods ring with their merry laughter. Except in special cases, patients are not permitted to come and go daily for more than a month or six weeks, though application may afterwards be made for readmission.

Many and far-reaching advantages have resulted. Besides benefiting by the good effects of light, air, and cleanliness, consumptives are taught the necessity of discipline, so that on leaving the place they are generally more careful in their habits, in this way helping to minimise the risks of spreading the contagion; no medicines are administered except those which the district doctor may prescribe, and no special treatment is undergone, yet it is recorded that the majority of the patients increase in weight during the period from one to two stones.

Thousands of cases that in all probability would have become chronic had they not thus been taken in time have been effectually cured at these day-treatment hospitals. Since the patients pay for their own food, and only the wages of one nurse and three servants are charged to each hospital, it stands to reason that the working expenses are nominal. In most cases the cost for attention and the charges for wear and tear are met by the various town authorities who are interested in the scheme, and whose generous co-operation has made this highly interesting scheme possible. The experiment thus made is well worthy the earnest consideration of all responsible authorities in our own congested districts, and certainly a scheme on similar lines is worth a fair trial.

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# THE DUEL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

THE day was fully come, the sun was aloft in a gray-blue sky, when Colonel d'Abné-Prevost recovered consciousness. At first he lay still, his eyes wide open, his mind working backwards. He remembered the cry of 'Nicolette!' the snatches of her song. He wanted to know who had been singing. He wanted to know if he were alone, and it had been fancy, or if some one was near to him, and it had been reality. He moved his head to the left. There was ice around him, but it was discoloured, and as he lifted his shoulders a streak of red ran down from beneath him and lost itself not six feet away in the open water.

This time he understood. The French artillery had shattered the ice; he must be lying on a floe. He was unable to move; he was wounded; he was floating in midwater on a December day.

For a little, sheer human terror sent shiver after

shiver through him. He raised his voice and madly, clamorously, called, 'Clements, *à moi; à moi*, Clements!'

The tone, unnaturally shrill, echoed into space, and it was answered by another voice which cried for Nicolette.

The reiterated name seemed the final phase of Hector d'Abné-Prevost's torture. He thought it must be the haunting, tantalising fancy of one doomed to die in utter solitude. He wondered wildly if next Nicolette would appear in person, if she would trip up with her dainty walk and her provoking smile quite near to him, but yet not near enough for him to grasp. He thrust a hand into his tunic.

'*Peste!*' he ground out between his teeth.

He had forgotten. Nicolette's picture did not lie close by his heart now. The place had been empty since the daintiest dancer in Petersburg mysteriously disappeared. Still, he felt again to be quite sure.

Instead of a picture, his cold fingers touched his flask. His grasp fastened on it, though again it was more instinct than reason which made him draw it out, which made him recollect that the flask contained *eau de vie*, that the spirit had kept life in many a man. He put it to his lips. The warm fluid revived him. He drew himself up, and sat with his shoulders hunched, his head hanging down, until courage came back to him.

He would fight for life, not just be snuffed out. The Emperor must know that his galloper was missing; some one might think of searching among the ice-floes—Clements if no other. At length, with this hope to encourage him, he forced himself to do that which, conscious or half-delirious, he had shrunk from. He directed his gaze straight in front of him. At first he could do no more than fix his glance on the stained ice; then he slowly took it in. At last he had to tell himself what kept him lying prone. His leg was blown away below the knee. The intense cold had congealed the flow of blood and had saved his life.

'A cripple!' he said slowly to himself. 'A cripple! Hector d'Abné-Prevost a cripple!'

. . . . . .

He turned his head slowly to the other side. The floe was wider in that direction; and across it, quite twenty feet or more away, was a dark, still bundle.

The wounded man looked eagerly at that still object.

'*Un autre!*' he said slowly to himself. '*Dieu merci, un autre!*'

His first notion was that another man in a like case to himself somehow doubled his chance of salvation. His impulse was to creep nearer to the fellow-sufferer, just as under fire each man insensibly edges closer to his neighbour.

Hector made the effort to move. The pain from his wound was excruciating. He waited, panting, his heart beating, the great round drops moist along his brow.

The sun struck down on him, glittering on the newly frosted ice; a bird, swooping suddenly out of the blue, circled low but just above his head, then with a croaking cry sped away. He watched it go, and it seemed to him that as it returned it must tell some one with whole arms and legs on the solid earth of his extremity. When it disappeared he shook his head at the fancy.

'I grow imbecile!' he muttered fearfully.

He looked across at the bundle because it seemed to him that its mere proximity must help him to keep his senses. It struck him—and his heart gave a throb of cold apprehension—that it might be but a castaway greatcoat after all.

But the bundle had changed its shape. It was a man, then; and what was more, it was a living man.

'Comrade!' shouted Hector. 'Comrade! Comrade!'

There was no answer.

Five minutes went by. Ten. Hector sat with his eyes glued on the motionless mass. He saw an arm lifted; it shook back the sheepskin coat, revealing to the Frenchman a uniform that he knew so well.

He, Hector d'Abné-Prevost, and a member of his old regiment, the Muscovite Noble Guard, shared the floe together! Had that man belonging to that regiment cried 'Nicolette!' through the night?

'THEN!' Hector set his teeth. 'Then!' He clenched his fist. Ah, but other men in the regiment besides Prince Boris had known Nicolette. Adamsvoski had sung her song; so had little Shiberoff; so had the troopers even. For a season it had been the most popular refrain of St Petersburg.

The man on the other side of the floe was stirring again. This time Hector could see enough of the stripes and facings to be sure that it was an officer. It was not little Shiberoff; the figure was too tall. It was not tall enough for Adamsvoski. Hector craned his neck. Who was it? Who was it?

More minutes passed. The Frenchman sat with compressed lips and staring eyes. 'Nicolette!' he muttered grimly. 'Nicolette! The fellow said, "Nicolette!"'

At length D'Abné-Prevost looked down at his leg. The suspense was so intolerable that he was making up his mind. Should he, or should he not, drag himself across the ice and so be sure whether the man who had cried for Nicolette was or was not Boris Prince Stanislauski?

Unflinchingly Hector counted the cost. His wound would probably open; if he could not stanch the bleeding from it he would die. He hesitated—not to sacrifice his life, but to sacrifice it for a man who might not be his enemy. He compelled himself to wait again. The brandy had revived him, and between that and his excitement he was stronger.

At length—and what a wait it had been!—the Russian Guardsman threw both his arms above his head, and lay with his face to the sky. Hector felt rather than knew that the man's eyes were open, that at length he was conscious.

'Who is there?' he shouted first in French and then in Russian. 'Who are you?'

He still remained unanswered.

The Guardsman moved again. Hector watched; his breath came in gasps. The other man lifted himself on one elbow; he remained thus, his face over the floe, his back to Hector.

'Animal!' growled D'Abné-Prevost, 'if you are Boris Stanislauski turn round.'

The blue-clad back in the elaborate uniform with the facings of astrakhan powdered with frost, with the gold braid dimmed and tarnished, seemed to shut out the light of heaven itself.

Hector drew in his moustache, bit at it. He felt about him. His pistol was gone; he could not shoot down his enemy as soon as he caught sight of the perfidious face. He did not know that he had ever meant to do so. His sword remained. He removed it from the entanglement of its broken belt, raised it, looked long at its edge, blunted and stained, and laid it down close by his side.

A breath of wind suddenly got up. It swept the fine sleet on the floe before it, drove it into Hector's eyes so that they smarted, sent it at the Russian with such force that he lifted himself quickly and sat this time upright. He looked before him; perhaps he looked at the lower part of his body. He looked out to the open water, up to the blue sky. Last of all he looked to the left of him. His glance stopped there.

The eyes of Hector d'Abné-Prevost met the eyes of Prince Boris Stanislauski!

Across the ice they two, it might be the only survivors on the floes, looked long one at the other.

It was the Frenchman who spoke.

'I have sought for you,' he began.

'And I have never avoided you,' returned Prince Boris.

'The ice is broken,' went on Hector; 'we float on the lake.'

'It seems,' answered the other—and there was even now a hint of that irrepressible Polish gaiety in his voice—'that there is still a resting-place on it for you—and for me.'

'Yes,' returned Hector, 'there is still a place for you and for me—for a little while longer.'

He paused. He measured the distance between himself and the man he hated. Before he could make up his mind what to do next Prince Boris called to him again, 'How are you wounded?'

'I have the leg blown away below the knee,' Hector answered. 'And you?'

'*Ma foi!*' answered the Pole, 'both my legs seem to be broken.'

'But you have them still?'

'*Vrai*,' retorted the Pole; 'they cling to me still, trailing on the ground like a woman's skirt.'

After that grim conversation there followed another silence. Hector lifted his flask to his lips, paused before he drank from it.

He looked, unwillingly this time, across the ice.

'Always thinking of women!' he muttered as if to justify something to himself. He lifted the flask again. For the second time the same thought stopped him.

'Have you brandy on you?' he shouted.

'*Bien sûr, non*,' called back Prince Boris. 'I was ever improvident, *n'est-ce pas?*'

The Frenchman held up his flask. The other man's blue eyes grew wider; in them was the longing of exhaustion, but he still kept the smile on his face.

Slowly D'Abné-Prevost turned the leather-coated bottle about in his hand. There was nothing he wanted less than to part with it. Reluctantly he came to a decision. 'Boris Stanislauski,' he cried, 'I took service with Napoleon for one thing, and for one thing only—that I might have a chance to fight you. It was the only way, since the Czar forbade me to call out one of his beloved Poles. I set out from Paris just that I might cross swords with you. All day you eluded me'——

'Not I,' thrust in the Pole. 'Fate separated us.'

'I would not be balked,' pursued Hector. 'I followed you on to the ice. I was struck down by a cannon-ball. Perhaps the same charge broke your legs also. I hope so. It is not too late yet. You have your sword; I have mine. We must cast lots. Who loses must drag himself, let the pain be what it may, to the side of the other; but first—since, no matter what the provocation, a D'Abné-Prevost fights fair—I will throw my flask to you. It was full. I have drunk half. What remains is yours.' He lifted his arm and spun the flask across.

Prince Boris caught it. His eyes fastened hungrily on it, and then as promptly he flung it back again. 'Hector d'Abné-Prevost,' he cried, 'I will not take so much as a drink from you until, since you wish to fight, we have fought.'

It was nearing midday. The sun was up; the floe began to drift, was caught in one of the currents of the lake, and was sent crashing against another floe. Both the injured men felt the shock, but only Hector could see that a great flake at the edge beyond him was broken off. The circumstance hurried him rather than dismayed him. He looked over to the man he hated.

'Boris Stanislauski,' he said, 'I have money in my pouch. Have you?'

'Yes,' answered the Pole. 'But'—laughing still—'it does not appear to me that it is exactly a useful possession here.'

'Then,' went on Hector, as he ignored the jest, 'I will throw a French écu over to you; you will throw a double rouble over to me. They are about the same size and weight. If my coin falls short of you, I come over to you, and we fight as we lie side by side; if your coin falls short, you come to me, and we fight in the same way.'

The Pole acquiesced.

'Throw first. I am the challenger,' went on Hector.

'That *is* so. The right is yours,' admitted Boris. 'I will throw.'

He tossed his piece negligently into the air. It gleamed in the light. It fell full on the breast of the Frenchman, clicked as it caught against a button of his tunic.

Then D'Abné-Prevost raised his arm. The piece remained a moment between his finger and thumb. He realised what it meant to him if he lost the toss, and perhaps that made his hand shake. Anyway, the écu fell short, and rang down on the ice not more than half-way to the Pole.

'I come to you,' he cried at once.

There was no tremor in his voice. It was more than probable that the journey meant death. He looked up at the sky. It seemed bluer than it had been an hour ago. He could see the land now; the floe was drifting quickly towards the shallows of the lake. He could distinguish a solitary leafless tree which still stood upright though its branches were torn with shot and shell. If the floe but worked on, it might come within hailing distance of the shore. But before then?

'*Nous verrons*,' he muttered under his breath.

He prepared to crawl over to his enemy. The merest movement of his shattered leg was agony. He had to turn over to get it under him, to crawl on his elbows, dragging his body after him.

He did it, at what a cost in suffering he alone knew. To begin with, there was red in drops behind him, next a trickle, finally a trailing smear.

In spite of himself, as he came closer to the Pole his head fell forward. He jerked it up with a last effort, and then, since he could endure no more, he had to lie still, his eyelids convulsively opening and closing.

Prince Boris looked into the blue-white face of the man who had been his friend—a friendship dating from a youth together under the old régime in Paris—of the man who would suffer thus in order to get near enough to try to kill him.

'You can do no more,' he cried out, not exultingly but compassionately.

For answer the Frenchman tried to lift his sword. His arm fell; a cold giddiness closed down on him.

'*Ciel!*' he demanded, struggling to the last—'*Ciel!* must I die now before we fight?'

He sank inert, motionless. Hector d'Abné-Prevost had fainted.

'*Tiens!*' whispered Prince Boris to himself. '*Tiens!*'

Though it hurt him to lean over, he bent sideways, intending to see if the brandy-flask were still available. But something warm touched his hand. He drew it back sharply, and looked at it. There was blood on it. He bent yet farther over. He saw the spurting flow from the shattered knee. He understood. At his very side the man who had been dearer to him than a brother was bleeding to death.

Hector lay not exactly straight with him, but rather above him. He put down his hand again. He laid his thumb on the severed artery, pressed it down, and the bleeding ceased.

Hector d'Abné-Prevost would live for just so long as the man he had desired above all things to kill chose to add to his own pain by remaining in a cramped position holding on to the wounded limb.

Another man might have reflected on the uselessness, might have told himself that death must come sooner or later, so why try to stave it off? The possession of that half-filled flask would not have been a small temptation to many a man. But to the chivalrous creed which belonged to Boris Stanislauski as a Polish nobleman was added the graces of his own nature. He could not take advantage of a man, be he friend or enemy.

The sun was still shining; the floe was still drifting. More than once it collided with other masses of ice, rubbing up against them with a creaking sound. Then there came a greater shock than any which had gone before, and again a great piece was detached from the floe.

This time Prince Boris saw the wedge separate.

'So,' he muttered—'so! It is to be that way.'

He smiled a twisted smile. He looked down at his aching hand. '*Mon cher*,' he went on, speaking aloud, 'it seems to me that Boris Stanislauski is meddling uselessly. It is a bad habit of his; he has heard observations made on it before. It may be better to bleed to death than to drown.'

But still he kept his fingers in place. But still the floe drifted; but still it grew smaller and smaller.

. . . . . .

The cold wind was beginning to blow up, the sun was already getting low, when Prince Boris heard his name and looked round.

Hector d'Abné-Prevost was conscious again.

'I am at your service,' said the Pole hastily, politely; but not yet did he take his hand away.

The Frenchman half-raised himself. He took a little time to remember what had gone before. He recollected that when he had lost consciousness his life-blood was welling out. It came to him that the bleeding had ceased. He darted a sideways look at his leg.

'What are you doing?' he demanded as the explanation of the miracle came home to him.

'Awaiting your convenience to fight,' returned Boris lightly.

'Thus!' Hector raised himself yet a little higher.

'Thus!' he repeated.

'Even so,' answered the Pole imperturbably. 'Get out your sword.'

'And your right hand?'

'It is true,' confessed Boris, avoiding the glaring bloodshot eyes looking fiercely into his, 'my right hand is engaged. *Eh bien!*—brightening—'we must fight with our left. You have yours. I have mine. It is fair.'

'No,' protested Hector. '*Grand ciel!* it is not fair. You have kept the life in me. I owe it to you that I live. It is not fair. You have robbed me again, Boris Stanislauski. First you robbed me of the woman I loved, and now you rob me of my vengeance. I cannot fight with the man to whom

I owe it that I am alive. But do you think I am grateful to you? I am not.'

Prince Boris let all go but one clause of the passionate speech.

'I robbed you of the woman you loved?' he echoed.

'Yes,' thrust in Hector, 'you robbed me of Nicolette.'

'Of Nicolette?'

'You cannot deny it,' the Frenchman hurried on. 'You cannot deny it. You testified against yourself. Last night it was Nicolette you cried for, it was Nicolette's song you sang.'

The Pole heard. He looked away from the angry, gleaming eyes so close to his own. His glance wandered over the water; he heard another crash of ice. Upon his face came a smile, the smile of a man who, seeing what has been and comparing it with what might have been, is struck by the infinite pity of circumstance.

'You thought,' he demanded, 'that I stole Nicolette from you? My friend, we both loved her. We neither of us made any concealment of that; but'——

'Did you not steal her from me?' thrust in Hector.

'You thought that?' went on Boris. 'Had we not determined that whoever could win her by fair means'——

'By fair means—yes.'

'And you thought that mine were'——

'Underhand,' declared Hector d'Abné-Prevost, 'nefarious, wicked. You lured her from Petersburg; you hid her; you have left her in hiding now, for all I know. She did not love you; she loved me. But you took measures—one can do such things in Russia—to force her to listen to you.'

Again there followed a little space of silence.

Instead of refuting or denying the accusation, Prince Boris said, 'Do you know the floe is breaking away?'

'Yes,' answered Hector.

'That if it grows much smaller it will not bear us, and we must drown?'

'I know that also,' the other answered.

Then the Pole waited again.

'Because you thought I had stolen Nicolette your friendship was turned to animosity?' he asked.

The Frenchman looked at the hand holding on to his knee.

'Yes,' he cried out. 'Because I loved Nicolette better than my life I hate you!'

The two crippled men lay one touching the other. The sun slanted down to the west. The floe crashed again. Death was creeping nearer and nearer.

Once more it was Prince Stanislauski who broke the silence.

'Who made you so sure I stole Nicolette from you?' he asked.

'Nicolette told me herself in the letter she left. She was the only person who could have made me believe it.'

'And she told me the same of you in the letter she left for me.'

'Told you the same! Left a letter for you! I do not understand,' cried out D'Abné-Prevost.

'*Mon cher*,' answered Boris, and into his voice slipped the half-humorous tenderness of old times, 'believe me I do not lie. Death is too near to both you and to me for anything but the truth. We both loved Nicolette. We both would have braved the Czar's displeasure to marry her. She loved neither you nor me. I know that, and yet I cannot forget her. She wanted to disappear and leave no traces—for she was a spy, the spy of the Corsican. From you she sought information respecting the plans of King Louis at Mittau, from me information respecting the strength of the Young Polish movement. When her part was played she had to separate us lest we compared experiences and unmasked her. She chose the most effective way. You left Petersburg. I stayed. By a strange chance the truth was revealed to me. Do you believe what I say?'

The Frenchman lay still for quite a time. There was no idea of disbelief with him. Napoleon's spy-system was notorious. The story was likely enough. Besides, as Boris had said, men about to die speak the truth.

Hector turned cautiously. '*Mon ami*,' he breathed, and his voice also told how his feelings had changed, 'you fatigue yourself. And if we must die, why not let us do it with as little inconvenience as possible? Lift your arm; you will be more comfortable.'

For answer Prince Boris clutched Hector roughly with the hand which was free.

'Look!' he said in a very low voice. 'Look!'

What was impossible to the Emperor of the French the faithful Jacques Clements had accomplished. He had seen a dark object on the drifting floe, and leaping from one fragment of ice to another with a rope and a towing-pole, had reached his master.

As he was close to them Hector turned to Boris. He thrust out his hand. The other grasped it.

'*Ma foi!*' remarked Boris, laughing as gaily as he used to do in Petersburg, 'we shall look a pretty pair with one good leg between us.' But in his eyes was the light of a great affection and a great rejoicing.

THE END.

# UP THE WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY TO PRINCE CHARLIE'S COUNTRY.

ONE is tempted to wonder how many Britons cheerfully brave the discomforts of Continental travelling to see the beauty of the Italian lakes or the Austrian Tyrol who are all the while blissfully ignorant that at their very doors, so to speak, they can find scenery which will easily compare with anything they will meet abroad.

It was the writer's fortune to be asked to stay with some friends who live in the heart of what used to be known as the Rough Bounds, that country which once from Loch Sunart to Loch Hourn belonged to the chiefs of Clanranald, and where still Macdonald is the predominating patronymic. It was from this country that Prince Charlie set forth in August 1745, and it was all about here that he was hunted from one hiding-place to another. But of that more anon.

We had heard, of course, of the treat that was in store for us on the journey, but had accepted it in the kind of calm, matter-of-fact way that most people do when others enthuse over the beauties of Nature. We certainly expected to see something beautiful, but were not in the least prepared for the ever-changing panorama that almost satiated our eyes before we reached the end of the journey. And it is perhaps the varied nature of the scenery —from sea-loch to mountain-loch, from wild savageness to fertile valleys—that forms the chief attraction of the views from the West Highland line. The eye has not time to get tired. There is no monotony.

The time of year, the very middle of June, was probably the very best that could be chosen, if the latter half of October (when the leaves are changing) be excepted. The flowering shrubs were in their full glory, rhododendrons, which flourish wonderfully in the West of Scotland, alternating with the wild-pink and yellow azaleas; while the broom everywhere was a blaze of orange, contrasting deliciously with the delicate green of the young foliage.

The train starts from Glasgow at about 5 P.M., and for the first three-quarters of an hour there is nothing of interest. Then we pass the great rock of Dumbarton on the left, and in a short time come to the real start of the West Highland Railway at Craigendoran. For the next twenty miles or so there passes a vista of sea-lochs, those great arms of the ocean which stretch like the tentacles of an octopus into the heart of Argyllshire—first the Gairloch, then Loch Long, and finally Loch Goil; and all the while the railway climbs higher and higher, the villas at the water's edge, which at the first are almost contiguous, get fewer and fewer, and the whole country assumes a wilder and still wilder aspect. Yet there seems to be all the time a faint tinge of suburbanism; the influence of a great city in some indefinable way still makes its presence felt.

It is not till Tarbet is reached, when the silver glory of Loch Lomond, with Ben Lomond standing out prominently in the near distance, bursts upon the view, that this feeling vanishes. From Tarbet to Ardlui, the head of Loch Lomond, the line winds high up along 'the bonny banks,' wooded right up to the top. On a fine day this run is indescribably beautiful; it is the contrast between the grandeur of the great hills which rise sheer out of the water and the placid calm of the great sheet stretching as far as eye can see that fills us with awe-struck wonder at the beauty of the scene.

On the opposite side of the loch is the famous Rob Roy country, and his cave is said to be somewhere opposite Tarbet. After Ardlui, for a time, the loch-country is left behind, and the ascent to the Moor of Rannoch begins. The moor itself, which is seventy miles long by twenty broad, desolate, silent, solitary, has a wondrous fascination. It is beautiful in its hideousness. The colouring is a sombre greeny-yellow, only broken by the dark black-brown of the peat-bogs; but this prevailing tone is to some extent relieved by the hazy blue of the distant mountains. What really impresses one is its utter loneliness; for miles there is not a living creature to be seen. The railway track over the moor, it should be mentioned, was a difficult piece of engineering. Immense quantities of brushwood had to be laid down to form a bottom on which to lay the ordinary railway ballast, and this had to be done, so to speak, foot by foot for miles on end. Indeed, the whole railway from Craigendoran to Mallaig is a marvel of engineering skill and science.

The line reaches its highest point at Corrour (thirteen hundred and seventy-five feet), but by this time the scene has somewhat changed. The moorland savagery has passed away; we are now close to the mountains; red deer are browsing unconcernedly quite near the line; a few crofts are seen. There is even a road or two leading to shooting-lodges. From there we move alongside of Loch Treig, a gloomy, narrow mountain-tarn six miles long, but quite narrow, with great hills on either side. As we turn a corner, Ben Nevis comes into view for the first time; and now, as the train descends rapidly into the fertile strath again, the nature of the outlook changes. By the side of the line, at times so close that one can drop a penny into it, the bubbling, boiling Spean seems to race us. So close is it that at times when the river is in spate the spume from the water falls in spray over the railway carriages. So, quickly we come under the very shadow of the great, huge berg

Ben Nevis. On the other side stretches Loch Linnhe, the mountains on the far side throwing their shadows into the depths of the smooth waters in the calm of the long June twilight. The whole effect is indescribably peaceful.

After a night in the quaint little town of Fort-William—where every other house seems to be an hotel, for thence is the ascent of Ben Nevis, beloved of trippers—we started next day about 10 A.M. Again the sea-loch type prevails, but this time what a difference is there! Here and there a steam-launch may be seen at her moorings, but there are no modern stucco villas to offend the eye. A gorgeous view of Ben Nevis, the best hitherto seen, opens out as the Lochy, one of the best salmon-rivers in Scotland, is crossed, and the train meanders slowly along the banks of Loch Eil, with a tunnel here and a horseshoe embankment there; so, in a short time, Glenfinnan is reached, and for us this is the end of the railway journey. Our destination is reached by steamer—almost the full length of Loch Shiel, one of the longest inland lochs of Scotland. And now we are in the heart of Prince Charlie's country, teeming still with recollections of the '45.

As we walk down to the primitive pier, a mile from the station, a high monument like a monolith, with a stone figure on the top of it, seems to rise out of the loch. It marks the spot where, on the 19th August 1745, Prince Charlie burnt his boats, crossed the Rubicon, and raised the Stewart standard for the clans to rally to. At the time he had barely six hundred men, a small company wherewith to set out on such an enterprise. This monument was erected in 1815 by a Macdonald of Glenaladale, a family always devoted to the Stewart cause.

The final stage of the journey is down Loch Shiel, a fresh-water loch some eighteen miles long. Great hills come right down to the water's edge on both sides; and, except for the shooting-lodge of Glenaladale at the foot of the loch and a few scattered shepherds' houses, there is not a vestige of human habitation. But this is almost the heart of Prince Charlie's country. It was the Macdonalds who dwelt in the secluded straths of this wild district who formed the backbone of his Highland host—that is, at least, till Culloden. No Macdonald likes to talk about Culloden.

So difficult of access was this part of the country that the Reformation never penetrated thus far, and the greater part of the population are still Roman Catholics. Indeed, it was not till the opening of the line from Fort-William to Mallaig that there was any proper land-communication with the outer world; it was of necessity all by sea, and the thought continually impresses itself on one, 'How did the old-time inhabitants ever have touch with what we understand as civilisation? How did they live? How could they live?' For, except for the few valleys bordering the many sea-lochs, the whole country is bare and unfertile to a degree.

More than half-way up Loch Shiel an island, Eilann Fionhann, is passed, crowned with rough-hewn crosses. It is the burying-ground of the Moidart district, and thither to this day funeral parties wend their solemn way, marking each place with a cairn where they have laid their dead down, while they rest awhile on their long journey. So it is that these cairns are met with all over the countryside. There is a roofless chapel on the island, with a stone altar; and on the altar is a silver bell which, they say, has been there ever since the chapel was built. After the '45 it was stolen by some soldiers, but recovered after a pursuit down Loch Shiel. In the affair, however, the tongue was lost, and it has been silent ever since.

After a two hours' sail, the terminus, Acharachle, is reached, a village where there is an hotel much frequented by fishers, for at times there is good sea-trout and even salmon fishing in the loch. Our destination, however, was short of this, and we landed for a three-mile drive over a very rough Highland road. Up and up the hillside we climbed till, at the top, Glen Moidart opened before us, a fertile valley with wooded sides, through which the Moidart flows into the loch which gives its name to or takes it from the countryside. In the far distance the islands of Eigg and Rum rear their precipitous heights, and the sun shines high on the waters of Loch Moidart. Near us we flush a covey of young grouse, and a little farther on see a herd of red deer feeding quietly. It is a grand sporting-country—fishing, shooting, stalking at the very door.

And so we reach our host's hospitable house, and are at once taken out to see Prince Charlie's walk, where he used to pace for hours together talking over his plans with young Macdonald, his first supporter, and at that time younger of Kinloch Moidart. It was, indeed, from this very spot that he started to set up the standard of rebellion at Glenaladale, over the very hill we had crossed, and down Loch Shiel in a boat. The whole place teems with legends of the '45, and of the wild days before, when the Clanranalds ruled the district with an iron hand. In the afternoon, as we steam down Loch Moidart in a launch, a rock is pointed out where the Macdonalds of Kinloch Moidart hid their plate from the soldiers who spread over the country-side after Culloden. The hiding-place was betrayed, but the rock was known ever afterwards as the Rock of the Silver Plate. On the other side is another rock with a more dramatic history. It is in full view of Castle Tirhim, the old ruined stronghold of the Clanranalds; and it is said that a chief of the clan, suspecting that one of his maids had robbed him, tied the girl by the hair to this rock, and watched the tide rise and rise till the poor girl was drowned. Castle Tirhim itself is a very impressive old castle, standing on an islet, with great stone battlements facing the sea. It was built in 1315 by the divorced wife of John, first Lord of the Isles. Only once, till it was burnt in 1715, was it taken, and that by treachery. It was the last remnant of the one time great

possessions of the Clanranalds, and was only sold a few years ago to Lord Howard of Glossop, who now owns a very large estate in this part of the country.

So the days pass quietly and lazily, with every afternoon an expedition round the great sea-bays. The return journey was unfortunately spoilt by mist and rain; but those who are fortunate enough to get a fine day or a fine spell of weather for any holiday they may choose to make in this comparatively unknown part of the world will never forget it.

# THE SIGNET-RING.

FOURTH STORY.

## THE CONNOISSEURS.—PART II.

UT I have often wondered since what would have happened had I taken the bet. If you read to the end you will probably think there is no room for doubt. Still, I take leave to fancy it an open question.

Well, before he left, Calthorne explained that he had at first intended to ask me to dine with him the next night. It seemed, though, that his housekeeper's mother was ill—Calthorne, too, was a bachelor—and so that necessary adjunct to a really successful dinner would leave the next morning by the early train.

'We must put it off for a day or two,' Calthorne ended. 'I can't invite you to cultivate dyspepsia with me on my housemaid's experiments.'

'Dine with me, then!' I suggested; but Calthorne refused.

'I'll drop in on you later in the evening perhaps,' he said, 'and hear whether you have that trout. I'm not ten minutes' stroll from you, across a couple of fields.' And soon after that he said good-night, wished me a tight line and a good fish for breakfast, went out the same way that he had come in, and disappeared in the hot, breathless summer night.

Well, the next day opened auspiciously, for shortly after six o'clock, with a little ripple from the south on the water, a red spinner went floating down under the willows, and was sucked into a capacious mouth. There was a five-minutes' scurry for the roots under one bank and the weeds under the other, a heart-stopping leap or two, some dour, dogged drives at a spot where I knew some sunken piles were, and then a beauty of nearly a pound and three-quarters lay in the landing-net on the dewy grass. He was such a picture that I would not have him cooked or cleaned, and kept him for Calthorne's admiration.

But soon after breakfast trouble began. I had the high dogcart that morning, with Mearns to drive me. We had not been out more than an hour, and were some eight miles from home, with another sixteen or eighteen to do, when Mearns confessed to feeling sick. He certainly looked very queer, very pale under his tan, with little beads of sweat starting out upon his forehead, cold, clammy hands, and a pulse which was hard to find.

We were only about three miles from an outlying village, with a good little inn well known to anglers. I took the reins from Mearns, drove quickly to the 'Anglers' Rest,' dosed him with brandy, and left him there, lying down and under the landlady's eye. When I returned an hour later I was relieved to find that he was much better, though still shaky. He insisted that he could drive me home, but owned to being drowsy before we reached the stables. I told him to get to his bed directly he had the cob comfortable in the loose-box, and to have a cup of strong tea.

Then I had my own lunch, and afterwards walked to three different houses within a mile of Rosedene.

On my way home, between three and four, I thought that, bar accidents, my day's work was probably done. Unless there were a very tempting evening rise of trout, I intended to read one or two new novels. As I opened the front door I decided that on such an ideal afternoon I should take my book and a rug to the foot of the garden, where the stream perpetually babbled and bubbled. There I would stretch my rug on the grass, and read in luxury, with a rod beside me in case anything promised sport.

Ideal—bar accidents! The things which a medical man can generally count upon, so to speak, at inconvenient times.

The pleasant prospects in my mind as I opened the front door were spoilt as I passed in. Mrs Binns, very pale but trying hard to preserve her dignity, appeared in the hall, and thanked Heaven audibly and warmly for the sight of me. Ruth and Rachel, the two maids, had, it appeared, been taken violently ill soon after their midday dinner.

'You're not looking quite the thing either,' I said, eying her as I got rid of my hat and stick.

'Indeed, sir, I am the same as them, or a bit worse,' said Mrs Binns; 'but I 'ope I remember my position.' Which I thought a truly heroic sentiment.

I must not give professional and unpleasant details. Poor Ruth and Rachel, not being cook-housekeepers, had not a shred of dignity between them, but shared a great many distressing symptoms; and the moment came when even the memory of poor Mrs Binns's position could no longer keep her erect.

With the recollection of Mearns's trouble before me, I of course asked for details of the day's meals.

Mearns had picked mushrooms the day before,

and had eaten some for breakfast, and they had taken them for dinner; when, by the way, he had gone in for a cupful of soup but had taken nothing else, though they told him how good his mushrooms were.

Well, I made the three women help one another to bed, after doing what seemed necessary for them; and then, seeing they were more comfortable, I ordered them to stay where they were until morning, and went across to visit Mearns. Him I found still better, but drowsy, and I couldn't rate him much for not having thought of warning the women off the mushrooms. Indeed, he had thought them very good, and had said so.

By dinner-time things had settled down again. I discovered Mrs Binns in the kitchen, again mindful of her position, and trying to arrange a meal for me. I hurried her back to her room, and made a perfectly satisfactory dinner on odds and ends, with a couple of, I thought, well-earned glasses from the unfinished first bottle of white port, eating with a novel propped up before me.

I thanked my luck that Calthorne was not due to dinner, and then practically forgot him till he came.

It was perhaps half-past nine, and I was still with my book at the dining-room table, where I had eaten my scratch meal, when a tap at the window made me look up, and there was Calthorne, smoking outside, trim as ever. He stepped in through that window, as he had come through the other on the previous night, and then apologised for doing so, explaining that he knew the ways of the house, and was accustomed to drop in upon Mannington without ringing the front-door bell or disturbing the servants.

I told him that such consideration was particularly acceptable that night, and gave him the day's adventures, not forgetting the trout, which I fetched and exhibited with some pride.

He was obviously a bit envious about that, but condoled with me most heartily on the misfortunes of my *ménage*.

'That, I suppose,' he said, 'accounts for Mearns being asleep. I called at his cottage just now to ask his advice about a setter-pup, a most promising Laverack, that has fits. His wife asked me if to-morrow would do, as he was very tired, and indeed sleeping. She told me no more. A queer woman! I'm glad to know it wasn't liquor.'

I said I thought Mearns a thoroughly temperate man; but Calthorne merely gave his usual wry, sardonic grin, and said one never could tell. Then we got on to more interesting matters.

Calthorne said he had lately been staying in Paris, Barcelona, Naples, and Venice, and compared the citizens of each caustically enough. But he was hardest on the Venetians, because some one there had tried to swindle him over sham curios. His wrath seemed based principally upon the fact that the would-be seller had very nearly succeeded.

He stopped in the middle of his vituperations, having used the most abusive terms of three or four languages, and said he hoped I didn't feel hurt. 'I forgot,' he said. 'Mannington, a bit of a genealogist, in his letter mentioned something of Italian descent and a ring.'

'The Italian blood must be pretty nearly crossed out,' I said, laughing; 'and I don't feel badly hurt. It's true there is a ring. Here it is!' and I stretched out my left hand.

Calthorne was interested. The shaded lamp was between us, but he could not see well enough. He asked if I minded taking the ring off, and I gave it to him, remembering Miss Raimes as I did so, and telling him of the scratches on the inner surface.

He was obviously attentive. He slipped the ring on to his own left-hand little finger, and stretching out his hand so that it lay on the table back upwards in the light, stared at the ring and listened. Then he took it off, and brought his pince-nez to bear upon the inner surface.

'Once or twice I have thought,' I said, 'that I was going to make out some tag of Latin; but there's no sense in it.'

'And where,' Calthorne asked, still scrutinising it—'where did you say your folk lived?'

'In Cornwall, after London, Venice, and Rome, till three generations back.'

'And then?'

'Oh, Warwickshire mostly, I think.'

My smooth silver cigarette-case lay on the table.

'Allow me!' said Calthorne, and was using the case as a polished reflector when the front-door bell rang.

I left him with the ring and the cigarette-case, and went to the door.

My visitor was a porter from the little local station. He brought a message which had been wired down the line from Ipley, some eight miles off. A woman whom I had seen early in the day was reported not so well, and I was asked to see her again before morning.

I thought it very likely that the matter could quite well be left for twelve hours, and it needed a bit of an effort to turn out again. Still, if anything went wrong the responsibility would be altogether on my shoulders, and at that time of night there was no way of getting details without going to the place myself.

I went back to the dining-room, where Calthorne sat, still fiddling with the ring and the cigarette-case, and growled out my grievances. 'So I'm afraid I must be off,' I finished. 'I suppose there's nothing to be made out of that?' and I held out a hand for the ring.

Calthorne yawned. 'Nothing that I can see,' he said. 'We must look at it again sometime;' and he pushed the ring across, and, I thought, looked mournfully at his untouched glass of port.

'Well,' he said, 'I go to town some time to-morrow. I've three or four days to put in at the British Museum, on a paper I'm writing for the Archæological. You must dine with me when I get

back. I wish I had another quarter of an hour over that ring. It's rather suggestive.' He seemed to have been taking the trouble to copy the scratches on a bit of paper. He held that above the lamp, and then let it burn on one of the plates. 'The evening is only just beginning!' he said disconsolately.

'Look here!' I suggested. 'I mean to ride Punch, and he's fresh, and I mayn't be more than an hour and a half if I ride steadily. Stay and finish your wine, and hold the fort for me till you feel sleepy. We'll see to the shutters and things before I go. Then, if you get sick of it, you need only lock the front door from the outside, and put the key under the scraper. If I'm not too long away we can still have your disquisition on the ring.'

'Capital!' Calthorne twinkled at his glass, and said the wine was far too good to leave in a hurry. 'I suppose I may look at your novels?' he said. 'I'm a regular night-bird; though, of course, as you say, I may get tired of waiting. Tell the excellent Mrs Binns that I'm here, and can be counted on to attend to any other messenger, at any rate until twelve o'clock. Now, off you go, and don't give your wretched patient too much time. Most inconsiderate of any one to be ill after dark!'

So matters were arranged to suit everybody. I saw Mrs Binns, who said she couldn't sleep for wondering what I had found for dinner, and who declared from between the blankets that she had always said Mr Calthorne was a nice, kind gentleman, and that she knew his likes and dislikes, and would keep them in mind the next time he dined at Rosedene.

I left her muttering something about salmon mayonnaise, and grouse on the Twelfth.

Calthorne and I went the round of the downstairs rooms together, though I always think a medical man's house the least likely to be burgled; for one thing, it's not generally worth the trouble.

Then I went to the stables. I glanced up at Mearns's bedroom window, but never thought of disturbing him. I saddled Punch (Polly's stable-companion) myself, and cantered off through the dusk of the summer night along the turf that edged our road. The night was perfect, and Punch lifted his heels as though glad to be out. I always revel in hot weather, and I did not see how there could be anything really serious to do at the other end of my journey. I considered possibilities for the first few minutes of my ride, and then began to think of something else.

Began? I believe it would be more accurate to say that I went on thinking of something else which had been in the vague background of my mind all the time. The thing bothering me seemed so unimportant, too. What did it matter in any case? Time after time I put it away from me, or thought I did, and time after time I found I was thinking of nothing else. Punch and I knew the road well, the light was good enough, and we had the country to ourselves.

Then suddenly I woke with a start, and took such a pull upon Punch's mouth that he reared and almost came back on me. The next instant we had turned in our tracks and were flying back over the five or six miles between us and Rosedene as fast as Punch could gallop. I had come to my senses at last, anyway, and my sleepy memory had stirred and wakened.

Within half a mile of the house I eased the pace, and went off the direct route. The stream, as I have said, ran along at the foot of the back lawn, separating it from one of Mannington's fields. Instead of keeping to the road, which crossed a bridge and went past the double doors of the stable-yard, I slipped off at the field-gate, led Punch into the field, and eased him of the saddle and bridle. Then I quietly crossed the little foot-bridge at the bottom of the garden, and stood upon the lawn. From there I slipped into the shrubbery, which screened the stable-yard from the garden with the help of a wall in which was a little door.

What was I going to do? I did not know. How long was I going to neglect my patient's message? I did not know that either. I stood at the edge of the shrubbery well in its shadows, and watched the house.

Nothing could look more peaceable and sleepy. I could not even be sure, so closely the shutters fitted, that there was any light in the dining-room or anywhere on the ground floor. Possibly Calthorne was already in bed, and I was scouting ridiculously round a first-class mare's-nest. Possibly, while I slunk about outside, he was calmly dipping into the novel and the port.

I fumed and shifted about, but saw and heard nothing. Then, just as I had determined to reach the dining-room window, the shutter began quietly to open. A mere line of light showed, and then suddenly went. The bar had been taken down, and then the light extinguished. I clutched Mannington's hunting-crop and watched. In the gray half-light it was quite easy to see the shutters separate farther; and then the French window opened, all without a sound, and a man stepped out. Calthorne doubtless, though I could not distinguish his features from across the lawn; but I got an unpleasant thrill at seeing that over his shoulder hung a long, apparently heavy body, under which he stooped, and which dangled not unlike a corpse. In all my life I can remember no more creepy moments than those during which I watched that man come softly across the lawn toward the shrubbery, stooping under his ghastly load. Then there was a clinking, and I almost laughed. He was carrying nothing worse than a sackful of loot!

'Drop it, you blackguard! Your game's up,' I said, stepping out to meet him; and he dropped the sack, and I could hear his little gasp of surprise.

'Is it?' he said softly, and fired at me point-blank.

I felt a heavy blow over the heart, and staggered, then ran in. I am a very nervous man, and have

often feared lest an emergency should prove me a coward, but I forgot all about that now. Here was a villain who had fooled me most ludicrously, and was now going to kill me too. Until I dropped I would worry him.

An upward cut with the hunting-crop caught him about the elbow, apparently in the ulnar region vulgarly known as the funny-bone. It sent his second bullet somewhere over my shoulder, and made him drop the pistol. He jumped at me like a cat, but my second stroke lit on his white head; and while he reeled my left hand caught him about the chin, and he went down as if killed.

I never stayed to see whether he was dead or not. I could feel that I was bleeding, and expected every moment to drop too. I got out a bandage from my instrument-pocket, and, tearing it up, knotted the pieces about his wrists, elbows, knees, and ankles. Then I left him lying, and entered the house.

No one seemed to have been disturbed, and I was able to see to myself without interruption, and soon found there was nothing much wrong. The convex metal surface of a small instrument-case in my handkerchief-pocket had deflected the bullet, which had then only grazed a rib. I hurried back to my prize, trussed him up still further, assured myself without disturbing them that the servants were all right, and then went to the stables.

It was only when I had the trap ready that I thought of examining the sack. I found it crammed with silver—silver mugs, spoons, candelabra, snuff-boxes, buckles, buttons, and many other articles apparently antique. Where they all came from I had no idea, for nothing in the house seemed disturbed. What on earth should I do with them? This must be Mannington's craze, over which he was so uncommunicative, and which he would not wish to be chattered about.

I picked out a couple of solid *pièces de conviction*, sank the sack in the deep pool below the willows, bundled my prisoner and my evidence into the trap, and half-an-hour later landed both at the police-station. A few minutes later still a white wig, moustache, and imperial lay on the inspector's desk, with a small automatic repeating-pistol and the two pieces of silver; and Calthorne, *alias* Mearns, dabbing at the deep cut made in his chin by my ring, coolly owned that the game was mine.

The inspector was apparently a man of some grim humour. 'Signed, sealed, and delivered,' he said gravely. 'Well, doctor, we acknowledge receipt.—Cells!' But Mearns hung back.

'What's the hurry?' he asked, and then turned to me. 'Was this a fluke? You seemed fool enough for anything. Did I give myself away? I never showed that cut hand, did I?'

'No,' I said, 'I never saw the cut. But when I was dressing that hand I must have noticed that the little finger was always slightly bent at the top joint. When you put on the ring this evening I noticed it again; but I was late in remembering what it meant.' And then this connoisseur in silver was led away.

After all I had to send a wire to Mannington at Christie's, but I explicitly told him not to return until the next day.

Till he came I had a deuce of a time with the sackful of silver. I imagined that since he had kept it so quietly at home he would not wish it to be deposited at the bank. At the same time I could not discover where he usually kept it. I may say that I slept upon it for three or four nights. At any rate, I kept it under my bed, and, begging Mearns's pistol from the inspector, I kept that, loaded, under my pillow.

We had the real Calthorne in to dinner the night that Mannington came back, and they drank my health in the white port, and wrangled in a friendly way over the merits of the antique silver which Mannington spread before us. His place for it had been a safe concealed behind book-shelves in the dining-room. Mearns, who had entered his service for that purpose, had watched patiently and unsuccessfully for a twelvemonth. Then, the night before Mannington left, Mearns got a hint while he stood quietly in the doorway, and saw how Mannington's eyes lingered on the shelves behind me as he talked of his hobby. Mearns had first seen Mannington at sales in Christie's.

There was nothing wrong with the mushrooms, of which I tried some. Mearns had dosed the servants, and, lightly, himself too, both as a test of quantities and to avoid suspicion.

It was not until long afterwards that I discovered the cause of his wife's illness. I may tell you of that some day, and of my next meeting with her. But when I returned from the police-station that night with a constable Mrs Mearns had disappeared, and nothing was heard of her for some time.

By the bye, it will occur to you that there would be marks of 'Mearns's' work on 'Calthorne's' hands. I found it was his fad always to put on old wash-leather gloves for stable-work, and of course he always wore gloves when driving.

## POT-POURRI.

Borne on idle breezes,
Little vagrant airs
Breathe a ghostly fragrance,
Bringing unawares
Half-forgotten voices,
Whisperings and sighs,
Low-toned words scarce uttered,
Sad and laughing eyes.

Sun, and moon, and glimmer
Of the summer night,
Starshine on the river,
Noon and morning light,
Scent of swaying flowers,
Love, and smiles, and tears,
Stirring of dead rose-leaves—
Pot-pourri of years!

Clara Singer Poynter.

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# THE PARIS BOOKSTALLS ON THE QUAYS.

## BOUQUINEURS ET BOUQUINISTES.

By J. GALBRAITH HORN.

Les boulevards, c'est la vie même de Paris et comme son *Petit Journal*. Mais les quais, c'est son passé, c'est son histoire, c'est sa véritable bibliothèque.—CLARETIE.

THE existence of the historical old stalls on the Seine parapets, as well as that of the famous Morgue, '*la chapelle ardente de l'infortune et du crime*' (Nodier), is threatened. For many years the prefect of the Seine has refused to grant new licenses for stances on the right bank, and very few survivors are left there. Now there is some idea of abolishing this interesting feature of old Paris altogether. Yet the queer, lazy, picturesque, if rather dirty, *bouquiniste* seems to the eye to have survived the Bourbons, the Revolutions, the Empires, and, like Ninon, though long past the allotted span, to preserve the vigour and life of youth. Singularly placid and apparently free from worry is this—more often than not female—philosopher of the open air. He has to trust the dishonest rogue and the professional thief to spare his poverty and respect his confidence. He seldom grudges the thirsty but sou-less scholar a drink at the classical fountains of his treasures. Elia writes with affection of 'the poor gentry who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls;' and describes Martin B—— snatching the most fearful joy of his life as he thus managed to finish two volumes of *Clarissa Harlowe* before being sent about his business. An old man confessed to Flammarion that he had in this way got through four hundred and fifty pages of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, not exactly light reading either.

On the left bank the *bouquiniste* extends from the Gare d'Orleans end of the Quai d'Orsay, formerly the marshy Quai des Grenouillières, to the Halles aux Vins. Usually from forty to eighty years old, but so lined and dirty that it is hard to guess his age within ten years, seated on a straw-bottomed stool, indifferent to the constant current of air which passes up or down the river and which probably prolongs his easy life, much wrapped up, worried by no fixed eight hours of labour, but opening and closing when he pleases or thinks a turn on the quays will tempt his clients, there he is year in, year out, stolid and moderately prosperous, enjoying his often cultured ease and cheered by the greetings of innumerable friends and gossips. '*Les mêmes êtres maniaques, biscornus, et brise-raison, les mêmes bohèmes échoués, les mêmes braves gens philosophes, les mêmes pauvres diables ignorants, ou, enfin, les mêmes érudits surprenants et modestes*' (Uzanne). Like the mariner, capped and dressed for the roughest weather, he ever stands on the bridge watching over the frail cargo, spreading the sails to the favouring breeze, and making all snug in the storm; while in summer he lazes like an Italian beggar, enjoying the *far niente* to the envy of the busier throng. They are temperate as a class, if you make allowances for the trials they perforce endure—extreme heat and cold, slush, gales, dust-storms, and thunder-plumps; and you cannot but envy their frugal but savoury picnic-meals. Here in a sense an author is judged during his life, and many a *magnum opus* is hawked about for a few sous. Here is the Morgue of the celebrities of the hour. The *bouquiniste* is no respecter of persons—or, rather, of authors. He is the reflection of the laws of supply and demand, and many are the rude shocks he administers accidentally to the mutual admiration society type of author. Uzanne, however, would rather find himself exposed in a box on the solid granite of the parapet, like an *enfant trouvé*, stained by dust and weather, '*où la Seine semble frôler sa glauque robe de soie*,' in the heart of the exciting, stormy life of Paris, than niched in an ebony burial-chamber in a millionaire's library.

Nodier prematurely announced the death of the *bouquiniste* about eighty years ago: 'Finished are the days of incunabula at two francs; Verard has a crown and some original works of Molière at six sous each.' Parison, '*le roi des bouquineurs*,' bought a Cæsar of Plantin with Montaigne's autograph for ninety-five centimes, which realised one thousand five hundred francs. There are many visitors to Paris like the



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Lord Spencer who spent a year in Rome without visiting anything but the *bouquinistes*, and returned at once happy to London when he had acquired the *Martial* of Sweynheym and Pannartz of 1473. Books could be written about the bargains made on the quays, but space forbids us to linger. Nodier with his last six sous bought *Le Songe de Poliphile*, printed at Venice by the Aldi, and got one hundred and thirty-five francs for it. It is true that Aldine editions, Caxtons, Elzevirs, &c. are now impossible rarities, and Uzanne says that even in 1892 the fine printing of Barbon, Coustellier, Guerin, Latour, Didot, Baskerville, Bodoni, Brindley, Foulis, Tonson, Martyn, &c. was very scarce. Still, men like Gladstone and Campbell-Bannerman loved nothing better, when in Paris, than to renew their hunt on the quays for a rare prize, and to have another literary talk with their favourite gossip. Many a precious volume can still be found by the poor lover of books to be a joy for ever and the cause of quaintly increased self-respect.

It is tempting to recall the quays on the right bank and on the islands (where were many *étalagistes*) under the older names, the great events they witnessed, and the famous or infamous spirits who lived and died there. The people's visit to Versailles, and their return with *le Boulanger, la Boulangère, et le petit mitron*, along the Quai de Passy; *la chaumière*, where Tallien loved in secret; Madame Roland's old house on the Quai de l'Horloge, which she could see on her last sad journey to the guillotine—(here France's first clock was stationed, and here the first signal for the massacre sounded; here was the centre of the optician and later of the photographer); the Quai aux Fleurs, where the fuchsias show their *rouges clochettes*, and where Zola lingered to breathe the first violets and the early wallflower; the old Quai de la Cité, where Heloise lived: '*cela sentait le clergé d'autrefois et l'on aurait dit qu'un autre Claude Frollo avait fait d'une de ces demeures sa carapace*' (Claretie); the Quai des Orfèvres, formerly covered with stalls offering the art of the goldsmith and church-plate, recalling the Ponte Vecchio of Florence.

Second-hand manuscript stalls were doubtless common in the great days of Rome, but it was not till the beginning of the sixteenth century that they appeared in Paris. The Pont Neuf (about 1600 thrown open to commerce) was the Eden of the *étalagiste*, as he was at first called. The term *bouquin* was introduced from Holland about the middle of the eighteenth century. Fournier describes the two long parapets of the bridge as covered with books and forming a huge hospital at one time, where the great unsold exposed their miseries and appealed for alms. The vendors were persecuted and abolished at times through the jealousy of the regular bookseller up to 1829. In 1650, to the grief of the poor student and lover of *belles-lettres*, fifty were driven from this bridge alone. By 1692, however, the quays, as to-day, were covered with not only books, but china, shells, coins, jewellery, medals, old armour, and every kind of curiosity. These stalls were often the humble origin of great booksellers, and equally often the last refuge of the ruined librarian.

The Quai Voltaire, formerly Des Theatins, and the Quai Malaquais were once the favourite promenade and rendezvous of the best society. In Victor Fournel's charming book on old Paris you can see pictures of the beauties of the day here showing their fineries, ivory fans, paniers, patches, &c., attended by their pages, who held up their trains. The conjurer was staged here.

Uzanne believes that the word 'charlatan' was derived from the scarlet (*scarlatano*) robe of an Italian drug-merchant who practised at the end of the Rue de la Dauphine, facing the quay. River fêtes, concerts, gingerbread and other fairs, were centred here. The rage of the day for tight and slack rope marvels was, however, the great feature. Mademoiselle Saqui, who crossed the river on a wire, the Furiosos, and others are often found in the pictures of the period.

Molière lived in the Hôtel Conti, where the Hôtel des Monnaies now stands. Fournier relates a pretty tale of Bonaparte taking Marie Louise to see the attic at No. 5 Quai Conti (where he nursed his starving ambition after leaving the École de Brienne), and the old bookstalls where he found the dry bones of mathematics, of history, of statecraft, with whose aid he afterwards remodelled Europe. Alas! the marble plaque with gold letters on the house had to be removed in 1869. Auguste Vitu proved this a dream. The only foundation for the story was that he often did visit, while at the École Militaire (which he entered in October 1784), M. de Permon, father of the future Duchesse d'Abrantès, better known perhaps as Madame Junot. Through M. de Permon's influence with the governors, he often got leave on some such transparent subterfuge as a sprained ankle, and spent a few days, or even a week, at No. 13 Quai Conti, sleeping in the attic at the left angle of the house on the third story. This was the old Hôtel Sillery, now occupied on the ground floor by the Libraire Pigoreau. As Cain says, the view from it was a fairy one: barges and bargemen, dog-barbers, bargee-barbers, lines of patient fishermen, picturesque and ever-toiling washerwomen, customs officers, bathers all round the Pont des Arts, besides the life of the quays, and to the right front the wonders of Notre-Dame and old Paris. Here the young cadet faced the old palace of the Louvre, in which his early dreams became realities, and from which he altered the face of the world and imposed his will and his family on the thrones of Europe.

At the corner of the quay and the Rue de la Dauphine stood the first Café Anglais, a famous *cabinet litteraire* about 1769. It was founded by Bechet, whose descendants almost to this day have been famous booksellers in the district. Sterne's adventure on this quay with the pretty housemaid who was seeking '*egarements du cœur et de l'esprit*' will be readily recalled. Copies of his books both in French and English are very numerous, and I

have picked up some charming editions. Many *bouquinistes* were specialists then as now, but one had a monopoly for the sale of sentimental works—a curious arrangement not in force now, when the most abominable sties all over Paris unblushingly appeal to the decadent idiots of the day with their vulgar and poisonous trash.

Greuze discovered his future wife in the assistant at a bookstall on the Quai des Grands Augustins, and Diderot tells us some ancedotes about her. Restif de la Bretonne, in his poetic prose, recalls '*la belle libraire*' and '*la jolis papetière*.'

On the Quai Voltaire lived Horace Vernet, at No. 15; and at No. 11 Ingrès the painter died. Here also lived Denon, Prud'hon, Alfred de Musset, President Perrault, Chamillard, Gustave Droz, and Gluck. Voltaire died at No. 27, in the hotel of his friend, the Marquis de Villette. His body, in a dressing-gown, was lowered from a window at night, and taken, in the bottom of a *berline de voyage* (30th May 1778), to be buried at the Abbaye de Scellières in Champagne. Ultimately, in 1814, his bones were stolen at night, with Rousseau's, from the Panthéon, and thrown into a hole at the river-side, near the existing Rue de la Bièvre.

Part of the Hôtel de Mailly, where Madame de Châteauroux, Louis XV.'s mistress, lived, still exists, and the room she died in can still be seen, with its quaint *médaillons* on the ceiling.

Fouché, who served so many masters, survived so many political cataclysms, and died Duc d'Otranto in the odour of sanctity, may be said, in a sense, to have governed France from the Quai Malaquais, where he occupied the great Hôtel de Juigné, whence went the condemned to the prisons of the Temple, the Conciergerie, Vincennes, and afterwards to the guillotine. Fouché's wife, Bonne-Jeanne, a near relation of Robespierre, and his family were his pride and his happiness; and in days of greatest power he shared one room with his family and lived the simplest life, working harder than any of his servants.

Sardou describes the booths on the Louvre side of the river, round the ruins of the old church of St Thomas-du-Louvre and the Prieuré, where Gautier and De Nerval installed their '*Bohème galante*.' Owing to the decadence in art and the bad taste following the Revolution, the marvellous works of Cochin, Moreau, Boucher, Lavreince, Fragonard, St Anbin, Prud'hon, Boilly, Isabey, &c. were offered for sale daily for almost nothing. What chances for the connoisseur at the end of the eighteenth century! What a saddening sight must the old banks of the Seine have furnished, littered with the treasures of centuries of curious knowledge and intelligent acquisition! I hardly jump with envy, as Uzanne puts it, as I read of how Madame de Genlis saw here the loved and well-bound books of her friends, stamped with their arms; and even the portraits of dear ones, who had suffered all the agonies and wrongs of the Revolution, and expiated, by their hideous death, the crimes of their feudal ancestors. A lucky *coup* made by a clever *bouquiniste* at this time is described by Fournier. He learnt that the fine religious library of the château of Seeaux, after the massacre there, was to be sent to the arsenal and used in cartridge-manufacture. He arranged an exchange *en route* with the carriers, and sold the priceless library in England. The rarest books were often stolen by valets and servants during the Revolution, and were exposed in panniers on horses in the markets among the onions and cheeses for next to nothing, and sold to dairymen to wrap butter in. The nightmare of Horace was realised:

> Ne . . . . . .
> Deferar in vicum vendentem thus et odores,
> Et piper, et quidquid chartis amicitur ineptis
> (Epist. II. i. 269).

Manuscript memoirs, unique prints, and other valuables have thus been destroyed in quantities. Men like Montmerqué, Laboudrie, Barbier, Peignot, Lacroix, and Victor Hugo were constant pilgrims in this land of poetry, culture, and romantic song about 1830, which may be termed, perhaps, the end of the golden age of the *bouquiniste*, who was often, like Achaintre, a ripe and famous scholar, who learnedly annotated the books he sold. Along the quays, singers of ballads and romances gathered the *bouquineurs*, workmen, *flâneurs*, and students together. Many loved the collecting of rare and beautiful books; some, like the gallant Grolier, with unspoilt illusions and his motto, '*Grolierii et amicorum*,' on their shelves; others, like the experienced librarian of the Arsenal, Charles Nodier, wrote:

> Tel est la triste sort de tout livre prêté:
> Souvent il est perdu, toujours il est gâté.

Few stances are open in the morning, and hardly any before 10.30; but it is the pleasantest time to hunt, as you are not elbowed about by the afternoon crowd, and there is less dust and noise. Often in the morning, though the cases are open, the vendor is conspicuous by his absence, and a *confrère* is perhaps looking after three or four lines of cases. The whole business strikes you at first as exquisitely casual and confiding, and almost like comic opera. If the price of your fancy is marked and no 'Pst! Pst!' produces an owner, you leave the money on the open box, as at a newspaper-kiosk. Truly an astonishing custom—old as the river almost.

In 1866 Baron Haussmann wanted to transplant the stalls and Haussmannise the bonny banks of the Seine into clean, bare, cold granite parapets. Napoleon III., however, made a personal investigation, and after an interview with the ancient Père Foy, whom he discovered warming his hands at a stove in which he was using as fuel the *Conquêtes et Victoires des Français*, gave up the project, and the veterans of to-day scoff at the rumours now current. Uzanne raves through many pages about this Foy—why, I can't conceive. The boss of a paid claque at a theatre, he became an incapable *bouquiniste* till a lucky fire yielded him six hundred pounds of insurance money, on which he long existed without

an attempt to clean either himself or his stall of rubbish. He is a blot on Uzanne's really admirable book (so charmingly illustrated) on the quays. Elsewhere I have come across anecdotes of this old horror's sty, which he and his pet rats shared. The rats were fattened up and devoured as required, being skinned and cooked, before the survivors, in oil and with all sorts of refined *gourmandise*. The historians and gossips of the siege say the result was excellent, but somehow the picture of the old man does not edify me.

Uzanne mentions that Durand, on the Quai d'Orsay, made by his stall more than six thousand *livres de rentes*. Ten francs is said to be an average day's sale. Another father of the house of *bouquinistes* was Père Malorey, who died in 1890, aged eighty-two, after sixty-two years of active work on the quays. He always stuck to his prices, I remember. Many, almost all, take less than the marked price; and when the price is not marked the unmistakable foreigner will often be asked ten times as much as the wily vendor will take. That is the great difficulty in dealing with these people. Rather pathetic is the sketch of a rival 'father' who, though younger, started the business a year earlier. Père Debas became slighter and more frail as he grew older, while his boxes became so empty that, with a bit of wind, a flight into the river seemed the probable end of both. To the last he was happy, and mended his loved books, or read them learnedly and philosophically, when he could not sell them. He loved the past, and would pour out all his erudition for his favourite priestly clients, who could appreciate his knowledge and charm.

Bears like Charlier, who would not allow you to touch his books, are rare. Naturally some, like Lécrivain, become masters of physiognomy, and judge almost infallibly whether a client is badly bitten and how much he can safely raise his price. Uzanne describes all the types: the loathsome Père Isnard; the decayed musical editor, Formage; the poet, Eugène Flaurand (Balzac's wild admirer); the charming Greek scholar, Raquin of Troyes, and his early death; the delightful old Leguiller, with his turban; Saint Simonians; deformed Quasimodos, ruined by women and absinthe; '*le noble le Masurier;*' the dynasty of Dubosq, Ambs, nicknamed Amer Picon because he required fifteen to twenty glasses of that much-advertised poison a day; the amateur, Gustave Boucher, who in earliest youth joined the trade for the love of it, and whose Mimi Pinson charmed the eyes of age as she helped him to close his boxes for the night (he died in the odour of sanctity as an administrator of the Beaux-Arts); Abel Tarride (after work-hours an actor); Yellow Pelet, called 'Pain d'Epice;' Papa Rosselin, the well-known editor; Delahaye, who started a brilliant illumination of his cases which, sad to relate, attracted more bats, mosquitoes, and moths than clients. The Normands are cited as the '*Juifs du Papier*,' as those who most often rose to mark and became more or less wealthy and eminent booksellers and publishers.

In the old days the boxes were toilfully taken home to the lair of the owner for the night. Since 1890, under certain conditions as to fastening, &c., they may be left in *statu quo*. Thieves of all sorts and kleptomaniacs have to be guarded against during the day, but are hardly worth worrying about at night. Formerly all books had to be clearly priced, and placed in boxes with others of the same price. Not so now, and the vendor can often show a mark after diagnosing his client's eagerness or ignorance. Ten metres is the space allotted for a stance by the Prefect of the Seine, and the cost, with taxes, is about two pounds a year. De Resbecq, in 1864, estimated that the boxes of sixty-four *bouquinistes* contained about seventy thousand volumes; Uzanne, in 1892, allows about ninety-seven thousand volumes to the one hundred and fifty-six vendors.

They buy surplus books privately from journalists and critics, many of whom arrange for a periodical call from their *bouquiniste*, and at private and public sales, while great quantities are brought direct to the stalls for sale. The foundation of most stalls has remained the same during the last thirty years, and the intelligent foreigner must relieve the *bouquiniste* of enormous quantities of Buffon, Marmontel, Delisle, 'Voyages' (especially that of Anacharsis, which is said to have largely led to the Revolution), Dulaure, La Harpe, church services, *Robinson Crusoe*, Scott, Maria Edgeworth, Berquin, and incomplete editions of all the French classics.

What I like best on the quays is a mixed bag. I go out after giving the ground a long rest in hopes of surprises, keen all the time, and ready for a snap-shot. I can recall some red-letter days when at sunset, tired but happy, I have got back by steamer with a goodly bag of, say, fifty volumes, large and small, stowed away in all sorts of poacher's pockets or strung together like rabbits after a day's ferreting; expenditure—say five francs for ammunition, free ground and no tips, and four sous for the steamers. To go out in search of any special book is usually disappointing, but it is wonderful here how knowledge of the ground helps; and you can keep a note of a number of works you want, or volumes to complete sets which you already have, so that there is always a lot of interest even when the elements are unfavourable and the ground is drawn blank. The other day I got an old 1664 book about the antiquities of Paris, which I had long wanted, for two shillings. *Vive la chasse au bouquin!* But Uzanne truly says the catalogues of Brunet, Quérard, and Barbier make the great find a rare accident.

Most of the immortals have owned to their love for the bookstalls, and sung the praises of the dear old book-hunting days in no niggardly fashion. Enormous libraries have here been collected. Pillet's, and Boulard's of about three hundred thousand volumes, are perhaps the best known. The *académicien* Xavier Marmier always offered a cigarette or a bon-bon, according to sex, on the conclusion of a purchase. He found a hundred-franc note sealed

up between two pages of a book, and at once gave it to the vendor, whose it was not, but whom it happened to relieve when sadly pinched by bad times. He left one thousand francs to be spent on a dinner to the *bouquinistes* of the left bank. About ninety-five of them dined *au grand Vèfour* on November 20, 1892. The oldest, M. Choppin d'Arnonville, made a fine reference to the far-travelled donor: 'Madame de Staël said that she preferred to the Rhine her gutter in the Rue du Bac; Monsieur Marmier preferred your quays to the loveliest country, to his mountains, to his great pines, which he loved so much that he called them his cousins.' Many survive to recall his charming personality, and the bottle of white wine which he often shared with a crony after a bargain.

Jacques, a bridegroom of the other day, then advocated a huge gallery on the quays, lighted at night, a sort of national fair, and the abolition of all the big shops. Chonmoru, perhaps the doyen now, over eighty, but good for another twenty years, who suffered three days in prison for his Socialism and for shouting, '*À bas les voleurs!*' to Carnot when he passed, has discarded his sabots and looks less Bohemian than of yore. The aunt of Raoul Pugno, the great pianist, died only a year ago, and his cousin now reigns next door to Chonmoru, at the end of the Boule Miche; while none who have looked over Uzanne's illustrations can mistake Ferroud, one of the deputies who helped to manage the great dinner. Bouland has almost completed forty years as a *bouquiniste*, and is perhaps, strictly speaking, the doyen or '*père*,' though not so old as Chonmoru. Many others might be cited, interesting personalities, young in spirit if not in years. What a sport of kings must this craze be which enthralls alike the young, the old, the rich man, the poor man, and the man of power! Paul Lacroix said the bibliophile was his type of happiness. From which it results that to be a *bouquin* is real happiness.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER XLIX.—HOW MAVIE'S CAP FELL OFF AND BROUGHT THEM INTO TROUBLE.

MONSIEUR DUPONT proved as pleasant a master, and found their services as much to his liking, as their last employer. They learned that he had a large estate near Torigny, and that he looked after it himself. They also learned incidentally, and by inference rather than by any direct statement to that effect, that, in keeping with the bulk of his neighbours, his sympathies tended towards the old order of things rather than towards the new.

'But there,' he said one time, 'we have lived through the troubles, and if we can only have peace and quietness, that is what we want most; and if M. Bonaparte can give us that, Georges Dupont will not say a word against him.'

They parted from him at Torigny on the best of terms, and he too promised them work at any time they cared to come to him for it. Then they set off by the country roads tending westward, meaning to strike the coast and work along it till they came within reach of Sercq. The heavy shoes and coarse stockings were, however, still very galling to Jean-Marie's unaccustomed feet, and their progress was slow. Had they been able to foresee to what they were so painfully pressing they would have turned their steps elsewhere.

Meanwhile, to one of them every step they took was a delight, if to the other it was something of a martyrdom. To Jack the fact that this slim figure plodding by his side was Mavie Lauriston set his heart aglow and transformed the world for him.

She was still not quite accustomed to her own transformation, and reddened at times when he looked at her, and then she looked so charming that he could hardly keep his eyes off her.

She tried, however, to carry it off with a laugh and a bold face. 'Do you remember how I always wanted to be a boy, Jack?'

'I remember. But you're too'——

'Too what?' as he stuck. 'Too thin?'

'Oh no.'

'What, then—awkward? I feel that indeed.'

'No, no.'

'Well, what?'

'Well, you're too pretty for a boy, and too—lady-like. Boys are rough and rude as a rule.'

'I don't remember your ever being very rough and rude, Jack. You were very stupid at times—at least I thought so then.'

'You should have seen some of the fellows at Westminster.'

'Tell me, and perhaps I can pick it up.'

And he beguiled the way for her with stories of the old rough fagging days at school, when one's life was hardly one's own, and a clean buckhorse knockdown was looked upon as reasonable reproof for small offence.

'I think they were just brutes, Jack!' was Mavie's comment. 'On the whole, I think I'm just as glad I am a girl.' And so was Jack.

It was at a little town called Periers that they fell upon trouble, and that through no lack of caution in themselves, simply through the fact that the Maire of Periers, after playing up to all parties in turn, and trimming his sails to every breeze that seemed to blow in the direction of his heart's desire, had but a few months before found himself at last in the position for which he had deemed himself best fitted since the beginning of troubles.

Caustic neighbourly comment was not wanting

as to the business methods which had, in the course of a short but troubled dozen years, sufficed to raise Cornu the grocer to the position of *propriétaire* and head of the community; but then neighbourly comment on the successful is not apt to err on the side of charity. The only thing that concerns us respecting M. le Maire is that he was possessed of unbounded admiration for himself, in which his wife only partially shared, and that his scholarship was of the most meagre description. A pig-headed man, a negotiator of hard bargains, the kind of man who gets on in the world and snaps his fingers at neighbourly criticism.

The day before he was appointed *maire* he addressed the gendarme who kept order in Periers and safeguarded it from outside aggression as 'Monsieur Garnichon,' and listened with deference to his latest scraps of news from St Lô. The following day he dropped the 'monsieur' and rated Garnichon soundly for neglect of his duties and tittle-tattling.

When M. Cornu heard then that a couple of strangers had fed and rested at the little inn outside the town, and had gone on in the direction of the coast, his mayoral instincts scented possible danger to the community, if not to the State; for strangers in these later days were few and far between. They might be brigands; down south people were pestered with them. They might be *détenus*, in which case the State might require them at his hands. The two might be conspirators or mischief-makers—they had had their fill of them, and the State was not solidly settled yet.

He despatched his gendarme at once, with peremptory orders to bring the travellers back to give an account of themselves.

Jack and Jean-Marie were plodding slowly on, dreaming of no trouble, and counting the miles to the coast, when Garnichon the gendarme came up with them.

'Here then, you! You are to come back with me.'

'Oh, and why?' asked Jack quietly, for he had pondered this possible situation.

'Because M. Cornu says so, *ma foi!*'

'Really! And who is the good M. Cornu?'

'He is the *maire!* Come along!'

'Not so fast, my good sir, or you and M. le Maire may get yourselves into trouble.'

'*Bien!* You can tell all that to M. le Maire. My orders are to bring you back.'

'See here;' and Jack produced the authority from the Minister of Police which Madame Jolicot had put into his hand at parting.

But M. Garnichon would have none of it. 'All that is nothing to me. M. Cornu says to me, "Monsieur Garnichon," he says, "you go after those two who called at the 'Belle Normande,' and bring them back here till I see who they are and what they are up to." So back you come!'

It was useless arguing with the man. They went. The *maire* received them with the overbearing assertiveness of the newly officialised bourgeois. A larger experience of men would have taught Jack how to play him better than he did. They were at loggerheads in a moment.

'Ah, Garnichon, you have got them!—Now, then, who are you? Where do you come from? Where are you going, and on what business?' asked M. le Maire brusquely.

'What is the meaning of this?' asked Jack weightily. 'Your subordinate refuses even to look at the authority of the Minister of Police. I shall notify them in Paris to that effect, and he must suffer the consequences. With you, M. le Maire, it will be different. See, then, for yourself!' And he laid M. Fouché's agent's credential before him.

M. le Maire gazed at it portentously, while Garnichon looked over his shoulder with visible discomfort.

Jack got the impression that neither of them could make head or tail of it. 'You see,' said he, 'there is M. Fouché's own signature. It calls upon you and all others to aid me in my going by every means in your power.'

'Then why do you travel afoot? A document like that should travel with post-horses.'

'That is my affair. I do my chief's business in the way that seems best to me. I am accountable to him only.'

'And this other?' staring hard at Jean-Marie.

'He is my assistant.'

'Ah, your assistant is he? Well, I ask again, where you are going?'

'We have business in the department. That is enough. If you hinder it you must take the consequences.'

If he had only played up to the man's vanity—dropped him confidential hints of a mythical royalist plot and threatened landing up north, required his assistance, and promised him recognition at headquarters—things might have gone differently with them. As it was, he confronted M. le Maire with a brick wall, and M. le Maire's constitutional treatment of obstacles was to get over them or through them.

'You may be all right,' he said stolidly, 'or you may be all wrong. They can't blame a man for overcaution in these days. I'll think you over;' and he picked up the Minister's authority and was about to put it in his pocket, probably for the purpose of consultation with some one more versed in such matters than himself.

'But this is an outrage!' cried Jack. 'And in any case that is mine, and I decline to part with it;' and he made a hasty snatch at the document, which fell between them.

Jean-Marie stooped to pick it up. Garnichon stooped to anticipate her, and they came into collision. The gendarme's great cocked hat raked her stocking-cap off her head, and her mane of brown hair rolled down her back before the astonished eyes of M. le Maire, and of Garnichon when he straightened up with the paper in his hand.

'Oh, ho!' said M. le Maire, 'that's how it is, is it? This will want some looking into.—Garnichon, you will take them to the jail. No,' with another look at Jean-Marie's red and discomfited, but, in its sudden unveiling, very lovely face; 'take them upstairs to those two rooms where we kept the Chouans yon time. One in each room, you understand! They'll be safe enough there till I've had time to think them over.'

'*Bien*, M. le Maire!—Come along, you two.'

For one moment Jack was possessed of the wild idea of leaping on Garnichon and overpowering him and M. le Maire, and making for the open. But the idea passed as quickly as it came. These were both big men, and Garnichon carried sword and musket, and it would have been impossible to carry Mavie away from under their noses.

'Very well! You will have to answer for all this,' he said, and turned and followed the gendarme.

The garrets into which they were locked by the exultant Garnichon—whose discomfort had vanished completely at sight of Jean-Marie's most unofficial-looking hair—were in the slope of the roof, and Jack's first quick glance round showed him that escape would be no easy matter. The windows up in the roof were no more than slits, and at that had been cross-barred for the safe keeping of the Chouans. Both rooms were bare save for some bundles of musty straw.

'In you go,' said Garnichon, 'till we have time to make up our minds about you. If you're good you shall have something to eat later on. If you try to get out I shall shoot you. *Ma foi*, yes! See that?' pointing to a splintered hole in the door of Jack's room. 'The bullet that made that had gone through a Chouan's head before it made that hole. He tried to jump out when I brought him his water, and that, *ma foi!* was the last water he ever needed. Oh yes, I tell you, I don't have to fire twice at a man.' And he bolted them in and went chuckling down the narrow stair.

Jack examined the door carefully. It was stoutly built, fastened on the outside, and offered little hope. He wondered how Mavie was taking matters. He thumped on the dividing wall; but it was built of rough, irregular stones like the outside walls, and no response came to all his knockings. He pictured her overcome with distress, and would have given much to be able to cheer her. And truly it was disheartening to tumble of a sudden into such a hole after such fair and prosperous journeying.

But he was not going to be checkmated by a provincial *maire* and his solitary gendarme after lifting Mavie out of the clutches of Bonaparte and Fouché. So he sat down on one of his bundles of straw and set his matter-of-fact wits to the cogitation of desperate deeds.

(*To be continued.*)

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# THE LION AND THE TIGER.

By Captain J. H. Baldwin.

PERHAPS more has been written in the past on the life and habits of the African lion and Asiatic tiger than of any other quadrupeds; but we know that one of the chief attractions to the study of natural history, if not the greatest inducement of all to the young student to take up this charming subject, is that it is never-ending, that there is always something further to be learnt even in the life of some little bird or the commonest of wild creatures, if we will only give them our attention and observe their every little way.

But to return to our subject. We have recently been reading yet another fascinating book by one of our greatest sportsmen and best authorities on large game, the well-known author, Mr F. C. Selous, entitled *African Nature Notes and Reminiscences*. In addition to relating many highly interesting hunting experiences, our author gives us the history and chief characteristics of the most important wild animals inhabiting Southern Africa. Naturally his remarks on the lion attract our chief attention, and among Mr Selous's observations on this grand creature we find much that is entirely new to us, and therefore all the more entertaining. While perusing these delightful pages we have here and there come upon passages giving details of certain traits of character in the life of the lion which, though exceptional, appear to differ from the habits of the tiger, and we will now venture to point out a few of these instances which we hope will interest our readers.

First and foremost, we would allude to the roar of the lion. All experienced travellers and sportsmen who have passed through or hunted parts of Africa inhabited by lions tell us of the roaring of these animals; that on a still night the sound can be heard miles away across the veldt; that when close at hand the very air appears to vibrate with the splendid voice from the king of the wilderness.

Tigers never roar in this manner; in fact, so far as I am aware, it is exceptional for the tiger to roar at all. When cornered by a line of elephants, or stung to fury by an ill-aimed bullet when driven forward by beater-men, he sometimes comes charging out, bent on taking revenge. He utters a roar of rage, followed by a succession of murderous coughing growls evidently intended to intimidate his adversaries. But this short roar of fury is altogether different in character from the deep-toned, nerve-

shaking voice of the lion. Although the tiger never utters the prolonged, resounding roars of the lion, yet, as is only natural, the animal makes use of certain calls and cries when roaming abroad during the night-time. One of the most common that I am acquainted with is made by the creature when going his rounds after sundown, and has been aptly termed the 'night moan' of the tiger. I have repeatedly heard this deep-toned 'plaint' when out in camp near to the foot or among the lower ranges of the Himalayas. It is always difficult to describe in words the cries and calls of beasts and birds; but this particular sound made by the tiger when on the prowl after dark cannot be well termed a 'call,' much less a 'cry,' and has no resemblance whatever to a roar, but is more like the grumble of a discontented wild beast. It consists of a single long-drawn note, beginning in a low key, gradually increasing in volume, and abruptly terminating in a deep grunt, sounding somewhat like distant thunder. This weird moan, sometimes almost a sigh, is, I believe—though I may be wrong—the voice of a male tiger in search of his mate. I have been told that when he utters this grunting whine the animal holds his head close to the ground. Whether this be so or not I am unable to say, but certainly at times the sound seemed to rise from the earth.

One thing I feel sure of, and that is, the creature is always on the move when uttering this night-moan, and following probably some path or track through the forest or jungle, never in the open, and it is invariably uttered at well-measured intervals. I have frequently stood in the open and listened attentively when a tiger has been on the move and making this sound. Now the muttered grunt would appear to be 'over the hills and far away,' then suddenly deep-mouthed and near at hand, when no doubt the animal crossed high ground; again more remote and subdued as the creature descended into a ravine, till gradually the voice of the night disturber died away and was lost in the distance.

On the very first grumbling note of the tiger, the jungle, just before still, became alive again with alarm-notes from the inhabitants of the forest, uttering warning cries to one another to beware of their common enemy. The deep bark of the sambur resounds from the opposite hill, the shorter, more startling *ow* cry of the beautiful spotted deer from the riverside below, the long-drawn cry of the little muntjak from the crags above. In the camp circle the same uneasiness prevails; every creature recognises and knows well from that dread sound that some 'uncanny' beast is on the move. The sleepy-eyed bullocks, just before peacefully picking over their fodder, cease feeding and glance uneasily around; the horses picketed in the open prick up their ears and become restless; while every dog in the tents rushes madly out into the open with bristling hair and barking furiously. When I asked some villager of the locality, 'Why does your tiger make that noise?' almost invariably he would reply, '*Bhooka mara*' (meaning 'He is hungry,' or, to be exact, 'He is stricken with hunger'); but this explanation appears to be unsatisfactory. Depend upon it, a wild beast when in search of prey never utters a sound of any kind. The deer of the forest, as also wild hog, are furnished by nature with an acute sense of hearing, and are ever on the watch against stealthy enemies with noiseless footfall. How, then, could the lion or the tiger hope to be successful if he made known his whereabouts or approach by roaring or making a continual moan or sound of any kind?

All African sportsmen of experience tell us that lions roar their loudest *after having satisfied their hunger*, often on their way to drink after having gorged themselves with flesh. More than this, they affirm that in a lion-country the creatures are *silent* when they are most to be feared, and an attack on the cattle-kraal is then probable. Perhaps the popular misconception has arisen from the wording of that well-known verse in the Psalms, 'The young lions roar after their prey, and do seek their meat from God' (Ps. civ. 21); but this passage does not necessarily mean that the lions roar with the view of *getting* their prey. The literal meaning is 'for prey and for seeking meat from God.' King David (if he was the author of this psalm, which is not called 'a Psalm of David') was well acquainted with the lion, for we read that when he was a mere shepherd-lad, in charge of his father's sheep, a lion seized one of the flock and 'arose against him,' but that David seized the wild beast by the beard—no doubt the mane—and slew him.

But we have wandered from our subject. Tigers, so far as I am aware, seldom, if ever, under cover of night make an attack on bullocks or other beasts of burden collected together in an encampment, and in this respect differ from the lion. Leopards, on the other hand, constantly prowl around after dusk, and carry off goats, sheep, and more especially wandering dogs. Once, in the hot-weather months of 1872, I was out with a friend, the police-officer of the district, encamped on a wild spot called Bala Behut, in the Lullutpore country. Our tents were pitched within the precincts of a forest inhabited in those days by wild animals of all kinds. My companion had brought a native writer with him, who on the line of march bestrode a stout white pony. For some reason of his own, this baboo one night foolishly tethered his steed outside the camp circle and under a large burgot-tree. We had retired to rest, and as usual a police sentry kept guard with a tulwar or sword in his hand. I may mention that at the time I speak of there were yet several outlaws wandering about in small bands, who ever since the Indian Mutiny had escaped from the vigilance of the authorities. Just before daylight an animal suddenly sprang upon the white pony and dragged him down on to his knees. The pony struggled desperately and set up a loud squeal; a wild commotion arose. Our sentry immediately ran forward to the rescue,

when the assailant quitted his hold on the pony and slunk off. By the time we had turned out with our rifles the pony had broken away from his heel-ropes, and stood, trembling and bleeding profusely from a wound in the throat, among our horses. The police sentry and two camp-followers, who had obtained a good view of the marauder, declared it to have been a tiger; but from the character of the wounds, and the fact of the pony's having been able to make his escape with comparatively slight injuries, we arrived at the conclusion that the assailant was only a panther or leopard.

Lions, we are informed, travel about or keep together in larger numbers than tigers ever do. Upwards of twenty lions, large and small, have been come across in one body—a truly formidable party; but tigers have never been known to keep together in anything approaching such numbers. In former times, during the hot-weather months, we not infrequently saw three tigers at one time; but four was exceptional, and only twice in recent years have I heard of five in one party.

Before quitting our subject we feel bound to allude to an exceptional characteristic, and that a failing applying to both lion and tiger, and, what is remarkable, to these two giant cats *only*, among the many included in the fauna *Felidæ*. We naturally would expect perfection in every attribute connected with power and strength in two such champions of the type and the order *Carnivora* as these two great creatures undoubtedly are, and yet we know that neither the one nor the other is gifted with the power of clambering up a tree. The tiger, at any rate, is altogether wanting in this respect. He will make prodigious springs, he will sometimes raise himself on to his hind-legs against the stem of a tree when goaded to fury, and endeavour with his forepaws to reach an enemy seated above, but he cannot *climb* a single foot upwards with all four feet off the ground after the manner of the ordinary cat; and from what I have read I believe that exactly the same remark applies to the lion. And why is this so? I venture to say that the one and only explanation applies to both animals. If we scan them carefully at our Zoological Gardens, and compare their build and general formation with that of the jaguar or the leopard close by—both expert climbers—we see at once that nature has formed both lion and tiger of a somewhat different build from that of their lesser brethren. Their great strength, given by nature no doubt to enable them to destroy the life of large and powerful prey, lies in the *forepart* of the body. The brawny neck, the broad, powerful shoulders, the deep chest, and above all the terrible, great muscular forearms, are all there and in every way symmetrical; but the hinder-parts show a falling away, the loins are somewhat narrow, and the hind-quarters are far less powerful in build, drooping almost in the lion. A full-grown male tiger, lusty and fat from feeding on cattle, will probably reach a weight of four hundred or four hundred and fifty pounds, and it is hardly surprising, after all, that this great and enormously heavy creature should lack the power of ascending trees. Nevertheless I have often felt surprised that some lithe, active tigress, when wounded and rendered dangerous, has not attempted to reach her enemy seated close above. We always endeavoured before a beat commenced to post the guns on a platform or bough of a tree fully fifteen feet from the ground, which is generally considered to be a perfectly safe distance from a wounded tiger, provided always that great care is taken in selecting a tree with no rocks or high ground anywhere near to the tree-trunk. A sad accident happened many years ago to an officer stationed at Seepree, in Central India, through neglecting this precaution. He was posted in a tree fully sixteen feet from the ground, but unfortunately this particular tree grew too near to the rocky side of the nullah. A tiger came forward, was fired at, and wounded. The enraged animal instantly glided forward, and in a second reached some high ground almost on a level with Captain C., sprang at him, seized him by the arm, and tore him down from the tree, mauling him very severely, and then passed swiftly on. The unfortunate officer was immediately carried into Seepree, but died soon afterwards from the effects of the terrible injuries he had received.

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# LOVE AND A GARDEN.

By H. A. Hinkson.

CAPTAIN JIM LESLIE now believes that he was divinely inspired when he offered to motor Major Chillinghurst down to Maybury, in Hertfordshire, to look at a house which the Major and his sister thought of taking for the summer.

The offer had been made almost involuntarily at the club when Major Chillinghurst said that he was going to look at a little place in Hertfordshire, with the drawback that it was three miles from a station—at least, so the house-agents had told him.

'Then you can safely call it five,' suggested Colonel Rivers, who suffered from gout and an inadequate income, and who consequently took a pessimistic view of things for himself as well as for his friends.

As a counterblast to this pessimism, Leslie had burst out with his offer to motor Chillinghurst to Maybury. He was a little sorry afterwards, because he did not like Chillinghurst any more than Rivers

or any other man in the regiment did. But he was impulsively good-natured; and, besides, he had a new car.

'I know Maybury,' continued Rivers, interrupting Chillinghurst's expression of thanks. 'After you pass Watford there are two of the most infernal hills in the country. Lord Montford and I stuck on the first of them; and if it hadn't been for the postman and half-a-dozen out-of-works, who pulled the beastly thing up with their belts, we'd never have got on the level again.'

'My car will go up any hill like a bird,' rejoined Leslie with proud confidence.

'I'll take the risk, anyway,' returned Chillinghurst, 'and if you find me a Jonah you can throw me overboard.'

Chillinghurst was staying at the club, so it was arranged that Leslie should pick him up there at eleven o'clock on the following morning.

'Leslie will never learn sense,' remarked Colonel Rivers when the two were gone; 'he's always letting himself in for disagreeable things through his impulsive good-nature. It was only last year that I had great difficulty in preventing him marrying the little widow Duncan because some fellow had jilted her, or at least she had told him so. And now he saddles himself with the greatest bore in London. The only chance for his future is to marry a sensible woman; but the odds are that he'll marry the first female in distress—real or sham.'

'Most likely sham,' retorted Captain Jackson with a laugh. 'Real distress is generally most carefully hidden; but a few hours of Chillinghurst's society ought to prove an antidote to romance in any shape.'

'Not a shape in petticoats,' grunted Rivers, turning to his paper.

The village of Maybury lies about two miles from the main north-western road. It stands high on a plateau, and is surrounded by fields pleasantly diversified with arable and pasture. The villagers are primitive, unemotional, and unadventurous. Dotted on the landscape round about are some dozen houses varying in size and pretentiousness, according to the wealth and ambition of their occupants, mostly retired City men, who still breathe an atmosphere of Threadneedle Street, their horses and dogs notwithstanding.

One of the least pretentious of these houses was the object of Major Chillinghurst's quest. It was what house-agents call a cottage-residence, as distinguished from a house or a cottage, being midway between the two. The owner, a woman who prided herself on her knowledge and taste, had had it constructed in imitation of the old cottages, with sloping tiled roofs and rough-cast, with the result that a suburban villa looked out on a meagre drive, and two matchwood gates with a holly-tree on each side, which gave a reason for the name that distinguished it from its more ambitious neighbours. The Hollies was at all events inoffensive and challenged no criticism.

Thither some two years ago had come, in search of health, Mrs Dillon and her daughter Peggy. Since her husband's death, three years before, Mrs Dillon had been ailing, having in truth lost the mainstay of her existence. It had been hoped that the bracing air of Maybury would restore her impaired vitality, and for a time it seemed as if that and the interest in trying to make a garden out of a wilderness were distracting her mind from the grief which had so long possessed it.

Already creepers were beginning to cover the staring nakedness of the house, flowers to take the place of the weeds, and an atmosphere of refinement to pervade the suburban villa—suburban in spite of the corn-fields and pasture-lands which surrounded it.

Within, the air of suburbia was completely banished, for the house was full of beautiful things—old china and silver, pictures and books, and the odds and ends which suggest culture and refinement.

But two bad, sunless summers and a desolate winter brought back Mrs Dillon's dejection; and, notwithstanding her daughter's care and almost heroic cheerfulness, she began to pine again. The place was lonely, for although the neighbours were kind enough, there was nothing in common between them and the cultured, refined, and disheartened woman who had been used to a different environment.

'You must go back to your own kind, and lose no time about it,' declared the specialist whom Mrs Dillon consulted.

That was the excuse which Mrs Dillon wanted. She was not, consciously at least, a selfish woman; but ill-health and dejection had inevitably accustomed her to think of herself first. There still remained two years of their lease of The Hollies to run. They must find a tenant for that period.

The blow was a bitter one to Peggy, for she loved the country and the wilderness which was fast taking on the appearance of a cultivated, if not of a 'matured,' garden. Even the suburban villa was beginning to hold delightful secrets for her.

With a cheerful face, however, she wrote to innumerable house-agents and concocted attractive advertisements of the place. In due course visitors came to see the house, strode through the rooms in silence, as is the way of those seeking houses, asked if there were certain things included which obviously did not exist, made a few disparaging remarks at the end of their inspection, departed, and were heard of no more.

Neither Mrs Dillon nor her daughter had had any previous experience of letting furnished; so they both quickly changed from optimism to something very like despair, although Peggy still kept a brave face.

'It must suit some one, little mother, only he hasn't come yet,' she said; 'and we can reduce the rent still further.'

'If it wasn't for the furniture I'd make them a

present of it; but, as your father used to say, people who won't pay won't spare,' Mrs Dillon returned querulously. 'We'll let them have it for what we pay ourselves, or else put in a caretaker.'

'Why not go away, mother, and leave the showing to me?' suggested Peggy without any anticipation of how eagerly the proposal would be accepted.

It was in the afternoon of the day upon which her mother had departed to stay with some cousins in London that Peggy received a letter from Miss Chillinghurst.

'There is only me and my brother,' she wrote, 'and we think your house would suit us. We should be very careful tenants, and should not require all the rooms. Unless inconvenient to you, my brother, Major Chillinghurst, will call to see the house on Thursday next.'

As Peggy Dillon had had no experience of house-letting, the words 'very careful tenants' occasioned no foreboding. Her heart rose again. What a triumph if she should succeed in letting the house immediately after her mother's departure! Then she might reasonably claim to be a woman of affairs, and not merely an amateur and losing gardener.

In high good-humour, and quickly throwing off the depression which had fallen upon her at the sight of her mother's disappearing trunks, the number of which augured ill for her return, she ran to the kitchen.

'Martha,' she cried to the cook, who with her husband ran the simple establishment, 'a gentleman is coming to see the house.'

'Yes, miss,' replied the cook without enthusiasm. People who come to see furnished houses to let generally forget the servants, which accounts for Mrs Moggridge's apathetic reception of the news.

A little past twelve o'clock Peggy heard a motor-car panting outside the gate. Peeping from behind the curtains, she saw a gentleman alight, and after a few words to his companion, who, she noted, was not a chauffeur, strode up the avenue.

Her first impression of her visitor from whom she expected or rather hoped for so much was disappointing. Like most women, and especially young women, she was conscious of the glamour which surrounds the name of soldier. And Peggy Dillon felt it all the more because during her childhood and early youth she had been used to men of thought rather than of action, scholars and poets and writers, who scorned the adventitious aids of dress, and to whom gaily coloured uniforms and flashing accoutrements were symbols of a civilisation which had not yet passed the stage of childhood.

She saw at once that Major Chillinghurst was small, thin, and sallow, and a cloud instantly fell upon her optimism. The sound of his voice completed her disillusionment.

'My sister has been in communication with you, I believe, about letting your house furnished,' said the voice, and the eye which looked at her through the monocle was cold.

'Yes,' answered Peggy; 'and I hope, now that you have come so far to see it, that you will not be disappointed. This is the drawing-room.'

'It is not very large,' said Major Chillinghurst.

'No,' assented Peggy; 'but, you see, it is a small house.' He might, she thought, have admired the Sheraton furniture which had been her father's pride.

From the drawing-room she led him to the dining-room, the library full of books and old engravings, the kitchen newly burnished for his inspection. When he had reviewed them in silence, she led him, after a moment's hesitation, and with heightened colour, upstairs, and threw open the bedrooms one after the other for him.

'They are very small,' remarked Major Chillinghurst, removing and replacing his monocle.

'Miss Chillinghurst said you were a small family,' rejoined Peggy, 'and so you can have two bedrooms apiece if you like.'

'That would not be the same thing,' he retorted. 'And is that the vegetable-garden? It seems very new.'

'It's only three years old; but things grow very well in it, perhaps because it's new.'

'An unusual experience with regard to gardens, I should say; but this may be an exception.'

Peggy's face flushed.

'I only tell you what I know to be true,' she said indignantly, as they descended to the hall. 'Would you like to see the stables? They are new too.'

'No, thanks. I don't think so. I mustn't keep my friend too long waiting. What a very narrow drive!'

'Yes,' agreed Peggy, walking with him to the gate; 'but it was worse before we had it widened. Now you can drive a pair along it—that is, of course, if you are a good driver.'

Major Chillinghurst did not say whether he was a good or bad driver. He took some papers from his pocket as they reached the gate, and consulted them.

'I think you said the rent was three guineas a week,' he remarked.

'Three and a half,' corrected Peggy.

'H'm! Is the gardener's wages included?'

'No; we pay him a pound a week.'

'Thank you. I will tell my sister.'

Peggy felt a sense of despair. Her fish had merely nibbled at the bait. She had not hooked him at all.

'The house isn't really dear,' she broke out. 'We pay as much for it ourselves, and we don't expect to make money out of it. Besides, we have spent two hundred pounds on the garden alone. Don't you really think it would suit you, because we might'—— She broke off in some confusion, being for the first time conscious of two very blue eyes looking at her with more than usual sympathy from a good-looking, sunburnt face. She hardly realised what Major Chillinghurst had replied, when

two caps were lifted and the motor puffed away down the hill.

'What a lovely girl!' exclaimed Leslie. 'Are you going to take the house?'

'I don't know. I don't think so.'

'What's the rent of it?'

Chillinghurst told him, adding that it was dear enough at the price, since you couldn't swing a cat safely in any of the bedrooms.

'Why, man, you can't expect Buckingham Palace for the rent of a labourer's cottage!' Leslie broke out indignantly.

'Perhaps not; but business is business, and they'll always drop their terms if you wait. My money is not so easily got as yours.'

Leslie, remembering the pretty, pleading face, did not trust himself to reply. For a moment he had some thought of upsetting the car in the hope of killing Chillinghurst; but the car was new, and he loved it—which was fortunate for the development of this story. He inwardly resolved, however, that this was the last journey he would ever take in Chillinghurst's company.

When the motor-car disappeared Peggy turned back to the house with a lonely and dispirited feeling. There was no use trying to let The Hollies, and she must write and tell her mother so. At the moment she hated Major Chillinghurst as much as Leslie did. Even if one did want to let a house one might be treated with ordinary civility. If only it had been his friend of the blue eyes, who looked so sympathetic, perhaps—— And Peggy was girlish enough to blush violently at the thought, although there was no one to see her confusion.

Anyway, she would wait until she had grown used to her disappointment to advise her mother of her ill-success. She would write to-morrow in time for the post.

In the afternoon she was somewhat diverted by a visit from a friendly neighbour who had a flat in town as well as a house at Maybury, and was regarded as an authority on letting furnished houses.

'My dear child,' she said, 'you must advertise.'

'But we have advertised,' replied Peggy.

'And what did you say?' inquired Mrs Bloxam in such a tone that Peggy knew they had done wrong whatever they had done.

'We said it was a well-furnished house,' she began.

'House!' exclaimed Mrs Bloxam.

'Well, isn't it a house?' ejaculated Peggy.

'Indeed it isn't.'

'Well, I'll call it a cottage next time.'

'That's just as bad, my dear,' cried Mrs Bloxam. 'You'll never let it if you go on like this.'

'Well, if it isn't a house, and it isn't a cottage, what is it?'

Mrs Bloxam laid a heavy white hand on the girl's knee and said impressively, 'It's neither a house nor a cottage, but—a cottage-residence.'

This somewhat mysterious distinction gave Peggy a new hopefulness. Perhaps, after all, they had failed to let The Hollies because they had called it a house and not a cottage-residence. In the latter name might lurk some mystic attraction to house-seekers.

She certainly felt happier when Mrs Bloxam had left after drawing up an advertisement of the correctly seductive nature. Without delay Peggy copied it out and sent it to the *Morning Post*. Then she composed herself to wait results, a little shaken, it is true, by the pessimism of Martha the cook, who declared that no one would take the house, not even if it was called 'Buckin'am Palace.'

But Martha Moggridge, excellent creature as she was, erred in this particular case, for while Peggy was writing a letter to her mother in the library on the following morning a motor stopped at the gate. The library was at the back of the house, so Peggy was not aware of the arrival until Moggridge came in with a card.

'A gentleman to see the house, miss,' he said.

Peggy took the card eagerly and read the name, Captain Leslie, Military Club, St James's Street. It conveyed little, but she was excited nevertheless. She caught some truant locks of red-gold hair into their place as she went to the drawing-room.

As she opened the door, a tall figure dressed in well-fitting homespuns wheeled round and confronted her. It was ridiculous, of course, and very annoying that she should colour to the roots of her hair because the sympathetic blue eyes of yesterday were again seeking hers; but then Peggy was still very young, and at such an age eyes, whether blue or otherwise, mean more perhaps than at a later period—although that is not quite certain.

'I must apologise for having come without first obtaining your permission,' he said; 'but as I was here yesterday with Major Chillinghurst I thought you wouldn't mind.'

'He is thinking, then, of taking the house?' she exclaimed with an undisguised note of eagerness in her voice.

'Well,' Captain Leslie explained with some embarrassment, being loath to dash her evident hope, 'I suppose he is thinking of it—he takes a long time to think of things; but I came—ah—on my own account. I was delighted with the look of the place, and I thought perhaps you would let me see it, as it might suit me.'

'Oh,' said Peggy, 'I hope it will!'

'I have very little doubt of it myself,' Jim Leslie returned cheerfully, 'except that it's too good for a beggar like me. What lovely furniture! I should be almost afraid to sit on those beautiful chairs.'

'Oh, they're stronger than they look,' Peggy answered, laughing with pleasure at his praise.

She led him to the library and to the dining-room, and he professed himself delighted with everything he saw. So eager was Peggy to land her fish that she did not notice that he hardly took

his eyes off her face all the time. Even the new, raw-looking garden, with its half-grown, stunted-looking shrubs, might have been a paradise. Major Chillinghurst had spoken of it contemptuously as a garden in a field, but Captain Leslie evidently found it the only possible kind of garden.

'I hate a walled-in garden!' he exclaimed. 'Now this is a sensible one, open to the sun and air. How fine your daffodils are, and the wallflowers! In my old home we let them grow into bushes, and they are never without a flower all the year round. You must do the same here, Miss Dillon.'

'I'm afraid that will not rest with me, as we shall not stay after our lease expires in two years,' Peggy made answer with a half-sigh for the hopes which she had buried since the wallflowers had been planted.

'What a pity!' said Jim Leslie. 'But I hope they will be left, anyway, whoever comes after you. When could I have possession?'

'As soon as you like,' answered Peggy. 'My mother is in London, and I want to join her as soon as possible.'

'Ah!' replied Leslie; 'but I hope you will be able to stay a little while until I get things fixed up. You see, I am really taking the house for my aunt, who is abroad now, and I'm not certain when she will be back.'

'But would it not be unwise to take a house when you are uncertain?' suggested Peggy.

'No; on the contrary. When she knows that I have taken a house she is certain to come back. If you could stay on for the present I should be very much obliged.'

So Peggy consented, and after apologising for taking up so much of her time, Captain Leslie departed. It seemed like a dream to Peggy that she had let the house so easily after all. When she awoke in the morning she knew that it was no dream, but reality; for she received the agreement for a six months' tenancy from Captain Leslie's lawyers, together with a cheque for the rent.

Peggy's first feeling was one of exultation; but as she contemplated the cheque she felt curiously dissatisfied. It was, of course, business, but she didn't like it. Reason whispered, would she have felt the same towards Major Chillinghurst's cheque? And she was fain to confess that she would not. After all, it was her mother's house, and not hers. She felt a certain sense of relief when the cheque was folded up and despatched with her letter to her mother.

On the following day she received two letters dealing with the tenancy. One was from Miss Chillinghurst offering to take the house at the reduced rental of three guineas per week, having regard to the drawbacks reported by her brother.

Peggy was not malicious, but she did experience a sense of considerable satisfaction in being able to write to Miss Chillinghurst a prompt refusal of her offer. The other letter was from Captain Leslie. He had ordered a number of flowers and shrubs to be sent down, and he craved permission to supervise their planting on the next Saturday.

The flowers and shrubs came, and duly following them came Captain Leslie. Peggy had a taste for gardening, and enjoyed the planting as much as Captain Leslie, more especially as he deferred to her and asked her advice about everything. It did occur to her that he was rather extravagant for a temporary tenant; but of course he knew his own business best. Planting shrubs takes a considerable time, and by one o'clock not half of the work was finished. Leslie seemed to have plenty of time; and, to do him justice, he did not force the pace. From the kitchen the planting was watched with interest and many a nod and a wink between Martha and her husband.

It was getting on for two o'clock when the manservant at last interrupted them by saying that the lunch was served. It was, of course, out of the question that Captain Leslie should seek his lunch at the inn, so he stayed after a conventional protest. 'Whatever Martha gives us will be better than anything you'd get at the village inn,' Peggy explained; 'and perhaps we shall be able to finish before the evening.'

But they did not finish that evening, nor for many evenings, since faster than the flowers went in more followed them, and Captain Leslie insisted on supervising the planting of them all.

'Your aunt must be very fond of flowers!' Peggy exclaimed one day.

'It's the passion of her life,' replied Jim Leslie, bending over his spade.

'When do you think she will come?' she asked.

'Oh, I don't know—that is, when I've got the garden into shape. Are you very anxious to get away?'

'No, not very,' answered truthful Peggy, who had often asked herself what she would do when there was no more planting to be done, and no more Captain Leslie coming nearly every day to supervise it. What weather they had had, with sunshine every day and no rain, which added watering to the labour of planting! But the rain was coming, and Peggy pointed to the clouds creeping over the sun's face, as Captain Leslie proceeded to set his car in motion.

'Well, we can't complain—at least, I can't, for I've had a good time,' he answered. 'Tell me, Miss Peggy, what would you do if some one whom you trusted deceived you?'

'I don't know. I suppose I should never trust him again. What would you do?'

'That would depend on the circumstances,' he answered. 'Good-bye.'

She felt chilled as she turned back to the house. He had said nothing about coming again, although a heap of plants still lay waiting. His last words disquieted her, and yet he had never called her Peggy before. What did it mean?

Two days went by, and still there was no message from him. The gardener sought instructions as to

the planting of the flowers, but she answered him listlessly that they must wait until they heard from Captain Leslie. But a week passed, and no message came from him. The days dragged slowly, and Peggy's eyes were heavy with watching and her ears sick for the sound of a familiar voice.

The atmosphere of the kitchen had become hostile to Captain Leslie; and Martha urged her young mistress to join her mother at Brighton, whither Mrs Dillon had gone, but Peggy refused. She had promised to stay until Captain Leslie's aunt arrived, and she could not break her promise. Day after day, too, the rain fell in torrents, and in secret Peggy wept for the bright, sunny days when the sun shone and her heart was light. Oh, what had happened to her, and why did it matter whether he came or not? But her heart cried out, 'God send him back to me!'

She heard the sound of crunching gravel, and going to the window, looked out. In the blinding rain a figure came striding down the avenue. Her heart leaped and her heaviness fell from her like a cast-off garment. The next moment he was standing before her.

'I thought you would never come again,' she said simply.

'Did you miss me?' he asked her tenderly.

'Yes.'

'Well, I have come back,' he went on, 'and it depends on you whether I come again or not.'

'On me!' she echoed. 'What have I done?'

'Listen! You remember when I asked you what you would do if any one deceived you, and you said you would not trust him again?'

'Yes, I remember,' she said in a whisper.

'Well, I deceived you. I told you that I had an aunt who lived abroad and loved flowers, and all that sort of thing. That wasn't true. I haven't got an aunt in the world; but I wanted to come here and see you and be with you. So I invented the aunt. Then I thought that if you cared for me you would forgive me, so I stayed away until you could find out. I have come back to know if you have forgiven me now that I have made my confession. After all, I can't help not having an aunt any more than I can help loving you. I couldn't think of any other way. What have you got to say to me, darling? Am I to go or stay?'

'It was so lonely without you,' she whispered.

'That is my answer, darling,' he exclaimed, drawing her to his heart. 'Twas for you I planted the flowers all the time.'

When Mrs Dillon returned to preside over her daughter's wedding she could hardly believe that this was the same much-abused garden that she had left in despair and disgust.

'It seems as though some one had waved a magic wand over it!' she exclaimed.

'Ah, madam,' returned the old, white-headed vicar, 'there is only one wand which could effect such a transformation as this, and that is—Cupid's.'

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# AN INDIAN WAR A CENTURY OLD.

By Day Allen Willey.

A WAR which began over a century ago, and is one of the longest, if not the longest, history records, has been in progress, with but few intervals when blood was not shed, in a far corner of the Republic of Mexico. Here a tribe of Indians, once a nation, actually maintained their independence against the soldiers of not only one but two countries, until, reduced to less than a thousand, they have at last been conquered and really eliminated as a tribe by being separated into groups and sent to different parts of Mexico.

The state of Sonora was the scene of this strange war, which continued for so many years, partly because it has been made a stronghold by nature. A thousand miles north-west of the city of Mexico, its surface is creviced with cañons a thousand feet deep. Mountain-ranges so high that snow ever covers their peaks stretch across the region, forming great ramparts; while to reach the towns where human beings have lived one must go by a few trails reaching to the passes in the mountains—trails that the adventurer follows for days through a desert as dry as the Sahara. Here and there, where the *arroyas* (the Indian term for valleys) contained a rivulet of water, the natives had their villages; but none of these could be reached without crossing the hill-barriers or following the occasional paths that wound down the sides of the cañons to 'bottoms' where a little land could be cultivated. Such was the realm of the Yaquis—a realm which they ruled in spite of all the efforts of Mexico, and at times of the United States, to subdue them, and where they defied armies of thousands of soldiers coming from both sides of the Mexican-American border.

The real natives of this corner of America, these Indians have been to Mexico what the Apaches have been to the United States—the most fearless and the most cruel race, yet thrifty and industrious, so that they could live where a white man would die. They are pure-blooded, a strong type of man, with great endurance, first-cousins to the Apache Indians. They have their own language; and like most men who live close to Nature, and whose law of life is might, they are stoics and contemptuous of physical suffering. Here is an illustration. One was bit in the wrist by a rattlesnake while at work in his field. He killed the snake with his *machete*, slit it, and took out its gall-bag. Pouring some water

into a gourd, he squeezed a drop of gall into it, stirred it round, and drank the concoction. He then slashed his wrist to make an active wound, and rubbed the remainder of the gall into a lather with his blood. Thus he saved his life where another would have died from the venom.

Necessity showed the Yaquis the wisdom of irrigation, and instinct pointed the way. Quick to realise the preciousness of the water, they stored it in the dry season, and with their women raised enough crops to keep them in comfort. They might have done so to this day, for after their ancestors had defeated the Spanish invaders they refused to recognise the Republican Government. Though army after army had invaded Sonora, none ever mastered these people; the hunger and thirst of the wilds defeated them. Then a truce prevailed from time to time, until the finding of the gold nuggets by adventurers, who, taking their lives in their hands and stealing into the mountains, brought the story of the mineral riches to the outside world. It became known that gold was abundant in the Sierra Madres that hemmed in the villages of the Yaquis, and the fortune-hunters began to come across the desert, but few returned alive; they were either killed by the Indians or dropped on the trail.

Hearing of the discovery, the Mexican Government tried to win over the Indians by proposing to buy their irrigated lands, offering a large sum for them, with the right to open mines. This treaty was signed about fifteen years ago, but the money claimed by the Yaqui chiefs was never paid. Thus was begun a period of the war which continued year after year, until the last bands of these hill-fighters were made captive. Troops were sent to seize the lands, but were driven back. Then the Indians offered to turn over a part of their home sites to the Government if the soldiers were recalled. This was done, and the fighting ceased; but it was only a lull. Thousands of the Yaquis crossed to the United States and secured work on a railroad which was being built in Arizona; but not because they wanted money for peaceful purposes, for with the American money they bought rifles and ammunition, which were secretly conveyed by mule-trains to Sonora, and hidden in the caves and cañons. In little bands they gradually returned to their villages, organised themselves into raiding-parties, and then made a descent upon the white settlements of miner and farmer amid the foothills of Sonora. Killing and wounding the settlers by the score, the savages drove them out upon the desert, where many perished from thirst and hunger, unable to cross the arid plains. More soldiers were sent against them by the Mexicans, but this time mounted and armed *vaqueros* and cavalry accompanied the expedition. The horsemen succeeded in reaching outlying Indian towns, but the warriors had fled to their strongholds in the Bacatete Mountains, leaving the *pacificos*, as the old men and women were termed. The invaders, enraged at their escape, burned their homes and crops, and hanged many of the *pacificos*, sending the able-bodied women to the Mexican criminal colony in Yucatan. But the food-supply of the troops began to give out, for they could not replenish it in this region, so they were forced to return to civilisation, leaving the Yaquis in control of valleys and hills. When they found the mutilated bodies of their people, the sight so enraged them that they gathered before Luis Bule, their chief, and swore never to take another white prisoner.

What this vengeance meant was shown when the gold deposits tempted the reckless and the daring. Parties of armed Americans went over the Sierra passes, but often to be waylaid. The captors had no mercy, for men and women, even helpless children, were shot and their scalps torn off in the old-time Indian manner. The attention of the American Government was called to the trouble in 1905, when four Americans and one Mexican were ambushed and killed four miles east of Cobachi, in the state of Sonora. The Mexican, whose name is unknown, was the driver of the baggage-train. The Americans had been prospecting for gold, and travelled in two wagons. They had just emerged from the hills and were entering into the desert country, when suddenly, without the least warning, a volley of shots was poured into them from behind a pile of rocks on the roadside. One of the horses attached to the first wagon fell, and the vehicle was brought to a sudden stop. Two men and the driver were killed almost instantaneously. The Yaquis fired another volley into the second conveyance, and other two men were shot dead. The survivors, Miller and Tolerton, and the Mexican driver of the second wagon, escaped to Cobachi, where a party of ranchers and *vaqueros* was organised. They took the trail in pursuit of the Yaquis, but failed to overtake them, and returned with the dead men. The Yaquis had stripped two of the bodies of clothing, stolen the watches and jewellery, plundered the wagons of all valuables, and then had fled to the mountains. These Yaquis were afterwards captured by a force of Mexican troops, under Governor Isabel, and shot. Following this came the killing of other Americans who had dared to venture into the Yaqui country, the most serious encounter being that which occurred near La Dura, when Teodore Hoff, with his father-in-law, Signor Mesa, his wife, and three daughters, and a guard of six cowboys and thirteen Mexican cavalrymen, were ambushed by two hundred Yaquis. The Mexicans turned to flee, but Hoff and the cowboys charged and were shot down. Hoff was riddled with bullets and hung by his feet to a tree until he bled to death.

The Yaquis were particularly enraged against Mexican officials, and mutilated them whenever opportunity offered. One José Flores, a large land-holder, was captured, the soles of his feet and the palms of his hands were cut off, and he was left. This man, crawling on his knees and the stumps of his hands, reached a ranch on the following

day, only to die a raving maniac. In that sandy country ants swarm, and he was covered with them when found. Another American named Watson, travelling with a mail-coach, was captured and ordered to cut the post-bags. He told them to do their work themselves. The butt-end of a rifle knocked him unconscious, and when he revived he cut open the bags. They took everything he had—money which he was carrying to pay mining-taxes, his pistol, rifle, ammunition, and clothing, leaving him naked. They then held a consultation. This alarmed Watson, who pleaded for his life. They spared him, but drove him nine miles through a country where the temperature was a hundred and ten degrees in the shade. Then they left him, and he finally reached the shack of a friendly Indian, nearly dead from exhaustion.

These were some of the acts that decided the United States and Mexico to co-operate in an expedition into the Yaqui country, the American force of veteran Indian fighters entering from Arizona on the north, and the Mexicans from the southern frontier. They destroyed a number of villages in the foothills and killed and captured several hundreds of the tribesmen, the Mexicans hanging their captives; but again Nature defied the invaders. The Yaquis fled into the wilds of the Bacatete, where it was impossible to pursue them because of the lack of food and water.

The plan which finally resulted in ending this strange warfare was the sending of troops to the few streams which exist in the Yaqui country. On these mountain torrents, and what the ranchman knows as 'water-holes,' the Yaquis depended for their supply of water. In some places it was found possible to build dams across the creeks above the villages and shut off the flow of water. Thus thirst finally forced the Indians to ask for a meeting with the Mexican general. With a heavily armed escort, he met Bule and his assistant chiefs. They agreed to gather all the Yaquis at the head of one of the passes in the mountains, and there to give up their guns and ammunition if they were not to be hanged or shot. The Mexicans agreed to this, but the guards at the water-sources remained until the Indians had assembled and laid their arms in a heap at the spot selected. That pile of rifles marked the end of the war, and since then the menace of Yaqui has no longer threatened the great republic of Latin North America.

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# THE ONLY CHILD.

I HAVE a playmate—
No one has seen her—
Her dress than the grass in the meadows is greener;
And her merry, kind eyes
Are more blue than the skies.
She comes every day,
And we laugh and we play.
Since no one has seen us
They can't come between us,
Or drive her away;
But they say:
'You 're a bad little girl,
And your hair 's out of curl,
And your feet are all wet!
Come now, in you get
To the fire to grow hot;
Next, bed is your lot.
Yes, of course it 's too soon,
For it 's only just noon;
And you sha'n't have much dinner,
You heedless young sinner!
For you know it was wrong
To go out in the rain.
But what can one do
With a bad child like you?
There, you 're crying again!
Hush, then, and I'll sing you a song.'

Then she sings it, while I
Like a pussy-cat lie
Curled up in my bed
With a small tousled head,
And my eyes shut tight,
Till she thinks I am quite
Sound asleep.
Then I soon hear her go,
Tip-a-toe, tip-a-toe,
From the room,
And I 'm left all alone—
So she thinks—when she 's gone.
But no!

For *she* comes instead
Softly up to my bed;
She puts her arms round you,
Crying, 'See now, I 've found you!'
If I shut my eyes nearly
I can see her more clearly.
If I shut them up tight,
Still it 's all right,
For I see just as well.
Then she whispers, 'Don't tell!
The punishment 's done,
And we 'll have, oh, such fun!'

Then the bad time is over,
So dearly I love her;
Though I won't go again
To play in the rain.
But why should I mind,
Since every one 's blind
But me
To my playmate, my darling!
And, 'No one has seen us,
So they can't come between us,'
Say her merry, kind eyes;
'We 'll laugh and be wise,
And play.'

So now I 've a sister!
Once how I missed her!
She comes every day
To laugh and to play
With me,
And her dress is much greener—
I know, for I 've seen her—
Than the leaves on the big apple-tree.

W. J. CAMERON.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

ANY very vast upheaval in affairs is supposed to be a not very good thing for the makers and publishers of books. It is the idea that when the public attention is strongly attracted to some great event of overwhelming interest—such as, we might say, a General Election or the death of a sovereign—the people for a time have no care for anything else in the world, and the nice books that are offered to them are left unopened and their pages uncut until their season of novelty has gone by, and newer books come along to take their place. That has been the idea of the publishers; but it may not be correct, or it may be that the public becomes a little fatigued with the frequent recurrence of the events of immense interest. Anyhow, it is certainly the case that in the present season some enterprising firms have departed from old policy, and fought hard with new volumes through the times of popular excitement in the belief that the readers would be gladder of relief than some others imagined, and they tell us that the results have justified their notions. At the present time more encouragement is probably given to new authors than there ever has been, especially by some of the younger and more enterprising publishing houses, and in most seasons some very good discoveries are made. So far, this present one has not been greatly productive in this respect; but there are two novels of which in the inner circles we have heard more than of others. One is *The Dop Doctor*, which comes forth as the work of a certain Mr Richard Dehan, and undoubtedly it is very powerful work, conveying the impression of a successful future for the writer. The other book is called *The Rajah's People*, and is the work of I. A. R. Wylie. When the name of the author is thus given with bare initials the idea is generally conveyed that it is that of a man-writer; but one has some idea that it is a Miss Wylie who is concerned with the book, which, it may be at once and simply said, is a fine piece of story-telling. The new school of women-writers is stronger, far more artistic, than the old one, and soon it may be against their interests to hide their Christian names and allow the male sex to be inferred, as seems to be the common practice. This new school has no use for the mere maudlin sentiment, in the liberal employment of which the authoress of the past was most happy. In the meantime we observe that more experiments are being made by some publishers in the way of publishing new novels at other prices than six shillings—generally lower prices. Readers will no longer be led to fancy that there is any fine time in store for them when their new fiction will cost them less, and they will not be disappointed in their resignation either, for there is the most abundant proof that not one reader in twenty feels quite happy and contented in settling down in a big chair or under a shady tree to read any novel purporting to be a new one that is not definitely branded as a six-shilling novel. It may be that a tale published at two shillings is really better; it is quite likely that in many cases it is; but that is not the point. Conservatism and custom have to be considered, and the public has been educated to the six-shillings mark, so that it is now perfectly clear, after many experiments, that nothing will disturb its faith.

* * *

Such faith may be fortified by the clear understanding that is given to us as the result of a close inquiry into the whole question of the price of novels by a sub-committee of the Society of Authors, the results of which have not become generally known to the outside world, being to some extent in the nature of a private matter. It is evident from this report that neither authors, publishers, nor booksellers can really afford to sell their new books at less than six shillings a volume, 'subject,' as they say—meaning that the book may be sold at four shillings and sixpence net. The report says: 'There is no evidence from authors or publishers that the lowering of the initial price leads to any


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substantial increase in circulation; while there is evidence that in certain circumstances the opposite has occurred. . . . We strongly advise authors to maintain six shillings as the standard price of issue of new fiction, save in special cases. . . . We suggest that a certain deterioration in the outward aspect of novels, the cheaper paper and the catch-penny cover, often insecurely sewn, is partly responsible for the cry for cheaper books. If the six-shillings novel, quite apart from its merits as a novel, looked better value than for six shillings, and were in fact better "turned out" than it is possible to turn out a two-shillings novel, we are of opinion that it would be distinctly easier to maintain the higher price.' This report is signed by five well-known writers, and the great reading public, being generally so much interested in a glimpse into the interior of things in this respect, may like to know what they may call the official view. It may be added that it appears from this report that Mr Heinemann has made some statement to the sub-committee to the effect that his interesting experiment of making the price of new books vary roughly according to their length was not entirely successful, and the sub-committee says: 'There were circumstances, apart from its novelty, which certainly fought against the plan; but these do not lead us to regard the result as anything but a warning to authors not to lower their price of issue.' There are signs in these times that the people who make their money from writing books of stories are growing more business-like, as they need to do. The other day a new play was produced in town, and it was announced that all the people who took a reserved seat for it would be presented with a copy of the novel on which it was founded, and to which it really belonged. There is something, commercially, in this idea, though for some good reasons one may hope the practice will not become a common one. When a play achieves a success in these days a novel based on it is brought out as soon as possible, generally in paper-backed covers, for a shilling, and it succeeds very well. To some people it is a mystery why it does so. The simple explanation is that the majority of the purchasers are not the old and seasoned theatre-goers to whom one play is very much like another, and most of them unworthy of a second thought; but very occasional patrons of the pit and gallery, who have been attracted to the show on the understanding that it is something sensational, some epoch-making event, something quite out of the ordinary, to be anticipated keenly for many days in advance, possibly seen two or three times, and then thought about and talked about for a long time afterwards. These people like the book because it gives them details that are not contained in the play, and refreshes their memories on many important points. Then they will sit and brood over it, and recall the fine men and women whom they have seen in the flesh as the characters, in just the same contented and resurrectionary way that the cow in the meadow chews her cud.

But, fiction apart, the new literature of the present season has yielded us, as usual, something of the most excellent interest in works of the biographical order. One conceives that the study of the character of Cecil Rhodes, in all its marvellous strength and variety, will increase in fascination as time advances from his death, just as at the present day we find the study of Napoleon to be more absorbing than our predecessors did, and crave constantly for more light to be thrown upon it. Certainly a book just written by Sir Thomas Fuller on the great empire-builder is fairly interesting. We are helped to realise in this little work how the vague impression that is arrived at by those who did not know the man is entirely wrong. Cecil Rhodes was very far from being that thick and cold-natured man, of the phlegmatic temperament, that many fancied him. We are led to see a little better than before of what hot imagination was this great empire-builder, how his great frame was but the envelope of a nervous mind that was all impetuosity and impulse. He was a poet, a veritable poet, an artist, and a dreamer; but he had the advantage of other such, in that, despite his temperament, he was imbued with a boundless self-confidence, so that when he awakened from his dreams he set about conversion to reality with no delay and admitting no hindrance. Certainly he was artist and poet, though it were continents that he coloured and railways that he wrote with. Some twenty years ago he and Sir Thomas Fuller were contemplating the then state of things in South Africa, and Rhodes remarked, 'It is inevitable fate that all this should be changed, and I should like to be the agent of Fate.' After the conference with the Matabele chiefs which brought the war to a close, he remarked as he rode back to camp, 'It is such scenes as this which make life worth living.' When any guest of his at Groote Schur turned his back on the Table Mountain, Rhodes, with all his love and respect for the picturesque, would say reproachfully, 'Look at what you are missing.' But we want no more evidence of the romantic touch that Nature gave to him than his choice of burial-place, away out on the high mountains of the country that he identified himself with.

* * *

The matter of the ever-increasing Napoleonic literature has been mentioned, and the present season has not been without its contributions to it. Although it is quite clear that the reading public does not find any monotony in these new volumes, but rather the reverse, nevertheless there is really a certain monotony of idea. It is always Napoleon the man of men, the great commander, the conqueror, the cold-blooded, unimpassioned schemer, that we are told about, as if there had never been room in his character for the exercise of any simpler human impulses, even those which are reputed as the most natural and powerful. The modern Cæsar is always given to us as the strong man of destiny, thinking

never of aught but arms and wars and gains. Women, indeed! Oh, well, yes, it is admitted there were some women. We have been told of the little affair of the youthful days when he fell in love with Desirée Clary at Marseilles, and then cast her away as he rose towards power, and how she married Bernadotte; and then, to more serious effect, we are given Josephine and Marie Louise in the life-picture, but only just as minor figures, incidents; and the thing that is best remembered about either of them—almost the only one—is the scene of sadness when the Emperor determined that for the sake of the future Josephine must go. But the dalliance, and more than dalliance, of Napoleon with the sex occupied much more of his time than this, and there is a certain satisfaction in contemplating him as the lover. He was a good one—in a way. Anyhow, there has proved to be a book of quite considerable fascination written on the subject of *The Women Napoleon Loved*, and a really excellent one it is that Mr Tighe Hopkins has made and which Mr Eveleigh Nash has published on his behalf. There are many of these women whose tales are told in the book, and they are tales of some fine romance and colour. There could obviously never be anything in the least commonplace in anything with which the great Napoleon was ever concerned. But of all the women that are written about, the story of none interests us so much after all as that of Josephine, which Mr Hopkins has presented with some fullness—in a fullness which is calculated to disturb considerably the view that is frequently held, as the result of the most superficial examination and consideration, that Josephine was little less than an angel, was most cruelly treated, even though reasons of State demanded such treatment, and that, in memory, she is to be greatly pitied. Mr Hopkins, like others who have studied Napoleon rather more fully than is to be done with the aid of a shilling history, knew that Josephine was no better than she ought to have been, and that she really should have been divorced many years earlier. At different times Napoleon said many cold, cynical things about the divine passion. 'Love,' he said, 'is the occupation of the idle man, the distraction of the warrior, the rock of the sovereign.' Then, 'Love is merely a silly infatuation;' and, 'I believe love to be hurtful to society and to the individual happiness of men. I believe, in short, that love does more harm than good.' Again, 'I have something else to think of than love. No man wins triumphs in that way who does not forfeit some palms of glory;' and, 'All the women in the world would not make me lose an hour.'

* * *

Very well; but the young man Bonaparte was either as good a simulator as he was a soldier, or he was at one time very deep down in love with Josephine. Once he said, 'I never was in love, except perhaps with Josephine—*a little*. And when I first knew her I was twenty-seven years old. For Marie Louise I had a sincere affection.' Now an extract from one of the letters that he wrote to Josephine before marriage is as follows: 'I awake filled with you. Your picture and yesterday's intoxicating evening have given my senses no repose. Amazing indeed, sweet and incomparable Josephine, is the effect that you have wrought within my heart. Are you angry, do I see you sad, are you uneasy—my very soul is bruised, and for this poor friend of yours there is no rest. But is there more, when, abandoning myself to that emotion which subdues me utterly, I drink a flame of fire from your lips and from your heart! . . . Meanwhile, *mio dolce amor*, a million kisses; but give me none, for they are a consuming fire in my veins.' A little while later, after marriage, when Napoleon has just started off for Italy, he sits down at Chanceaux to write to her: 'I wrote you at Chatillon, sending you a power of attorney. . . . Each moment sunders us more widely, my beloved; each moment finds me less able to endure the separation from you. You are eternally in my thoughts; my imagination exhausts itself in guessing what you are doing. If I picture you sad, my heart is rent, my grief redoubles. If you are gay among your friends, I reproach you for having so soon forgotten the wretched parting three days agone. . . . May my good genius, which has ever held me safe in the midst of danger, enfold you. Ah! be not gay, be a little melancholy. . . . Write me, dear one, at full length, and take from your devoted and true friend these thousand kisses and another.' Afterwards he tells her that fatigue and her absence are more than he can endure together in Italy, and he implores her to 'get wings and come quickly.' In the meantime Josephine is enjoying herself in Paris, and telling her friends and admirers how very much amused she is with this infatuation of the Corsican general, her husband; how droll he is. She goes to Italy unwillingly. Mr Tighe Hopkins evidently does not like Josephine, and she suffers at his pen; but those who read this book will think that she was not much to be pitied.

* * *

The consort of the new King of England did a wise, and a discerning, and a suitable thing when she chose that she should be known to the people as Queen Mary, little enough as there is in likeness between her and the Queen Mary who in her own right sat alone on the throne of England as monarch. The new Queen Mary had an alternative; she might have been a Queen Victoria. But apart from the good taste and the advantage of leaving that name in its splendid lonely attachment to a single one of the great dead, there is a gain in the taking of Mary for the name, for it is the most beautiful and expressive of all the names of women. We may pay no attention to the nonsense that is sometimes written about what the Christian names of men and women 'signify'—what are the 'natures' of people who have them, and so forth, to a limit of

stupidity. And yet it is surely true that each name, each of the old and well-loved names, suggests to us a type, gives us some imaginary picture of the qualities and the characteristics that should be possessed by the woman who has it. We are inclined to idealise our women in types, and as we have those different types we have the names for them. It will be found that the vague subconscious idea that is formed of the individuality of a woman never seen or heard about and not in the least understood, but whose name only is known, follows the name as it were, and that the idea is approximately the same in the minds of different people. Then, if all of us hold in our minds a personality for a name, it may be that a little influence is reflected back to the holder of the name; and that, subconsciously again, she does a little to live according to the indication of the name; and her nature, trained from the moment when she first knew that name was hers, may be bent towards it. This is not wildly unreasonable, considered just as a gentle tendency, and not as a strong circumstance; and looking at it in this way there may be something in a name—in a woman's name. Surely there is. Now we have these names of women in classes or groups, with a certain type of character awarded to each class, and by mentioning them we may now show more clearly how the contention may be right. We have a class in the first place for great womanly strength and independence, and the leading name in this class—the facts of history may have had something to do with the supremacy, but they have had less than the sharp, hard consonant with which it begins—is undoubtedly Katharine. You may have a loving Kate or a playful Kitty; but Katharine, even if she is Kate or Kitty, is always strong and independent, often enough a little too much so for the liking of some men. There are very few other names that we can think of as being in the same class, but there are Isabel and Julia among them. There is another set of names for women that seem to stand for strength of a different kind, one that is a little inferior in independence, but not less in seriousness, a deep, womanly, and most beautiful seriousness. Those in it are noble women, the helpers and makers of strong men. The mistress-name of the class is Helen, but we must be particular to spell it with the aspirate. Another of the foremost in the group is Elizabeth, and then there are Margaret and Beatrice and Ruth. Anne and Agnes, Evelyn and Therese, come in also. All these names seem, in many minds, to stand for a type of womanhood that is very splendid. We have something softer in another class that embraces Mabel, Enid and Rose, Emily and Sylvia. And then again, dipping a little deeper down into simplicity and gentleness, a more elementary but not less beautiful form of womanhood, we have the group that is led by Alice, with Florence and Dorothy, Maud and Lilian, Nancy, also; while, separated again, there is a little section wherein the names are suggestive of some daintiness, perhaps a little caprice and whimsicality, no great profundity. In it Phyllis and Fanny trip about.

* * *

And where, then, is Mary? She is all alone in a place apart from others, alone in a great glory. She stands, the name stands, for a grand, soulful depth, the utmost charm of woman. It is a name for some strength, but essentially of a pure, woman-like kind. It is the name of virtue, of sacrifice, of sympathy, of devotion, of motherhood, of domesticity, particularly of this domesticity. It is the name of a woman of sovereign charm, one who is the woman in the highest, and only the woman. It is the most beautiful name that has ever been formed from letters, and in those four letters it gives more expression than any other. Do we not all know instinctively that there is a certain sacredness attached to this name? How rarely does the author of books employ it for his characters, and that never save for those that are near to his ideal of the perfection of womanhood! We cannot remember any book with a wicked Mary in it. There would seem to be an incongruity; we should not be satisfied. And when the poets sing their songs to women, they have the sweetest, purest, and most serious—sometimes their saddest—when they sing to a Mary. Of all of them none knew the power of the name, its great meaning, its divine enchantment, so well as Burns. The men of letters have been a little skittish when they have addressed their odes to Phyllis, Fanny, and to Rose, but not like that to Mary. Mary was the mother of Jesus; Mary was sister to Moses and Aaron; there was Mary of Magdala, Mary of Bethany. It is a name that for its full beauty must be uttered properly, with some delicate articulation, with a gentle, precise compression of the lips at beginning, a prolongation of the vowel sound, and then a sharp tipping of the tongue to the palate for the *r*, and a raising of the note to finish. We remember how sweetly Mr Lewis Waller made the name in his *Monsieur Beaucaire*. It is too often spoiled, coarsened in pronunciation; but when it is nicely done we hear it for all its sweetness and its meaning of fine womanhood. It is the queen of names. It is the name for a queen. And for this year and after it will be the most popular of all names. Those who have it now will rejoice in it, and parents who go to a christening will more often than before have but a thought of Mary—Queen M-a-r-y.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER L.—HOW THEY CAME THROUGH FIRE TO THE SEA.

ONE fact stood out clearly through the turmoil of Jack's thoughts. Whatever was to be done must be done quickly. If the *maire* consulted other authorities concerning them their chances of reaching the coast would be small. He had no weapon but a fairly stout pocket-knife. The room contained nothing but musty straw. When tools are scarce commonsense bids one use what one has. He mused on the musty straw. Then, following his train of thought, he got out his knife and began doggedly to pick out the mortar round one of the stones in the wall. It was hard as the stone itself almost, but he picked away, scrap by scrap, till there was a furrow round the stone; and then he picked on, hiding the scraps beneath the straw, until he could get the points of his fingers into the furrow. Two hours' hard work and his knife-blade was worn down, but the stone was loose and ready for his purpose—a sharp-cornered flint capable of various uses.

When the light reddened and began to fail, Garnichon, with ostentatious withdrawing of rusty bolts, whereby to impress upon the prisoners the futility of any ideas of escape, brought in a plate of stewed meat, with a big slice of bread and a jug of water.

'There, *mon beau*, we're not going to starve you, you see. Monsieur le Maire is away to Coutances on your affair, and as soon as he gets back we shall know where we are.'

'You will at all events know when M. Fouché hears how you treat his agents in Normandy.'

'That's as it may be. I do what M. le Maire bids me. I'll bring you some sweeter straw if you like;' and he bolted the door and came back with a bundle for each room.

Jack was half-tempted to try a tussle with him while the *maire* was away, but escape through the village while there was still any light would be impossible, so he bided his time. Through his strip of bottle-glass in the roof he could see that the day still lingered. In his impatience to be up and doing, before the *maire* returned if possible, it seemed as though the friendly night would never come.

Lying flat on the floor, with his ear to the crack of the door, he listened intently to what went on below. He caught distant evidence of the *maire's* return. So concentrated was his attention that he could catch at times the rumble of his talk. And the results of it all were presently apparent in the heavy footsteps of Garnichon as he came up the stairs and sat himself down on guard with his back against the wall between the two doors, proof sufficient that the verdict of the local wiseacres was unfavourable to release.

Garnichon settled himself to his vigil with purposed clatter of arms as subtle warning to those within. His sword clanked loudly; his musket-butt rang on the floor. He was prepared for contingencies. He hummed a song of the camp-fire. He yawned and shifted his long legs in vain search after comfort. And at last he snored unmistakably.

It was quite dark outside, and Jack's time had come. His plan was as simple as the materials he had to work with. He had flint; he had steel. He shredded musty straw and husk into a little pile of tinder, and flaked sparks into it till it caught, and a bright tongue of flame shot up into the darkness. He fed the hungry tongue with straw till the room was aglow with the glare. He damped some of the straw with water from his jug and produced thick smoke, which set him coughing. He shoved a portion of the burning pile against the door, and was rewarded presently with a startled exclamation from Garnichon, wakened from dreams by the smell of burning. Then he heaped his bedding on to the blaze in the middle of the room and pressed himself flat to the wall alongside the door.

'*Nom-de-nom!*' growled the startled gendarme, 'what's going on inside there?'

He unbolted the door, and clouds of smoke and crackling flames leaped on his astonished and dazzled eyes. Then Jack's flint descended on the back of his head, and he fell with a clatter.

And Jack was at the other door hauling at the bolts with trembling hands.

'Mavie!' he jerked as it opened at last. 'Quick! Come!' Her hand slid into his, and they stumbled down the stair.

But the noise had roused the household. Below them they saw M. le Maire in very unofficial attire, a cotton nightcap on his head and a big horse-pistol in his hand, and behind him his wife asking vociferously what was wrong.

At sight of his prisoners running down the stair M. le Maire raised his pistol threateningly. Jack loosed Mavie's hand and leaped down on him as the report rang out. The two went down with a crash, but Jack was on his feet again in a moment.

'The house is on fire up there,' he cried to madame, 'and your gendarme is burning!'

Then he caught Mavie's hand again and sped on, found the door, unbolted it, and away out into the night, while madame's shrieks behind roused the neighbours.

'Oh Jack!' gasped Mavie as they ran on through the darkness; and he knew what was in her thoughts.

'It's mostly flame and smoke,' he jerked. 'It was the only way out. This way,' he panted

when they came to a branch road, for he had been pondering the very essential matter of direction during the afternoon, and had decided his bearings by the sinking of the sun. They would make straight for the coast now, and trust to Providence to open the way when they reached it.

One glance back, which showed them that the *maire's* house was like to furnish him with ample diversion for some time to come, and then they raced on into the unknown blackness of the cross-road.

And now, for the first time, Jack became aware that the *maire's* wild shot had found its billet in his leg somewhere below the knee. It could not have broken any bone, he was sure, or he could not have walked and run. But it pained him at every step, and from the unpleasant, squashy feeling of the shoe on that foot he judged that the blood was running down into it. His only anxiety was to show no sign of it to Mavie, lest she should insist on stopping, and every moment was of importance. And, besides, he had an idea that if he stopped it would stiffen and perhaps prevent his walking at all.

Mavie was very quiet. This actual living of deeds such as her childish imagination had revelled in was somewhat overwhelming. She was inclined at the moment to think the imagination better than the actuality, and the thought that she was the root-cause of these wild doings lay heavy upon her. Depressing as that was, however, as a set-off against it was the thought that it was for her that John Sax was developing such unexpected qualities of boldness and resource, and she clung to his guiding hand with a feeling of helplessness and security which sent novel thrills up his arm and pricked his heart with little stabs of unutterable delight.

'Where are we going to, Jack?'

'To the coast.'

'Do you know the way?'

'We're going due west. A couple of hours should bring us there—if we can keep up.'

'I could go on all night to get free. It was hideous being locked up all alone in that room.'

'I thumped on the wall, but I suppose it was too thick.'

'I never heard you. You didn't kill that gendarme, did you?'

'I only knocked him down with a stone I picked out of the wall with my knife. It would take a good deal more than that to kill him.'

His leg grew more painful with every step. He bit his lip and plodded on. And at last the wind grew sweet and sharp, and they could smell the salt and new life in it.

In the darkness, the trees they passed all had their backs humped to the flailings of westerly gales. They flitted by like a procession of ghostly hunchbacks carrying burdens up into the land. Then they came upon wide sandy dunes where nothing grew but long wire-grass and rushes, and there were hills and hollows which made a straight course difficult, and the going was heavy in the soft, dry sand. But whenever they topped a height there fell on their ears the distant murmur of the sea as it broke in league-long rollers on the beaten sands of the shore.

'Oh Jack, I must sit down for a minute or two. My legs feel like breaking off at the knees,' panted Mavie at last, and he sank down alongside her in the sand. 'Do you think they'll come after us?' she asked anxiously.

'I hoped the fire would keep them busy for a time.'

'It's dreadful to think of having to do such things!'

'Worse still to have been sent back to Paris, as that pig-headed *maire* would probably have done. We have done no more than we had to do.'

'And where do we go now?'

'Find a boat, if we can, as soon as it's light,' he said through his teeth, for there was a feeling in his leg as of red-hot irons and the gnawing of wild beasts.

There was nothing to be gained by wandering farther in the dark, so they sat there in the hollow till the void above them thinned, and feathery rose-flushed clouds floated up to greet the sun, and the shadows slipped away from the hollows, and a pearly day broke over them like a blessing.

As the tight-strung cords of the night relaxed, Mavie fell asleep with her head against John Sax's shoulder, and he dared hardly breathe for fear of waking her. And at times, in spite of the pain in his leg, he dozed too, and woke with a start and a feeling of default. But Mavie slept on, undisturbed by his guilty starts or by any thought of the past or fears for the future; and when he looked down on the sweet, unconscious face, and the slim, graceful figure, laxed in the trustful unconcern of all-sufficing sleep, his heart burned within him, and the blood raced in his veins and set his wound bleeding again, and he would have given years of his life to have the right to put a protecting arm round her and draw her closer still. Oh, throbbed his heart, could they ever again be to one another only as they had been before? And his homely common-sense asked how it was possible they could ever be anything more. He did not know! he did not know! throbbed his heart, with the thin blood dancing in his head till it felt larger and lighter than usual; he did not know, but it seemed to him that, whatever life might hold for him, the whole of it was not to be compared with the joy of sitting here with Mavie's sleeping head against his arm. If life would but leave them so and pass on to its smaller concerns elsewhere—just leave them sitting in the sand for ever—he would ask no more of it, not one other thing as long as he lived.

'Just this, oh God! just this!' he cried aloud, and did not know that his thought had broken bounds till Mavie woke with a start.

'What is it?' she asked, sitting up suddenly, with

sweet, misty eyes and a sandy hand that flew unconsciously to push her hair back under her cap. 'Are they coming, Jack?'

'Yes, yes, they are coming to part us!' he said, in a voice that was strange to her.

But the fear of their coming overpassed all else—even the strangeness of his manner and the wanness of his face.

'Where?' and she sprang up and began to climb the sand-slope where they had been sitting. It was so dry and soft that it ran down to meet her in a hundred little streams, and buried her to the knees, so that she could scarce get through. And down below he sat nodding his head and babbling, 'Yes, they are coming—coming'——

Scrambling up at last, she looked round anxiously, but found no sign of life, save seaward, where the great blue plain lay glinting in the sun beyond the long, yellow sweep of the sand.

'I don't see any one, Jack,' she cried with relief, and then sprang downhill with a cry at sight of him fallen on his side and lying prone.

'Oh Jack!' and then her quick eye caught sight of his foot, a red mass of congealed blood and sand. And 'Oh Jack!' she cried again, and looked desperately round for succour.

In the hollow below their slope was a shallow pool, the dark centre of a broad patch of damp sand. She ran to it and soaked her stocking-cap and wrung it out over his white face and mopped his brow with it. She ran down again and hastily scooped up some of the water, found it brackish but not salt, and carried some up in her cupped hands and dribbled it into his mouth.

He raised himself on his hands and looked at her.

'Hello!' he said dazedly; 'what's this?'

'Oh Jack! I thought you were dead. Why did you frighten me so?'

'Did I? I'm sorry.'

'Your foot! Oh, and you walked all night and never said a word! And, oh, Jack! is it very bad?'

'Don't think so, or I couldn't have walked. But it bled a good deal;' and he sat looking stupidly at the sandy red lump below, with a vague remembrance of his thoughts concerning her, and a disquieting fear that she might have surprised them. 'I'll clean it up,' he said gruffly, and got slowly on to his feet, but fell again with a groan as the wounded tendons refused to work.

Mavie stood watching him, with clasped hands and pitiful face, and never a thought for the hair that rippled down below her waist.

'That old fool's bullet caught me in the leg,' he growled, 'and it was running down into my shoe all night;' and he crawled slowly down to the pool and proceeded to wash shoe and foot together till he could get them apart. Then, baring his leg, he cautiously examined the wound, and found, to his relief, that the bullet had passed clean through the calf, leaving a painful, but he thought not a dangerous, wound. 'Might have been worse,' he said, as he washed the torn flesh and bound his handkerchief tightly round it. 'It's a good thing we've got to the sea, for I'm afraid I couldn't walk far.'

'You must have suffered horribly all night,' said Mavie pitifully. 'And I never dreamed you were hurt!'

'It was the resting stiffened it. Could you see anything up there—houses—boats?'

'Not a thing but sandhills, and the sea—over there.'

'Let's have a look at the sea;' and he got cautiously on to his feet again and essayed to walk; but his tightened lips and crumpled face showed what it cost him, and Mavie was at his side in a moment.

'Lean on me, Jack. Lean heavily. Is that better?' and with her as crutch he managed to hop along a winding way among the hummocks till the sea lay before them.

'That must be Jersey,' he said, pointing to a long blue film on the horizon, as he sank down on to the sand. 'If we can get there we are safe. Aren't those houses away there along the shore?'

'I think so; but they are a very long way off.'

'We must get there and try for a boat.' Then he caught her suddenly by the arm and dragged her down beside him. Away along the shore, in the opposite direction, three men had issued from the sandhills and stood gazing out over the flats. 'They are after us!'

'Oh Jack!' and her face was filled with terrors.

'We can't run, and we can't fight; but we can hide. Come on!' and they limped back among the hummocks, his wits searching busily for cover. They came upon another of the long, soft sand-slopes, and he saw his way.

'Pull your cap right down over your face, Mavie, and lie down.' And she lay obediently. Then, with a touch or two, he set the sliding sand in motion, and in a couple of minutes she was nothing more than one more small sand-hummock among many.

'Poke a hole to breathe through,' he bent to say to her, 'and don't move till I come. I'll bury myself close by you.'

He satisfied himself that she would not suffocate, and then sought a similar hiding-place in an adjacent slope, and succeeded in inducing the sliding sand to overwhelm him. But it was most irksome work lying there, not daring to move so much as a finger, and nothing but direst necessity could have constrained him to it.

*(To be continued.)*

# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DENIS DUVAL.

By E. Beresford Chancellor.

IN the *Cornhill Magazine* for June 1864 appeared the last number of 'Denis Duval'—the last number, that is, at which Thackeray was working when the hand of death was laid upon him. Six years later *Edwin Drood* ended prematurely in the same way. The two works are among the pathetic fragments of English literature. Attempts have been made to elucidate the future course of both stories; but we hardly heed these *pastiches;* we want—and, alas! shall always want—the *ipsissima verba* of Dickens and Thackeray, and are little concerned with the later fortunes of Edwin and Rosebud, of Agnes and Denis, although we cannot be wholly indifferent to the notes left by both writers, which tell us that that happy ending which all novel-readers who are worth their salt expect and wish for crowned the adventures, 'the hopes and fears, beliefs and disbelievings,' of the protagonists.

In Rochester you may follow the fortunes of Edwin Drood, and may think you see Rosebud's pretty face peeping from one of the latticed windows of the Nun's House, or hear Mr Crisparkle's voice raised in joyous interrogation as to the whereabouts of the 'Flora' of the old song, in Minor Canon Row or beneath the archway where the sinister Jasper had his rooms. As I write I am in Rye, where Denis Duval went to school, and but an easy walk from Winchelsea, where he was born and where those adventures with which the story opens took place—where the Westons lived and Mrs Duval and grandpapa (the perruquier and secret smuggler), and whither the poor, crazy Countess de Saverne and her little Agnes came, and the ill-omened Monsieur de la Motte. So little altered are the main features of these two towns, which differ so greatly in their outward appearance, and which yet can boast a past so similar, like half-sisters unlike each other and yet exhibiting certain features that tell of a common ancestry on one side, that the imagination need not be very largely drawn upon to rehabilitate the outlines of both as Denis Duval knew them, and as they actually were in the year of grace 1763, in which he first saw the light in Winchelsea. The serenity of this picturesque spot is disturbed by little of modern growth; indeed, few towns—for it is actually a town with a great record behind it, although one might take it for but a large village—have been so little desecrated as this; and were it not for the offensively blatant Free Grace Mission Hall, with its painful corrugated-iron roof, and the Wesleyan church (close to the church stands the great tree under which John Wesley preached his last open-air sermon in 1790†), little has been altered since little Denis prattled with such unfortunate results in its streets, or Grandpapa Duval carried on his perruquier's trade, and disguised behind his innocent unguents and pomatums his less reputable calling, and by way of dust threw soap-suds in his customers' eyes. Here is the church dedicated to St Thomas, which Thackeray calls St Philip's, with its ruined transepts and its incomparable Alard tombs, standing proudly in the centre of the great square. It was, you will remember, its nave which Dr Barnard lent to the French Protestants of Winchelsea whilst their own tumble-down old church was being mended; but it was not in its churchyard, of course, that the Countess de Saverne was buried; that last sad rite took place in the old burying-ground 'behind the house in the Priory,' although good Dr Barnard, who had quelled the tumult that arose when it was known that the body of a papist was to be committed to the earth, attended the ceremony, walking between the two Roman Catholic clergymen. As you wander in the church precincts, cannot you, in your mind's eye, see that scene?—'the tramp of the people, the flicker of a torch or two; and then we go in at the gate of the Priory ground into the old graveyard of the monastery, where a grave had been dug, on which the stone tells that Clarissa, widow of Francis Stanislas, Count of Saverne and Barr in Lorraine, lies buried beneath.' You will seek long enough for that stone to-day, or for the graveyard in which it stood and bore its pathetic inscription—pathetic in its very simplicity and baldness; but the ruins of the Priory, the beautiful remains of the choir of the Chapel of the Virgin, with portions of the transept and nave walls, covered with ivy and clematis which cling so closely and help its stone to defy time, may still be seen in the gardens of the house called The Friars—in the garden of the house, that is, where the Westons lived, and where Agnes's early years were passed, and where Denis, climbing once up the wall to get a peep at her, only just avoided a brickbat flying from the enraged hand of Joseph Weston, and escaped with torn breeches and bleeding hands. There is still the old Court Hall, a stone-faced building standing at the north-west angle of the Church Square, and as old as anything in the place—except its memories—where Dr Barnard and his fellow-justices sat and administered the law in a place which, rural and innocent-looking as it was, required a strong and stern administration of justice. For, truth to tell, Winchelsea was a very hotbed of smuggling, and Grandpapa Duval was one of the heads and fronts of the offending. Don't you remember how on one occasion, when the old man had been belabouring Denis for one of his luckless blabbings of the truth, of which he tells us in so artless a way, Dr Barnard happened to pass the shop, and over-

heard the dispute and its accompanying punishment, and how, stepping up to the perruquier, he delivered himself thus: '"Listen, Mr Duval. I know a great deal more than you think about you and your doings. My advice to you is to treat this child well, and to leave off some practices which will get you into trouble as sure as your name is what it is. I know where your pigeons go to, and where they come from"'? Indeed, the old man was one of the chief of those 'mackerels,' as they called themselves, who here, as well as at Hythe and Folkestone, Dover and Deal, Sandwich and Rye, might have been numbered by scores, all intent on turning a dishonest penny by defrauding the revenue of His Majesty King George III. In this respect the old town has now no likeness to its former self; but in all else it is, or so one, helped by its existing landmarks, imagines it, the very Winchelsea in which Denis Duval learnt the barber's business, occasionally took part, in the innocence of his boyhood, in the nefarious trade that held the town in its grip, and through one of the old gates of which —the Strandgate—he set off to Peacock's Grammar School in the neighbouring town of Rye. 'I have the picture in my mind now,' he says. 'I see a winding road leading down to one of the gates of our town; the blue marsh-land; and yonder, across the marsh, Rye towers and gables, a great silver sea stretching beyond;' just as you may see it to-day, in fact. Even the railway which links up these old-world towns with the progressiveness of Hastings or the trim respectability of Eastbourne, shrinks, as it were, from breaking the charm, and puffs and rattles a mile away to the north.

The Strandgate we may suppose to have had mixed joys and sorrows for Denis; it was the way from school, but it was also the way *to* school; but what feelings must he ever have cherished for it after he had been borne through it in Dr Barnard's carriage, on his memorable journey to the Metropolis, when he first heard the sound of Bow Bells, and when—was it on Chiselhurst Common or Lewisham Hill? —the party were stopped by a highwayman (Joseph Weston in disguise, no other!) and young Denis put a charge of shot into the would-be depredator's face! What a journey was that! You may read its exciting record, and think how exciting it must have been to a boy who had hitherto been no farther than Rye, and whose topographical knowledge was confined within a five-mile radius; you may, I say, read the account of this first journey in Denis Duval's own words. If we follow him to the house of his patron, Admiral Sir Peter Denis, in Ormond Street, or to the play to see Garrick act in *Macbeth* 'in a gold-laced blue coat, with scarlet plush waistcoat and breeches,' or to the Tower, or Vauxhall, or Mrs Salmon's Waxworks, or, greatest show of all, to Kew Gardens, where Majesty itself spoke to him and smiled benignly, it will carry us too far from Winchelsea, and now we want only to walk two or three miles, to Rye, where, as I have said, Denis got all the schooling he ever was to have.

Rye! Do you know it? No. Then imagine a great bluff of sandstone towering up sheer from a level expanse which was once the sea, but is now green fields intersected by waterways and ditches and dikes, for all the world as if you were in Holland; and in the distance, two miles away, the long, gray glimpse of sea, with Camber Castle, standing a solitary and weather-beaten landmark, to break the line of vision. Look to the west, and on an adjoining crest of sandstone, so like to Rye in position, yet so alien in its present formation, is the Winchelsea we have left. Behind, the ground rises, and then you slope away to Pleyden or Peasemarch and Beckley. To your east lie Lydd; and Romney, with its unforgettable church; and Fairfield, whose place of worship is surrounded by water, as if it had never quite recovered from the Deluge; and Brookland, the steeple of whose church stands on the ground beside the fabric, as if its builders had just energy enough to finish it, but not quite enough to place it in position.

But it is Rye itself that fascinates more even than the prospects which Rye enjoys—Rye, with its dominating church, which rises, as if set on the top of this pyramid of year-worn, weather-mellowed red roofs. The town once had its three gates no less renowned than those of Winchelsea, although to-day only one remains—the Landgate; but when we look at it we see work executed in the time of Edward III. as sturdy and as massive apparently as when the monarch rode beneath it after he had seen the Spaniards defeated off the coast, and with a brilliant cavalcade galloped away to spend the night at Etchingham.

Young Denis Duval knew all about this, you may be sure, and about the equally famous Ypres Tower, built by William of Ypres, or, as some say, by King Stephen himself, in the twelfth century, and of all the ancient landmarks in the Cinque Ports only yielding in point of age to Dover Castle. One supposes that, good Protestant as he was, he looked askance at the Monastery, of which a mere fragment now remains on Conduit Hill. As he wandered, out of school-time, through the tortuous streets of the town—Mermaid Street, with its Mermaid Tavern (Phœbus, what a name to conjure with!); Watchbell Street, where the watch-bell was rung as a warning of the approach of danger from foreign foes who were continually making descents upon this exposed and devoted colony, and sacking and burning in and out of season—as he wandered thus, did he ever hear tell, one wonders, of the legend which is said to account for the strange name of Turkey Cock Lane belonging to a pathway close to the monastic buildings?—how a certain monk named Cantator (or so called because of his fine voice) fell in love with the beautiful Amanda, the daughter of one living close to the monastery, whence the damsel could be easily seen as she wandered in her father's pleasaunce; how Cantator's voice was raised in songs of love, which wooed and won the lady better perhaps than mere spoken words would have

done; and how they fled together, but were overtaken by bloodhounds, and the monk was condemned to be buried alive, and the maiden died of a broken heart and was interred close by her lover's living grave. If Denis knew of this, he would also have heard how the two met as restless spirits, and how Cantator still sang his burden of love and longing. One can imagine young Denis's eyes to have opened wide at such a recital; but his lips must surely have parted into laughter as he was further informed of how, as a punishment for his sin, Cantator's voice was no longer permitted to resemble a fine tenor or a beautiful alto, but the gobbling of a turkey-cock —a kind of medieval chanticleer, indeed—with which the maiden, or rather her ghost, was obliged to be content.

Well as he must have known the landmarks of Rye, its old houses—Jeake's House in Mermaid Street; the half-timbered thing of beauty in West Street; the Town Hall, built during the first half of the eighteenth century; the house, dating from about the same time, which has sheltered royalty —George I. and George II., driven by stress of weather into Rye, when on their too frequent visits to their Hanoverian dominions—it was the grammar school in the High Street, whither he came to learn 'the three R's,' that he knew best of all. There it stands, as it stood in the days when George III. was king—as it stood, indeed, when Charles I. sat on the throne of England; its fine and mellowed Jacobean brickwork dating from 1638, when Thomas Peacock (Thackeray calls him Pocock) founded and endowed it. One imagines that the learning to be gained in that solemn, old-world building could hardly have been of a very advanced kind; but let Denis Duval tell us himself. He was 'sent,' says he, 'to a famous good school, Pocock's grammar school at Rye, where I learned to speak English like a Briton—born as I am—and not as we did at home, where we used a queer Alsatian jargon of French and German. At Pocock's I got a little smattering of Latin too, and plenty of fighting for the first month or two. . . . Whilst I was at Pocock's I boarded with Mr Rudge, a tradesman who, besides being a grocer at Rye, was in the seafaring way, and part-owner of a fishing-boat; and he took *some very queer fish* in his nets.' They were all in it, indeed —the smuggling business; all 'mackerels,' even the commonplace grocer of Rye, who was, besides, one of the chiefs of the Wesleyans, and turned up his eyes and turned out his toes no doubt as if his own butter would not melt in his mouth. There are no remains to-day of Rudge's shop; but one next the George Hotel, and still, curiously enough, a grocer's, is regarded by those who know Rye as occupying at least the site of the establishment where Denis passed some happy hours in the company of Robinson Crusoe and Monsieur Galland, and some very stormy ones in the sanctimonious presence of Mr Rudge and of his virago of a dram-drinking daughter Susan, and her *preux chevalier*, Edward Bevil. Here it was, you will remember, that this precious family, instigated by Denis's arch-enemy, Joseph Weston, preferred the charge of theft against him, and incontinently haled the innocent boy off to the Town Hall hard by. The little procession, surrounded by a motley crowd of jeering townspeople and wondering grammar-school boys, had but a short way to go. A few steps brought them to the corner of Lion Street, at the top of which stood the Town Hall, with the church tower and its wondrous clock (the oldest *going* clock in England, it is said—it was purchased by the churchwardens in 1560), just behind it to its right.

Few, I think, who pass up and down that steep thoroughfare, and who know the story, will do so without calling to mind the scene, and how, as Denis himself tells us, 'I was made to walk through the streets to the Town Hall, passing on the way by at least a score of our boys, who were enjoying their half-holiday. It was market-day, too, and the town full. It is forty years ago, but I dream about that dreadful day still; and, an old gentleman of sixty, fancy myself walking through Rye market, with Mr Beales' fist clutching my collar.' Beales was the constable, and Rye market was then held on the ground floor beneath the Town Hall, not as now to the north of Cinque Ports Street and close to where the railway runs.

You can go into that Town Hall or Courthouse, and see the place where the justices sat, and where Denis, trembling but volubly indignant, stood before them; you can people that wainscotted room with the ghosts of this little world which Thackeray has made as living as the people who are known to have existed here. Nor shall we have much difficulty in following Dr Barnard and Denis, after the latter's triumphal acquittal, as—— But let Denis tell it: 'He led me away, and we took a walk in the town together; and as we passed old Ypres Tower, which was built by King Stephen, they say, and was a fort in old days, but is used as the town prison now, "Suppose you had been looking from behind those bars now, Denny, and awaiting your trial at assizes? Yours would not have been a pleasant plight," Dr Barnard said.' Old Ypres Tower is so close to the church that we need accompany these two strange companions but a few steps to reach its precincts, and surely we may follow them into the sacred building, and read with them the psalm appointed for that evening service, that psalm which they recited together 'of thanks to the Highest, who had had respect unto the lowly, and who had stretched forth His hand upon the furiousness of my enemies, and whose right hand had saved me.'

As Denis grew, Agnes grew; and although the nearest way for him when going to Rye was obviously by East Street and out at the Strandgate, it became his custom to make a détour by West Street. 'And why?' you ask. Because by so doing

he could see '*a certain window:* a little twinkling window in a gable of the Priory House, where the light used to be popped out at nine o'clock.' Years afterwards—indeed when he helped to take the king of France over to Calais, after Waterloo had restored their throne to the Bourbons, that is, for Denis wrote his memoirs in his old days, about 1820, years after—'I must needs,' he says, 'hire a post-chaise from Dover to look at that old window in the Priory House at Winchelsea. I went through the old tears, despairs, tragedies. I sighed as sentimentally, after forty years, as though the *infandi dolores* were fresh upon me, as though I were the schoolboy trudging back to his task, and taking a last look at his dearest joy.' And there was something else which he sought for, in after-times, and which brought back memories of those happy far-off days. We know how difficult it was for the Winchelsea Romeo, under the ever-prying eyes of those dragons the Westons, to communicate with his Juliet. But Love laughs at locksmiths, and hiding-places were found for little notes—ill-spelt perhaps, and in round, childish hands no doubt, but full of innocent love and constancy—a china pot-pourri jar in Mrs Barnard's drawing-room, that neutral ground; the barrel of an old blunderbuss hanging in the Doctor's hall and labelled 'Loaded,' only Denis knew better, for had he not helped Martin, the Doctor's man, to clean it? and, queerest receptacle of all, 'in the churchyard, under the wing of the left cherub on Sir Jasper Billing's tomb there was a certain hole in which we put little scraps of paper in a cipher devised by ourselves.' We all know what they wrote. 'We wrote,' says Denis, '*Amo, amas*, &c., in our childish handwriting.' You may not find the name of Sir Jasper Billing on any of the tombs in Winchelsea Churchyard; you must take Denis's ghostly hand if you would seek it. *He* knew, after so long a lapse of time, where to find it, and the last time he was here he went and looked at it, and at the hole under the cherub's wing, and —'there was only a little mould and moss there.'

Yonder lies the Priory. What small forms are those that approach it and stay a moment before its doorway, as the moon peeps slyly from behind that mass of heaped-up clouds? Agnes and Denis are saying farewell. 'We whisper one little minute under the stars; the little hand lingers in mine with a soft pressure; we hear the servant's footsteps over the marble floor within, and I am gone.'

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# CHINA'S AWAKENING.

## PROGRESS OF THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY.

THE regular shipments of six-thousand-ton cargoes of high-grade pig-iron from China to San Francisco and other ports on the Pacific coast serve to draw attention to the ominously rapid development of the Chinese iron and steel industry. It is doubtful if this industry, which dates from 1891, has received the attention it deserves; but now that Chinese producers are entering into active competition not only in the United States but in Japan, as well as in China, the true state of affairs may be brought home to British makers with unpleasant directness. Recent developments have no doubt been stimulated by the fall in silver affecting the exchange between the United States and China; sixteen taels, which two or three years ago were equivalent to sixty shillings, being now worth only forty shillings or thereby. So low are the costs of production that the Hanyang Iron and Steel Company, Hankow, which is so far the sole producer of international importance, is able to quote for pig-iron forty shillings per ton f.o.b. (free on board), or seventy shillings per ton c.i.f. (cost, insurance, freight, which means that the price quoted includes, in addition to the price of the goods, the cost of insuring it in transit and the cost of transport), to New York, which is appreciably below the figure at which Pittsburg manufacturers can afford to sell. The exports of pig-iron to the United States began during the great trade boom of 1907, and it is significant that immediately trade revives shipments are resumed on a substantial scale.

As already indicated, the Hanyang Iron and Steel Works were established about nineteen years ago. At first they were somewhat slow of getting into working order, chiefly owing to the difficulty of securing skilled workmen. The works were erected under the superintendence of British engineers, and native workmen were sent to Belgium for twelve months' training. Even when the works were got under way many difficulties were encountered, mainly as a result of the mismanagement of native officials, who, while entrusting the technical management to European experts, jealously guarded the administrative control from foreign interference. Financial embarrassments retarded the development of the undertaking until 1904, when it passed into the hands of the railway director Sheng-kung-pao. That gentleman displayed praiseworthy energy and enterprise in putting the concern on a proper basis by remodelling the plant and adopting Western methods. Now the works are turning out fully five hundred tons of pig-iron and two hundred and fifty tons of steel rails per day, which it is expected will be more than doubled when the plant in course of erection has been completed. Already four thousand native workmen are regularly employed, many of them having attained a high degree of efficiency.

A careful survey of the conditions under which Chinese producers are working leads inevitably to

the conclusion that they have a great future before them. Hankow, where the works of the Hanyang Company are situated, stands on the Yangtse, China's great waterway, little more than seven hundred miles from the sea. From April to October the river is navigable by big ocean steamers, and during the winter months by boats with from nine to twelve feet draught. Both coal and iron ore are to be found in vast quantities within a distance of two hundred miles from Hankow, and are readily available for river transport. The former is brought down in native boats, which are constructed for one voyage only and then sold as timber. The iron ore, which contains over 60 per cent. of iron, is carried in steel barges towed by tugs. Labour both at the riverside and at the works is cheap. The coolies engaged in loading and unloading the ore work for threepence per shift, while at the works wages vary from fivepence per day in the case of unskilled labourers to five shillings per day for skilled furnace and mill hands. The average may be taken at about one shilling and threepence per day.

The developments now in progress or in contemplation include the erection of extensive plant for the manufacture of steel bridge and structural material and railway equipment, and the increase of the output of rails from two hundred and fifty tons to seven hundred and fifty tons per day. The existing mill is being remodelled so as to permit of the rolling of rails direct from the ingot. Plant for the manufacture of cement from blast-furnace slag, one of the world's latest industries, is also being installed. For much of the plant electricity already supplies the motive-power, and important developments in this connection are in progress. During the last two or three years the rail output has been a factor which has caused producers elsewhere serious consideration. Every rail used in the construction of the Pekin-Hankow line was manufactured by the Hanyang Company, and large quantities were also supplied in connection with the construction of the Tientsin-Pukow Railway. How long it will be before its activities in this direction are extended beyond the confines of the home market is a question which is seriously occupying the attention of the International Rail Association, which controls production and prices practically throughout the world. The great United States Steel Corporation has also now taken alarm at the 'dumping' of pig-iron on the Pacific coast, and is considering the advisability of establishing works at Hankow or elsewhere in China. The great extent of the iron ore and coal deposits and the low cost of labour are factors which, it is recognised, cannot be indefinitely ignored; but the project with which the Steel Trust is credited may receive a check from the fact that the Chinese mining-law forbids independent mining enterprise in China, and only permits foreigners to participate as shareholders in native companies. Perhaps the point of most immediate concern to British manufacturers is the hold which the Hanyang Company is securing on the Japanese market. Last year Japan imported nearly ninety thousand tons of British pig-iron, but is now reported to be buying the Chinese article instead. It has also a contract with the Hanyang Company whereby the latter undertakes to supply for a period of thirty years one hundred thousand tons per annum of the best magnetic iron ore at six shillings per ton.

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### INGENIOUS AIR-AGITATOR FOR SICK-ROOMS.

ONE of the great difficulties in the sick-room is the efficient agitation of the atmosphere to meet the requirements of certain maladies. In many cases this is imperative if relief is to be brought to the sufferer, and the great question is the fulfilment of the desired end without creating a draught. For instance, in bronchial attacks the steam-kettle is freely advocated, as the bubbling steam issuing from the spout serves to keep the air within the chamber in constant circulation. Asthmatical persons also derive considerable benefit, especially at nights, if the air is kept in movement. Some time ago an ingenious inventor was desired by an eminent specialist to evolve a small apparatus, operated by mechanical agency, for spraying the throat. The success in this direction prompted the inventor to apply the idea to general sick-room purposes. The apparatus is of simple design and occupies only a few inches of space. There is a funnel-shaped device covered with fine gauze, and in the neck of the funnel is placed a small fan mounted on a vertical shaft. This shaft is connected with either a clockwork drive or a small electric motor driven by batteries. It revolves at very high speed, and the air is kept in constant agitation without the slightest draught throughout an ordinary-sized room. If desired, certain chemicals which have the property when in an atomised state of imparting relief to those having respiratory troubles can be used. In this case the chemicals are placed in a liquid form in a small container within the apparatus, and there is a siphon connection which enables the solution to fall drop by drop on the gauze of the funnel at the same time that the air is being whirled through by the fan. The apparatus has been severely tested, and has been found most efficacious. Moreover, it can be utilised for both disinfecting and perfuming an apartment, it only being necessary to charge the

siphon receptacle with the desired solution. The clockwork is powerful, and will run the apparatus for about four hours without attention. With its aid one is enabled to inhale while asleep beneficial air impregnated with a variety of therapeutic constituents. The apparatus should, moreover, prove serviceable in connection with surgical operations, since it constitutes a highly serviceable mechanical means of saturating the air for a wide area around the patient with disinfectant in a more efficient manner than is at present possible. For deodorising or perfuming an apartment it is only necessary to run the apparatus for two or three minutes to secure the desired effect.

### REVOLUTION IN RAZOR-SHARPENING.

Some time ago we published a paragraph in the 'Month' relative to the care of the razor and the preservation or rejuvenation of its sharp edge. In order to perform its allotted work satisfactorily the razor must have the finest edge possible, but stropping calls for considerable dexterity, and many, unable to perform the operation successfully, ruin the cutting-edge to such an extent that it requires resetting. It must be conceded that the leather strop usually employed is far from perfect; but hitherto it has been impossible to find a more efficient substitute, despite the ingenuity of inventive effort. Recently, however, a new sharpener, the 'kemikol,' has been placed on the market, which is quite a revolutionising appliance, and the inventors claim that it is the only really scientific razor-sharpening device that has yet been perfected. In appearance it recalls the ordinary leather strop, and the razor is manipulated in the usual manner. The surface of the strop is absolutely free from gritty substances such as paste, emery, or other abrasive, and a few strokes suffice to obtain an edge as 'keen as a razor' in the fullest sense of the words. Moreover, by using this strop periodical resetting of the edge by honing is rendered unnecessary. For instance, you can hack wood with your razor, which rough treatment naturally destroys the finest edge; but upon giving it a few strokes backward and forward upon this sharpener the edge is completely restored, and it will cleanly sever the finest hairs. The sharpener is everlasting, and will always retain its properties. As there is nothing so disagreeable as shaving with a dull razor, nothing can equal one which leaves the face as smooth and clean as a mirror surface, and this is what is certainly achieved with the 'kemikol' sharpener. The device is equally applicable to safety-razors.

### A NEW ASEPTIC FLOORING-MATERIAL.

Though nothing can compare in beauty with Roman or Terrazzo marble mosaic paving where solid flooring is required, the high cost of such work militates against its general adoption. To meet the demand for an inexpensive substitute a new material has been evolved, known under the generic name of 'westolite.' It is a composition applied in a plastic state, and the result is that the whole floor is converted into a homogeneous, level, smooth surface without a single joint. It can be laid upon any type of foundation provided the latter is dry, sound, and unyielding, and it does not matter whether such is rough or uneven, as these deficiencies can be remedied by the method of laying, so that a surface as level as a billiard-table is presented. Moreover, it can be polished to a high finish, rendering it an ideal aseptic material. The flooring can be laid in one colour, or if desired designs can be worked up, giving a handsome appearance similar to that produced by the best qualities of inlaid linoleum, as the various colours extend through the thickness of the material. As the substance adheres firmly to the surface of the foundation, there is no danger of bulging or creeping after setting. It is far preferable to tiling or brickwork for halls, hospitals, business premises, offices, or the domestic quarters of private residences, and is more ornamental and attractive than plain cement or concrete work. The polished surface renders cleaning an easy task, for it offers no refuge to dust and dirt. An improvement upon the conventional inexpensive methods of solid paving has long been desired, and this material imparts just that finishing touch to a building which is required to arrest attention and to complete appearances.

### A SOLUTION OF THE SMOKE PROBLEM.

Until legislation prohibits the use of anything but anthracite coal, the emission of smoke from furnaces and open grates using bituminous fuel is bound to be with us. The only expedient that can be adopted is the mitigation of the nuisance, and in this direction commendable and diversified ingenuity has been displayed. The latest device to achieve this end has recently been perfected by a well-known English inventor, and certainly the experiments and applications that have so far been carried out prove its efficiency. The appliance calls for no modification in existing practice, nor the addition of complicated, expensive mechanism. In the case of boilers the ordinary curative efforts are bound to be attended with either mediocre success or total failure. All that the new system comprises is a number of quadrants made of a special material which possesses to a very marked degree the capacity of absorbing and transmitting heat. These are arranged so as to form a kind of combustion-chamber immediately behind the firebridge of the furnace, with the result that a mean temperature considerably higher than that required for the complete combustion of all smoky products is maintained even when the furnace is temporarily cooled down by feeding with fresh fuel. As is well known, when fresh fuel is added to a fire it exercises a damping-down, smothering effect, which gives rise to dense volumes of smoke. However, in this instance, although smoke may pass from the fire, it has to travel through this zone of reserve heat, where combustion is completed, so that no

unconsumed particles escape into the air. Not only does the system eliminate the smoke nuisance to a marked degree, but in addition it brings about an economy in fuel-consumption ranging from 12 to 30 or more per cent., according to the grade of coal used. There are several installations of this type in use, and in every case the claims of the inventors have been fully established. Certainly it marks the most advanced step towards the healthier and cleaner city that has yet been made, and experiments are now being carried out to apply the same principle to marine boilers and railway locomotives.

### NOVEL OFFICE-COMPANION.

A novelty for the commercial office has recently been introduced. The paper-knife is one of the most elusive articles of utility on the desk, and has a knack of disappearing when wanted. You may secure it with a string, but the result is just the same. Now an attempt has been made to prevent its peripatetic movements by combining it with an electric bell-push. The end of the handle carries the push, and a few feet of flexible electric wire trails from the handle. It can never be lost, and the combination of the two purposes in one is ingenious.

### WHAT TO DO IN A THUNDERSTORM.

Lightning, owing to its extreme subtlety and tremendous force, is regarded by the majority of people with distinct respect, if not absolute awe. The flash strikes terror into the hearts of people of highly strung and nervous temperament, and often in their rush for safety they act in the very way to court disaster. What should one do in a thunderstorm? On this point Mr Killingworth Hedges, M.Inst.C.E., the well-known authority, and author of *Modern Lightning-Conductors*, offers some very pertinent hints in the new edition of his standard work. Sheltering under trees should be avoided, as well as standing in the vicinity of spreading branches; nor should one stand on the lee-side of a haystack or building, as the rain dripping from the top thereof may easily lead the flash in the direction of one's person, converting one into a human lightning-conductor. Telegraph-posts should be given a wide berth, and the telephone should not be used during a storm. Lightning-conductors, rain-water pipes, and such like should be avoided. If one is walking over open country and becoming saturated with the rain, the best safeguard is to crawl under a low copse or hedge. Should such be unavailable, as on a plain or moor, the safest procedure is to lie flat down. To hold up an umbrella as shelter against the rain is to seek disaster. Similarly, should one be cycling when overtaken, one should dismount and leave the cycle on the ground. It is not that the cycle directly attracts the lightning, as is generally supposed, but a flash throws out innumerable branch discharges. If one's clothes are dry one may receive no further injury than a smart shock, but if the garments are sodden with rain fatality may easily result. The safest place is within the house. True, the building may be struck, but the chances are very remote. If such should result, it is invariably the chimney-stack which is selected by the flash in its passage to earth, and consequently one should stand well clear of the fireplace, which invariably will be blown into the room. Hot-water and other pipes should likewise be avoided. The windows should be shut, for glass is an excellent insulator, and will not attract lightning, as is popularly believed. One should not sit in a conservatory or greenhouse, for the trailing wires and general metallic-work may be highly charged with electricity resulting from a flash; and one should not shelter in a farm building where animals are collected. Lightning is most erratic in its selection of convenient channels for its passage to the ground; but if the foregoing hints are borne in mind a person caught in a storm is less likely to be a victim to its caprices.

### OIL IN BRITAIN.

The recent boom in oil has served to stimulate interest once again in the available British supplies of this commodity. In this direction this country is at present at a disadvantage. Not that these islands do not possess dormant oil-resources, but because, owing to our strong position in regard to coal, oil has been neglected. The chief source of British supply is Scotland; and this industry, which has long been suffering from attempted American trust-squeezing tactics, has received a new impetus. The Americans, in their efforts to acquire control of the British market, attempted to drive the Scottish companies out of business, but have signally failed, for the Admiralty has at last realised the fact that, to be prepared in time of war, home industry must be fostered during periods of peace. The Scottish oil is obtained from shale, and the process comprises destructive distillation. The method is more expensive as compared with those in practice in other parts of the world where the oil is present in the form of a liquid, and more easily and cheaply obtainable. The Scottish oil has long been famed for its high illuminating value, and has been exclusively employed for the lighthouses around the north of Britain. Now, however, the companies have not only to produce sufficient to fulfil the everyday needs of the Admiralty, but must always maintain a reserve of twenty thousand tons to meet emergencies. In the south, too, another endeavour is being made to exploit latent oil-resources which are confidently believed to exist in extensive quantities. Certainly the geological formation in Sussex is such as to render the presence of oil very probable, and this belief was further substantiated some eight years ago when the Brighton Railway Company, in sinking a well for water at Heathfield, struck a subterranean pocket of natural or petroleum gas, which was harnessed, and has since been used for lighting the railway station and other buildings in the vicinity. As the presence of this gas in

such quantities points to the fact that supplies of oil are no doubt concealed in close proximity, efforts are being made to substantiate the belief by boring for the liquid fuel. Should such be tapped, and in extensive volume, the result would be of far-reaching importance to the south, and might appreciably assist in the resuscitation of the bygone iron trade, for the county teems with rich deposits of ore which cannot be profitably turned to practical use at the present time owing to lack of cheap fuel.

### THE DEMAND FOR RUBBER.

Many of the schemes for acquiring great riches by growing or collecting rubber, remarks the *Field*, are of a debatable nature, whereas at the present time it would be difficult to conceive a more paying proposition than is offered by the company which is able to produce it in quantity at small cost. It will pay to grow good rubber at the price of two shillings per pound, about the price of good leather. Before long the supply of rubber from wild trees will come to an end, and then plantation rubber will hold the field. There seems little danger of the supply exceeding the demand even should planting operations be much increased. The increase of production in the Straits Settlements has been phenomenal. Waste grounds of Singapore islands have been converted into plantations, and even swamps have been drained for the purpose. Malacca is now more flourishing than ever, owing to rubber. The first practical rubber-planter in Malacca was a Chinaman; the Chinese there have become wealthy, and are investing largely in property in Singapore. Regarding the prospects of artificial rubber, the same journal remarks that a fair imitation of caoutchouc can be made from turpentine, methyl-isoprene, coal-tar and boric acid, and peat, but the process is a costly one and the product of little value for practical purposes. A synthetic rubber company formed some time ago came to an end. So that those who have been again and again alarmed by the bogey of artificial rubber may have their minds relieved.

### A NOVEL UTENSIL FOR COOKING PEAS.

A distinct acquisition to the culinary art is furnished in a new vessel that has been perfected for cooking peas. Its main purpose is to enable the comestible to be boiled without the shells parting company with the mealy contents, thus avoiding the unsavoury-looking mash in which peas often appear on the table. Moreover, the vessel is a strainer as well. When peas are cooked in the usual manner by being put into the saucepan and boiled, the bubbling action of the water keeps the peas continually in movement, which causes the thin husk to part company with the kernel. By the new method the shells are preserved and the peas kept intact. The vessel comprises a circular drum freely perforated in the bottom and around its sides, and so designed as to slip into the saucepan. The peas are placed in this receptacle, and a cover is then slipped in. The latter is likewise perforated and slides in the outer cylinder, so that it can be used irrespective of the quantity of peas being cooked. When the water boils the peas cannot move, as the weight of the adapter plate is sufficient to keep them compact, though it will automatically lift as the peas swell. The boiling water is enabled to pass freely through the perforations in its circulation, so that every pea becomes thoroughly cooked. When this task is completed the inner vessel is lifted from the saucepan, the superfluous water drains away, and the contents can then be turned into the dish for the table, the peas retaining the fresh, green, whole appearance of the raw state. The cooker can be used for all classes of vegetables, such as haricot beans, potatoes, artichokes, Brussels-sprouts, broad beans, and so on, with equal success, and the comestible cooked in this manner has a far more palatable appearance than when prepared by the general hap-hazard method. The cooker is especially applicable for the preparation of the marrowfat-pea, which is a delectable dainty in winter when the fresh produce is unavailable. The marrowfats came somewhat into disfavour simply because there was no known method of cooking them so as to avoid shell-shedding, and when cooked they generally had the appearance of mush. Yet there are few vegetables which possess the dietetic value of marrowfat-peas. But there are marrowfats and marrowfats. A large bulk of foreign origin have failed to please because they did not possess the indigenous characteristics and flavour of the home article. A marrowfat to possess its greatest palatable value must be grown in Lincolnshire. It is the only county in these islands the soil of which is conducive to their perfect cultivation. So extensively has this trade developed that one firm alone has several hundred acres devoted to the raising of the marrowfat, and in addition holds a lien upon the entire pea-product of numerous other farms. The firm provides the seed, which is of the highest quality, so as to ensure success. The crops when harvested are sun-dried and permitted to stand in stack for at least a month to mature, after which time they are threshed, cleaned, picked, and graded, being then packed by automatic filling machinery into cartons, which are sealed to render them airtight. By this means it is possible to secure out of season, and indeed at times when all vegetables are scarce, an appetising dish of peas as green as grass when cooked. When properly cooked it is impossible to detect this article from that just picked out of the garden. Certainly there is nothing so attractive and tempting as a dish of green peas, more especially out of season, and the development of the trade in marrowfats has given rise to another flourishing British industry.

### SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE CATALOGUE.

It is now possible to leave Stratford-on-Avon with a souvenir of what makes it most worth while to visit the town. Mr Richard Savage, secretary

and librarian at the birthplace of Shakespeare, has compiled an illustrated catalogue for the trustees which describes the manuscripts, works of art, antiquities, and relics to be seen there. It is impossible in a cursory glance to get acquainted with all the relics there, and therefore for present and future reference this catalogue will be invaluable. Three hundred and fifty-four items are catalogued up till now, an inventory of the miscellaneous gifts and purchases made over the sixty-three years since the birthplace became national property. A pocket ring-dial such as is mentioned in *As You Like It* is here; a gold ring with the initials W. S., believed to have belonged to Shakespeare; a deed witnessed by his father; the will of his granddaughter; specimens of all the first folios of his works and of separate plays; and many miscellaneous articles which belong to his times.

### RAILWAY DEVELOPMENTS IN BRAZIL.

According to *Cassier's Magazine*, up to 1899 a number of railway lines had been constructed in Brazil, connecting towns or convenient districts with each other, all these being isolated undertakings. A Railway Commission was appointed on May 3, 1899, for drawing up a general plan of the railways that should be built, and turning the whole system into a sound and useful one. This was all the more necessary as Brazil has a unique system of waterways; the basin of the Amazon extends right up into Matto Grosso and Bolivia, where the Rio Paraguay's tributaries start, forming a magnificent and nearly unbroken inland water-communication across pretty nearly the whole continent. Besides these, a number of powerful rivers lead down to the Atlantic; and when there is still such a vast system of railways to build, the navigable streams show not only which lines need not be built in the immediate future, but also which should be, for connecting two such rivers. The Commission sent in their report, which was adopted. All the lines the Commission recommended have been or are being built, sometimes in a slightly modified form. The ruling idea was to unite the existing systems, to build a few long, penetration lines into suitable districts, and to complete the military or 'strategical lines.' Most of the penetration lines were to continue those starting from the coast of São Paulo and Rio States, and to reach some tributary of the Northern Amazon or Paraguay watersheds.

### A MOTOR-SLEIGH FOR THE ANTARCTIC.

The equipment for the forthcoming expedition to the South Polar regions under the leadership of Captain Scott will include a motor-propelled sleigh of which great things are expected. Such vehicles were employed on the Shackleton and Charcot journeys, but this latest sledge is materially different in its design. Instead of having runners in place of the front wheels, and being propelled by spuds attached to sprockets in lieu of the rear wheels, it is designed somewhat after the caterpillar style. The frame has four large sprockets, two on each side, instead of the wheels, over which passes a heavy roller-chain, the bottom side of which is fitted with pattens and spuds. A runner is fixed between the two parts of the chain, so that when the lower section of the latter is in contact with the ground it supports the whole weight of the sledge. The engine develops twelve brake-horse-power, and the drive is transmitted to a change-speed gear-box giving two speeds of two and three and a half miles per hour respectively. There is no reverse, as it is not required; no brakes, as the gear reduction is so heavy that such are unnecessary; and no steering. This at first sight appears a handicap, especially for the negotiation of sharp corners, which is admittedly difficult; but among the ice-fields of the Antarctic, where the road is of illimitable width, corners can be avoided. Should it be necessary to deviate slightly to the right or left, this can be done with ropes. The vehicle was submitted to heavy tests among the Norwegian ice-fields, and its behaviour was in every respect completely successful. It is not primarily intended to carry the stores of the party, but to act as a tractor, and showed itself fully capable of hauling with ease a train of the ordinary sledges fully laden. Special arrangements have been made in regard to the carburation, while the oil for lubrication has been expressly prepared, and has the property of not congealing at low temperatures.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### NESTING-TIME.

Where, little bird, with that bit of down
Plucked from thy snowy breast,
Wherever in all this smoky town
Canst thou build thy cosy nest?

The sweet green fields are over there,
Under that sky of blue,
Where wild flowers peep through the mosses fair,
And call, little bird, to you.

In the peaceful shade of a hawthorn-tree,
Where the blossoms snow-white cling,
Build, little bird, thy home to be
In the tender days of spring.

Sing, little bird, in the bough above,
And answer thy nestlings' call;
Then over them gather thy wings of love
When the evening shadows fall.

GILBERT RAE.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Forgotten Rock, The Luck o' the Spey,* &c.

## CHAPTER I.—AT THE BUCK INN.

IT was in the back end o' the year, as they say in Morayshire, and a dour day in the Glen of Rothes. Gray galleons of mist were sailing slowly on the hills of Speyside, one of them anchoring on the dark shoulder of Ben Rinnes as the irresolute wind died; and farther down the valley the topsails of another of the ghostly fleet, from above the crown of Ben Aigen, looked down on the fir-woods, the brown patchwork of the crofts, and the loose steel chain of the river. The folk of the Glen saw the sashes of mist round the two Bens, and tried to read their weather signs, calling to mind the old couplet of the Strath:

> A mist on Ben Rinnes may soon wear awa';
> A mist on Ben Aigen is sure to doon fa'.

For Ben Aigen's stature is less than that of his kinsman Ben Rinnes, and the flying of his misty pennant signals rain.

There had been a sudden clutch of frost. The earth felt the first twinge of the coming winter, and the folk of the Glen, seeing the gray veils on their hills and remembering the jingle of their country-side, hoped against hope that a thaw would set in. But the mist on Ben Aigen did not fall. There was an unusual silence, an absence of the flight and call of birds, of the rustle and swaying of the forest, of familiar sights and sounds in the Glen; a spurious tranquillity ruffled suddenly by the faint answering bleats of the weather-wise sheep up on the hills, huddling together in restless gray clusters, forgetting to browse, uneasily certain of a weather change. They smelled snow in the air, and the promise of it grew in a reticent and discoloured sky. By after-noon its first powder sailed on the awakened wind careering down the empty and deserted Glen; and now, just on the darkling frontier of evening, multitudinous flakes were falling, falling; steadily, swiftly, silently. A blackbird ceased whetting his bright-orange bill on a branch of his favourite elm, and sat curious-eyed, motionless, watching the snow, to dart upon a sudden across the clearing into the wood, breaking its silence with a silver-throated call of 'I know it! I know it! *I know it! Winter fairly!*'

Winter fairly! Winter in the early dark of the evening; in the shawled woods; in the glisten and sheen of the tumbled hills; in the faint clink of the new drift-ice of the Spey, close at hand, where the river muttered, black and sinuous, coiling along her whitening haughs. The wind's temper was rising; bitter gusts from the moors, the warning bugles of the wild horsemen of the storm, smiting the silence, blaring down the funnel of the Glen in the gathering darkness. No movement of life of man or beast was visible. The last belated bird had winged swiftly to shelter; the wild creatures of the mountains had stolen home early; and the cottars in their little thatched houses in the wrinkles of the hills threw more peats on their fires, drawing closer as they listened to the wind gnawing at the latch, their doors barred against the menace in the air. Thickening snow-flakes flouted the face of the river, and as the sudden winter curtain of the sky fell, the trembling woods cowered under lashing drifts that scudded before the steadily rising wind. Winter fairly! Ill weather to be caught in on the mountain or the wide moor; ill for the sheep; ill for the hungry deer; but a good night to hide in, a kind night, perhaps, for one to see without being seen. Of a certainty, so thought Murdo Cameron, Murdo the Hill-Fox, smuggler and desperado, crouching under the scanty bield of a clump of junipers, shivering, welcoming the dark, fearful of the gallows.

Here is his description, and 'relative papers' in the Crown's bald economy of diction dedicated to such untoward incidents:

### 'WANTED.

FOR MURDER.

'Murdo Cameron, of no fixed residence, lately in the croft of Upper Laggach, in Morayshire. He is


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about 30 years of age, of small stature; very broad; sharp featured; dark hair, whiskers, small beard and moustache; with a cutlass scar (old) on his left cheek. When last seen he was wearing a dark, homespun doublet, and knee-breeches, broad bonnet, and rough brogues. He is of exceptional strength and endurance, and is of most plausible tongue and cunning. He is certain to be armed. In some districts he is known as Sionnach an Aonaich or "The Hill-Fox." Information to Captain Hugh Falconer, The Castle, Castle Lossie.

'And whereas it has been humbly represented to His Majesty, that about five o'clock in the evening of the eleventh of November 1811, certain smugglers, among them one Murdo Cameron, of no fixed residence (and above described) feloniously assembled, armed with firearms and other lethal weapons, on the Moor of Dava in Strathspey, North Britain, for the purpose of convoying a quantity of uncustomed spirits, or other contraband merchandise, and in the execution of their unlawful purpose, being discovered by Richard Evans, late a first-rated quartermaster of His Majesty's ship *Ramilies*, and then riding officer in the said district of Strathspey, the said Murdo Cameron and others feloniously discharged their firearms upon him, whereby he was mortally wounded and died shortly afterwards.

'His Majesty, for the better discovery of the perpetrators of this murder, is hereby pleased to order his most gracious pardon to any one or more of the offenders so assembled (except the said Murdo Cameron or others who actually discharged the firearms) who shall discover his or their accomplices, so that they may be apprehended and brought to justice.

'*For and by authority of W. Addington, R. Buxtone, Secretary.*

'And as a further encouragement—The Lords Commissioners do hereby offer a reward of One Hundred Pounds to any persons (except as aforesaid) who shall make known the said Murdo Cameron or others, so that they may be apprehended and convicted; which reward shall, on the conviction of the said offenders, be divided among the persons making such discovery by the Solicitor to the Lords Commissioners, Spring Gardens.'

Murdo had begun his career, at least such of it as lay off the beaten track, by 'running' illicit whisky from the 'sma' stills' among the mountains over the hill-tracks to the waiting, ready merchants. Incredible license to smuggling was allowed in those days. Britain was in her hour of trial, facing life or death in the duel with Napoleon, crippled by the difficulty of manning her army and navy. One reads nowadays with amazement of the jails being emptied for the army's needs, and bounties of forty pounds being paid for the enlistment of boys of fifteen. Little attention could be paid to the Excise, and in consequence the Preventive Service was weak everywhere, glaringly so in the far North, where public opinion, in common with the rest of the country, more than tolerated smuggling. One can see to this day in some old, weather-beaten taverns along the beach of the Firth yawning cellars built for storing 'crops' run across the North Sea, or for 'stuff' brought down from the lonely glens, where many a 'sma' still' reeked in cunning corners in those old days. The decent, law-abiding tacksmen of the country-side all knew of hiding-places near the hill-roads through their farms where an anker or two would mysteriously be found, and many a good-wife rustled demurely into the kirk clad with laces that ought to have cost a pretty penny, but had never seen King George's seal. Every one winked at the system. Douce bailies mellowed comfortably at e'en over the contraband barley 'bree.' It was whispered that even the ministers gave more than the time o' day to the agents of the Gentle Traffic. It was a question of economics, so the apologists airily said, a mere statutory and venial breach of the law. Were not the duties high, times bad, and 'siller' scarce? To be sure there were Acts of Parliament against it, but dishonesty was too harsh, too uncomfortable a word to use, for an element of romance, strange, false, yet amazingly vital, hung round the Free Traders.

The over-seas smuggling occupied far more of the Preventive men's time than the 'sma' still' trade, wherefore Murdo the Hill-Fox and his men flourished like green bay-trees, his name, his cunning, and the success of his smuggling exploits gathering round him, like wasps round treacle, a gang of deserters, happy-go-luckies, toss-pots, and their kind. Not for nothing had he been nicknamed the Hill-Fox. He had never even tholed an Assize, and knew every corner and every sheep-track in the mountains from the Bin o' Cullen to Ben Alder—ay, and farther west to the sounding Atlantic rollers.

But years of freedom from capture, and the tacit copartnery of the country-side, while sharpening his greed, had blunted his methods. Ugly rumours, it seemed, were afloat. Whispers of robberies and man-handling filtered down from the hills, and the canny country-folk began to shake their heads over their drams at the markets. Smuggling was maybe all very well, said they. The whisky dues were there no doubt, and business was business; but bloodshed was bloodshed, a staring and unchancy thing, not to be blinked at. Sophistries failed the decent folk when foul play was talked of. 'No, no, it winna do!' was their verdict, and Murdo's clients and his prestige as an honest smuggler fell away.

Then one day came tidings black and definite. A new riding-officer, keener, more rash than his predecessors, stumbled suddenly on the gang in the heart of the lone moor of Dava in Strathspey. There was a scuffle, a shot or two, a smuggler fell badly wounded, and the officer reeled in his saddle. The good horse galloped for a couple of miles in the gloaming, its master contriving to keep his seat, until he fell off, faint from loss of blood, close to a wayside shieling on the bleak moor. There he survived only long enough to give a dying but clear

deposition to the Sheriff-Clerk, hastily summoned from Castle Lossie. There was only one name for it. It was murder—stark murder by Murdo the Hill-Fox; and now, a fortnight afterwards, the questing pack of the law after him, he was lurking in the Glen of Rothes in Morayshire, his wits alert, balancing his chances, but with empty pockets, stung by the driving snow, and every naked winter tree shaping a gibbet.

He had doubled on his tracks night after night, the wild weather favouring him; but, travelling only after dark, made slow progress. There still lay a long tramp between him and his hiding-place at an illicit still in the wild hills, where some of his gang were sure to be lying. Dog-tired and hungry, he peered cautiously round the trees, glowering enviously at a spark blinking through the falling snow near the highway above him, gnawing his nails morosely as he thought of the warmth and comfort that the sight of it conjured up, for the single peep of light was that of a solitary tavern, a howff of the hillmen and shepherds. He knew the Buck Inn in the Glen well. Many a gallon he had 'run' there. Many a gallon he had drunk there. He imagined with a hungry curse the ruddy glow of the peats inside the inn. His teeth chattered in his head. A few tumblers of toddy, strong, brown, would be an amazingly grateful bellyful. His jaws cracked at the thought.

Then there was the lass Bell of the tavern! Bell, he reflected, was not what he might call bonny, not so—so jimp as some of the others maybe, but she was better than bonny. She had a heart, and therefore, he judged, was a fool. She might, she *would* help him. He wondered if he could manage to cross a word with her. 'Twas a dooms fashious business this last affair! Still, Bell could be trusted. If he could only lay hands on some money! He knew a way west through Inverness-shire, and could reach a smuggling haven in the Sound of Arisaig—that is, if he could raise money somehow, anyhow. Without it his chances on the weary flight west through the hills were too sporting, even for him. But once in Arisaig he would be safe. Greedy Peter the Manxman would surely some day be running into the little bay of Altnaserihan with the *Keturah* lugger, out o' Ramsey. He knew Greedy Peter of old, and with the aid of the 'siller' would easily get shiproom, and no questions asked; thence to Ireland or the Isle of Man, where he could snap his fingers at Preventive men and dragoons. Thus for a while he pondered, his mind swinging between trepidation and hope.

But the present moment called. The cold wind was plucking at his vitals, whirling the snow round to the lee of the trees where he crouched. 'Twas an ill wind that blew nobody good, he reflected, for the inhospitable snow would at any rate cover his tracks against the morning. He decided to risk a reconnaissance of the lonely light, and rose cramped, to stagger against the storm as he crept slowly up towards the blink in the window. The drift was blinding, the way brae-set, drift-laden, and the man was miserably cold and wet, but he climbed gamely and steadily and as one who knew his way.

The night had fallen dark when he came near the window and dropped on all-fours, creeping alongside the wall, the pale stream of light from the room, alive with snow-flakes, cutting trenchantly on the dark. Keeping well in the shadow, he peered in, and saw dimly, through the streaming window-pane, two men sitting in front of a blazing peat-fire. One of them was singing, with maudlin voice and uncouth and frequent gestures. The man outside caught a stave or two, in the short pauses between the wrathful bursts of the wind. He could not recognise the voice, but the sight of the two taking their merry ease at the bright fire turned his heart to water. His mortification wrought on him a physical weakness. His legs shook under him as he looked again. Comfortable, alluring wreaths of tobacco-smoke floated above the two men; there was a clinking of glasses. The sight and the sound stiffened his hungry thought into decision. He slipped stealthily round to the back-door, and waited until there was a lull in the blast. Then he put his mouth to the keyhole and whistled softly and musically the last few notes of the tune of 'Poor Cluny.

Inside, in the kitchen, a woman, plain of feature, sat alone, listening to the moaning of the gale. There was a shadow in her fine gray eyes, for only on the day before she had seen a little handbill with a dreadful heading, beginning '*Wanted.*' Since then the words loomed everywhere, haunting her fitful sleep in letters of blood; everywhere, everywhere, seared on her heart, shouted by the river, written on the hills, branded on the sky. *Wanted! Murder! Murdo!*

She started at the sound of the broken tune. Joy, alarm, doubt struggled in her face, glowed and ebbed in it, leaving her pale and trembling, as she heard the notes again. She stood for a moment listening to the movements inside the inn; then, giving a swift, comprehending glance at nowhere, sang carelessly, as if to herself, a bar or two of the same air. She listened again, with a smile in her eyes and heightened colour, and went into the room where the two men were sitting.

'Did ye call?' she asked cheerfully, and in a steady voice.

'Na. But we'll save ye anither journey to the cask,' said one, and pointed with a bemused grin at the empty glasses.

She took them away, bringing them back brimming, and then went out again, closing the door after her. Tiptoeing to the back-door, she noiselessly unbarred it.

'Murdo! Murdo!' she whispered, and clasped the rascal's wet hands to her bosom.

'Wha's inside?' he asked in a hoarse whisper, his hunted eyes searching the house over her shoulder.

'Duncan Ross the shepherd and a man fra' Dallachy at the mouth of the Spey. They're in the front room drinkin'. My father's at Forres, an' canna' win hame till Friday.'

Murdo gave a breath of relief.

'Fetch me a dram, hot; I'm fair guizened! An' something to eat, Bell! Quick, my lass,' he said. 'I'm sair needin'.'

She ran at his bidding, and in silence watched him eat and drink ravenously, a welling pity in her heart.

At last she said softly, 'Murdo, is't true that—that—the sodgers are seekin' ye?' She trembled, tears in her voice. The man slipped a confident arm round her waist.

'Let them hunt. Gin I win to Arisaig they might as well whistle for me. An' stop greetin'; I canna thole a greetin' woman,' he answered. 'Get me some tobacco.'

Her eyes transformed her plain face.

'Maybe I'm near greetin', but women maun greet whiles, an'—an' I'm no' a coward. I'll follow ye west, Murdo,' she said, 'if—if ye want me.'

'If—— What's that?'

There was a loud sound of knocking somewhere. They listened with drumming hearts, a quick resource in the woman's eyes, an ugly glint in the man's. No sound. Perhaps it was only the wind round the roof. Then above the hollow voice of the gale in the chimney there rose sharply, unmistakably, a thundering tattoo at the front-door.

'Quick! In there! If it's the sodgers I'll wander them, an' you'll make for the hill,' she whispered, pointing to an empty cupboard. The man stole in and closed the door as Bell passed swiftly into the room where the two men were sitting.

'A bonny dunnerin' some ane's makin' at the door,' said the man Duncan, who was on his feet. 'We were baith half-asleep, an' I was just on my way to see wha it was.'

'House within!' shouted a voice, and above the howl of the storm another fusillade of knocks was heard. The woman unbarred the door, and a tall man, snowed on from head to foot, stood in the doorway, a blown horse behind him, the bridle-rein in his hand.

'A wild night! Twice I thought the mare and I were in the Spey, but 'twas up to our necks in snow-drifts we were. Lucky that I caught a glimpse of your light.—Steady, lass,' he said, as the mare snuffed the warmth and pushed a shining, wet muzzle over his shoulder.—'I was told to make for the Buck Inn up the Glen.'

'This is it, an' ye're welcome, sir,' said the woman. —'Duncan! Tak' ye the gentleman's horse!—Come in, sir.'

'I'll go with you, and see the mare comfortably stabled for the night,' said the owner. 'I'll warrant she'll sleep sound enough.'

Duncan got the lamp and lit it, and he and the Speymouth man went out to the stable, followed by the stranger leading the mare. The woman listened to their receding footsteps, then stole swiftly to the door of the cupboard in the kitchen.

'A stranger, Murdo, and alane! Bide where ye are till the blast gangs by,' she whispered. 'Ye can see through the chink there.' She pointed to a tiny slit in the door. The man nodded in swift comprehension, and Bell slipped back to the drinking-room, pretending to busy herself there until the three men came back from the stable.

*(To be continued.)*

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# HOW I DISCOVERED FRANCE.

By the Rev. THOMAS HANNAN, M.A.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

I HAVE always taken a great interest in exploration, which I explain to myself partly on the basis of a constitutional infirmity the possessors of which are known in America as 'rubber-necks.' In my case the infirmity does not extend beyond places and things; but some people have it so badly that they apply it to people almost exclusively. But I also trace the special interest which I have mentioned to an old schoolmaster, who used to declaim from our reading-book, with more energy than elocution, the lines:

> Up, up, let us a voyage take;
> Why sit we here at ease?
> Find us a vessel tight and strong
> Bound for the northern seas.

So I started off one day, or, to be more particular, one night, in search of the vessel thus described. I packed my wardrobe in a piece of waterproof cloth, and strapped the package securely on the back-bracket of my bicycle, which is a very convenient conveyance to go exploring on. Then I set out for Leith, which I had heard was a place where ships bound for all sorts of ports were to be found. I did not come across one 'bound for the northern seas;' but I found a very comfortable vessel of the Gibson Line, the captain of which seemed to be expecting me. So I got on board, and in due time we 'set sail;' which is a very silly phrase to use, because the vessel was a steamer, and a very good one, too, and we did not set a single sail the whole time I was on board. We first arrived at Rotterdam, which I do not propose to describe, except so far as to say that it is a very interesting city, and well worth seeing. Then, after a stay of a few hours there, we passed down the coast until we came to Calais; and that was the first stage in my discovery of France.

What I have already written is perhaps a poetical way of stating that I had decided on a cycling tour in France. I had been in that country on various occasions before; but I had always gone quite respectably. On this occasion I proposed to be a kind of tramp; and the bicycle looked like the profession. There are two forms of locomotion which I do not like—one is walking, and the other is going by train. Both methods are too slow, in different senses of the term. But to go by sea is the ideal of happiness and comfort. Besides, I think it is a waste of good money for a Scotsman to go by train to London, then to Dover, Folkestone, or Newhaven, and last of all to face an unpleasant sail across the Channel, in order to get to France, when he can go on board a comfortable vessel at Leith, go to bed at night, and walk about a deck all day, and still do it more cheaply than the other way.

When one is travelling it is a great mistake to get separated from one's clothes. An Austrian officer realised this some time ago. He was travelling in a night-train, and got out at a station to get some coffee in the gray of the dawn. The train started sooner than he expected, and his brother-officers saw him sprinting after it, dressed only in pyjamas. So they threw his clothes on the platform for him, realising how awkwardly he was situated through losing his train. But he had just managed to get into the last carriage; so the awkwardness arrived all the same. I carried everything with me. In my waterproof pack I had one suit of clothes, one suit of pyjamas, two soft shirts and eight soft collars, one 'boiled' shirt, as the Americans call a dress-shirt, and four 'boiled' collars, half-a-dozen pairs of socks, and a number of handkerchiefs, together with a variety of other necessary or useful articles. Then I had a bag fitted inside the frame of the bicycle; and this contained a Baedeker's guide, ten dozen flat photographic films, a note-book, and some other things; while I carried a handy camera in its case over my shoulder, and had a portable stand tied to the bicycle. Over the handle-bars I had a rainproof overcoat, which was better than a cape, as the time was the end of October. This seems a lot; but it did not make too much weight. The only comfort which I lacked was a change of boots; and no amount of experimenting with the packing would enable me to carry a spare pair. So I contented myself with a pair of dress-slippers, which packed easily.

I arrived at Calais on a Friday morning, and expected to be delayed a little by the usual examination for dutiable articles. To my disgust, when the Customs officers saw my belongings they passed them with a look of contempt, and I felt sorry that I had not secreted something contraband. Then I started out for the post-office and got my letters. One of my letters was a newspaper, as an Irishman might say, and I read it in the hall of the post-office. Having done so, I dropped it in a corner and left. I was half-way down the street when I heard a shouting, and, turning round, I saw that I was pursued. The official handed me my paper, and we had a conversation in French. The official, however, must have been some sort of foreigner, for he did not seem to understand the language. Then I tried English, which he did not understand either. I got on better with him when I tried Scotch, for he left me; but he would not take the paper, although it was the *Scotsman*. By this time I was getting hungry, so I walked into the Grand Hôtel for lunch. I chose two items from a long menu, and enjoyed them greatly until I came to pay for them. Then I discovered that I had chosen them from a *table-d'hôte* menu, instead of, as I had supposed, from one *à la carte*, and I had to pay for the lot. I felt inclined to go back on the menu and work through the other items; but I thought in time that they might in that case charge me for a second lunch. So I left, and, mounting my bicycle at the door, was just getting up speed when a waiter came rushing after me with my *Scotsman*. I had to take it to keep him quiet, and did not risk getting rid of it for some time. Ultimately I gave it to a boy who said he was learning English. I picked up this boy by asking him the way out of Calais, and he guided me a couple of miles.

The road which runs south from Calais is a good, broad, well-engineered road, sometimes rather up and down. There is nothing special about the scenery, but the villages on the way are all rather interesting. I did not reckon on going any great distance the first day, and contented myself with accomplishing the journey to Boulogne, where I put up at a comfortable hotel. I regretted greatly during the night that I had not stopped at Wimereux or Wimille, because Boulogne struck me as being a rather noisy place. I had had a walk round it during the evening. Every one seemed to be out of doors, and the fishermen were greatly in evidence, many of them appearing to be 'imperfect ablutioners.' As a general rule, when one is touring *en bicyclette*, it is better to put up at one of the outlying villages rather than in a town like Boulogne. Wimille is a very pretty place, with a hotel which seemed delightfully situated, and the village is less than three miles from Boulogne.

I had another object in my tour as well as that of pleasure and sight-seeing. I wanted to study the State schools, and accordingly I had secured from the French Government permissions, signed by the Ministers of Instruction and of Commerce, to visit the schools under these two departments. I visited those in Boulogne, but do not propose to inflict a description of them on my readers. Yet one incident in connection with my visit was rather amusing. I had gone through *l'École Navarin*, one of the largest of the primary schools for boys. I had addressed them in French, which entertained them greatly; but unfortunately I left the school just as their dinner-hour arrived. I was taking a photograph outside, when four hundred boys poured out and surrounded me. They were all delightfully good and polite, and wanted to shake hands with

me. So I shook. Then I shook more. And then I shook again. By the time I had shaken four hundred hands, and convinced myself that I was shaking them over again, I had got tired of *l'entente cordiale*. So I ran for it, followed by the crowd, and I got round so many corners that I soon lost both myself and the boys. Then I pursued my way to my next intended stopping-place, at Montreuil-sur-Mer.

This day's cycling was delightful. The air was cool, and yet there was pleasant sunshine. The road had some very heavy ascents, with similarly rapid runs down to the level again, so that there was a good deal of variety in the going. All the same, the country can only be described as generally level and by no means very attractive from the point of view of the scenery. A very striking feature of all this country is that it is practically given over to the cultivation of beet. It is not the red beet with which we are familiar in our gardens, but a large white variety. In places the roots had been dug up, and were piled in great heaps; while in other places the people were busy digging them. Another feature would gladden the hearts of boys who may read this. Most of the roads are bordered by apple-trees, and nobody seems to trouble about them. So the people who pass by eat them as they please. Of the villages through which I passed I was most attracted by Pont-de-Brique and Samer.

When I arrived at Montreuil-sur-Mer I found that I had to climb a very steep but short hill into the town. The street on this hill is extremely old-fashioned, with whitewashed houses curiously gabled, some slated and others thatched. Although it is called Montreuil-on-the-Sea, the sea is distant about six or seven miles, where the river Canche, on which Montreuil is situated, enters at Étaples. I put up at the Hôtel de France, a big building quite of the country kind. Its arrangements were very quaint, reminding me of the inns of two or three centuries ago as described in the attractive romances of Stanley Weyman and F. Frankfort Moore. Indeed, I should not have been at all surprised if D'Artagnan, that wonderful hero of Dumas, had come galloping along the street on his foam-flecked charger and dismounted in the yard. But he did not. From all the appearances, I expected to be made very comfortable, and to be compelled to eat garlic in my dinner. As to the comfort, I was completely satisfied; while I was agreeably disappointed in the matter of the garlic. The dinner was excellent, consisting of several courses, and costing only two and a quarter francs, which included as much beer as one wished. The waiting was somewhat rough and ready, and there was no change of the knife and fork at each course; but this is a custom in France to which one has to get used. Although it was quite a French hostelry, I found seven English-speaking people there besides myself, but they were mostly Americans resident in France for art, and enjoying a week-end away from Paris.

As a somewhat hardened tramp-tourist in Continental countries, I consider that most of the pleasure of Continental travel is lost by going to hotels where English people are catered for. I am prepared to cast myself into any civilised country, whether I know the language or not, and to trust to the natural friendliness of the people to a stranger. On this tour I was quite alone, and I got to know France and the French as I had not known them before. That is why I have given to this article the title, 'How I Discovered France.' There is enjoyment in the change of meals; and the *petit déjeuner* of rolls and coffee in the morning, in many hotels always served in one's room, is in itself a change which emphasises that one is in another country than one's own.

I spent one day at this place, and then went on, passing through Wailly, Lepine, Nampont, and Vron to a village called Nouvion. The villages are unattractive, and the country flat, with occasional rises which give the cyclist a little trouble. At Vron I had lunch at an uninviting *auberge*. '*Auberge*' sounds quite well; but, as I never tell a lie, I may as well say that it is practically a public-house. When a tramp is hungry he will have lunch anywhere. I had a very good lunch in the presence of three generations of proprietors, all females, the youngest being a somewhat mud-stained little girl called Marie Louise. 'Marie Louise' is a very favourite name in Picardy. The young people all spoke French very nicely to me; but when a number of draymen came in for a drink the children lapsed into the *patois*. The peasants here are fine people, very like rural Scotsmen in build and appearance. They were all most respectful, raising their caps with a cordial '*Bon jour, m'sieur*,' as they left. The old grandmother remarked to me, '*Vous parlez français très bien, m'sieur*.' It was very nice of her, and I think the recording angel did not take any notice; but as some slight compensation, in case he did, I gave Marie Louise threepence, with which she was highly pleased.

I mentioned Nouvion because here I struck off the direct route to visit the battlefield of Crécy, returning to the same main road afterwards. I cannot say that I saw anything special, but it is something to say that one has seen the site of the famous battle in which the Black Prince gained fame and 'won his spurs.' In due time I reached Abbeville, a fine provincial town with many monuments and a magnificent church, that of St Vulfran. I intended to spend the night here, but after seeing the sights I changed my mind. The population is something over twenty thousand, but the town gives the impression of a much larger number. It displays the French taste for commemorating its great men, and among the monuments are those to M. Lesueur and to Admiral Courbet.

I left Abbeville at five o'clock in the afternoon; and, as it was the end of October, darkness was not long delayed. The direction of Amiens from

Abbeville is easterly, and I soon found that an east wind had sprung up. This naturally gave everything a kind of a homely feeling, but it did not improve the pace. I have found that wherever I go I get the east wind. I have been told that a strong east wind was blowing when I was born, and I quite believe it. From Abbeville to Amiens is about thirty-three miles. When I started from Abbeville I had only a vague idea of going a few miles farther; but I soon enjoyed the experience of going over an unknown road in complete darkness, and so I decided to go all the way to Amiens. Twice I had to dismount to walk up hills that seemed about ten miles long, but that cannot have been more than about half a mile long each. I 'larded the lean earth' generously, though the night was cool. As it was cloudy, there was no moon. At one part the road ran through a forest, and was as dark as a cellar and very weird. I had a splendid acetylene lamp, which illumined the way a long distance in front of me and added to the weirdness. At a very dark part of the road another cyclist emerged like a shadow from the gloom, and as he had no light he hung on to me. It was a comfort to have some one to talk to, even though the conversation was not very fast. I was glad when the lights of Amiens came into view, and very soon I found myself in what is really a splendid old city. It was rather awkward to choose my hotel. I had made two mistakes in my packing. One was that I had forgotten to take soap with me, but I had rectified this omission on my way to the steamer. The other was that I had packed a list of German hotels instead of the French list which I meant to carry. But I simply asked at a shop for the kind of hotel which I wanted, and found myself fully satisfied with the Grand Hôtel de la Paix. The dinner was excellent, and only cost three francs, including red and white wine and mineral waters, and I had an exceedingly comfortable and quite pretty room, with electric light, for two and a half francs per day. I remained two days there, and considered that my arrival at Amiens marked the accomplishment of the first stage of my tour, in the fact that I now felt quite at home in the country which I had discovered.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

CHAPTER L.—*continued.*

JACK lay wondering how Mavie was standing it, whether she might have moved inadvertently and disclosed her hiding-place; and then, horribly, if the sand might perchance have started sliding again, and covered her breathing-hole and smothered her! The possibility of that tormented him; and it was no wild fear, for one time when he himself had moved slightly he felt more and more sand piling over him till it grew oppressive. It was only by a mighty effort that he restrained himself from creeping out to see if all was well with her.

Then he felt small feet on his sand-covering, and a couple of rabbits hopped over his face on their way to breakfast. And then, after what seemed hours of burial, his heart leaped into his mouth at sound of a man's voice just above him, and at the same moment the terrified rabbits scuttled over him to their burrow.

'*Non!*' said the voice. 'Not a sign of them!' He was evidently on top of the sandhill, gazing round. 'We are only wasting our time here. They never came this way, I'll swear. *Ma foi!* but there are rabbits here. Lend me your gun, Monsieur Garnichon, and you shall have rabbit for supper. *Vîa!* They 're off into their holes.'

'Now pray Heaven he doesn't jump down this side and land on top of us!' thought Jack.

'All the same,' said he on the sandhill, in reply to some remark of Garnichon's, 'if we can't find what we want we needn't go back empty-handed. *Eh b'en, allons donc!*' and he swung down the other side of the mound, and they passed away, leaving Jack—and, he doubted not, Mavie also—in a cold sweat at the narrowness of their escape, but hot at heart with gratitude for it.

His wounded leg got a cramp in it, so sore that his teeth ground together in dumb agony. This absolute immobility was maddening. He doubted if he could endure until such time as the danger might be considered safely past. An age of torture followed, during which his head seemed like to burst with its agonised throbbing. His thoughts swam mistily.

Possibly he was unconscious for a time, for he was suddenly and violently jerked back to a knowledge of things by a hand clapping the sand covering his shoulder, and a cheery voice said, 'You may come out, monsieur. They have gone off towards Carentan, those others;' and Jack wriggled out of his sandy bed, and sat up in amazement and stared blankly at the speaker.

He was a man of middle age, short-set and sturdy, open-faced, blue-eyed, and of a very cheerful manner. 'Good!' he laughed. 'Tell the other rabbit she may come out also.' And Mavie sat up and stared at him likewise.

'You saw us?' asked Jack, somewhat crest-fallen.

'Naturally, because, you see, I'm used to the dunes. It was well thought of, and might have

passed with another; but I've known these dunes since I was so high.'

'And what now?'

'Where do you want to get to?'

'Across to Jersey or Sercq.'

'Ah! And whom do you know in Sercq?'

'George Hamon—Philip Carré.'

'The good Hamon is enough—and the fact that M. Cornu and his Garnichon want you.'

'You will help us?'

'*Ma foi*, what do you suppose I'm here for? And why did I send those others on to Carentan when I knew you were burrowed in the sand there?'

'If you will help us across I can pay you well—when we get there,' said Jack cautiously.

'It's payment to me to know that I'm balking the good Cornu, whom I detest, and his Garnichon, who amuses me. *Ma foi*, yes! I'll help you all right, but it must be on the quiet, you understand. No need to make trouble for one's self at home here.'

'But why?' asked Mavie anxiously. 'Why will you help us?'

'It is as I say, ma'm'selle. There are many would help you simply for the pleasure of spoiling the good Cornu.'

'You do not like him?'

'There is only one likes him, and that is M. Cornu. Even Madame—— But that is neither here nor there. However, there it is. He is not liked—no!'

'Can you get us something to eat?' asked Mavie hungrily.

'Within the hour. And for the rest, you had better lie low here till nightfall. Then we will go quietly along there to Port Bail without announcing ourselves, and it's odd if we can't find some kind of boat lying about. The night will be fine,' he said, glancing out over the sea. 'You can row?'

'Yes,' said Jack.

'I offered to keep watch here while the good Garnichon searches round Carentan. Oh, he amuses me, does that good man! He is so very clever and so very simple, it is a pleasure to lead him astray. Now I will get you something to eat. Keep in the hollows, lest others should see you.' And he went off along the dunes towards Port Bail.

'Can we trust him, Jack?' asked Mavie anxiously.

'We've got to.'

'He looks honest. It's wonderful—just when we needed him.'

'They are not too fond of the new order of things round here. Good thing it was he that climbed that sandhill!'

There was a new tone in his voice, a gruffness and restraint in his manner, that struck her almost like a rebuff. She looked at him more than once, with questions in her eyes and on her lips; but his face was set hard and tight, and she did not ask them.

She sat and wondered. Had she done anything to wound him? Or was it the more visible wound that troubled him? And, trying back to find out how she could be in fault, she remembered vaguely the words that had wakened her; and, having got that far, she sat and pondered them, and there was not a word between them till their new friend appeared noiselessly alongside them with brown bread, which the edge of their hunger endowed with most surprising sweetness, and fat bacon and cheese.

'*V'là!*' said he with abounding cheerfulness, 'you will not starve. And here is a bottle of red wine, and a small one of cognac. It is such dry work watching the dunes!'

'And the boat?' asked Jack.

'Pierre Maillot will come in late from the fishing to-night, and will be too weary to haul up his boat. If he should find it gone in the morning—*eh bien!*—what would you? Some rascal has gone off with it, and there you are! If he should find a gold piece or two in its place—well, it's an old boat, and he was thinking of getting a new one the first chance that offered.'

'I hope it will carry us all right,' said Mavie nervously.

'With a little bailing now and again, ma'm'selle;' which did not tend overmuch to her reassurance.

'May we know your name, monsieur?' she asked. 'It will be pleasant to think of one's benefactor.'

'M. le Normand will do well enough,' he said with a smile. 'Then your good thoughts will spread wide. And you, ma'm'selle?'

'I am Mary Lauriston.'

'Ah, we have a Lauriston also—a brave soldier and a good fellow, though he does serve Bonaparte.'

'I know him, but he is not of our family.'

'And why does ma'm'selle want to leave France?'

'Because Monsieur Bonaparte has kept me here for over two years against my will, and my mother is ill, and wants me. That is all.'

'I am doubly glad to be of service to ma'm'selle.'

'You are very good, M. le Normand, and I shall never forget you as long as I live.'

'May it be long, ma'm'selle! And monsieur here?' with a nod towards silent Jack. 'Ma'm'selle's brother?'

'No; a very dear friend. My father sent him to bring me home.'

'Monsieur was honoured indeed with such a trust;' and Jack nodded his thanks and made play with the brown bread and bacon.

'He is wounded in the leg,' said Mavie.

'Ah! *Voyons donc!* Perhaps I can be of assistance. I have seen wounds;' and he made Jack roll up his trouser-leg and show him his wound, which by this time was much discoloured and badly swollen.

'It is not good,' said Le Normand at the sight. 'But all you can do here is to keep it bound and the bandage constantly damp. And when you get across there have it seen to at once. The bullet is in? No! That is good. Will you be able to row? One rows with the legs as well as with the hands.'

'I'll row all right once I get into the boat,' said Jack stoutly.

'It is a long pull,' with a doubtful look at him, 'and you have lost blood. But no man could go from here, for there is a gendarme now in every village to keep an eye on all our goings and comings.'

'We shall manage it all right.'

'I'll help, Jack, if you'll show me how,' said Mavie eagerly.

'We shall manage it all right,' he said again.

Every now and again Le Normand climbed one of the sandhills for a searching look round, but no one disturbed them, and the day dragged slowly on. He kept Jack's bandage damp, too; and came back from a saunter on the shore with the forked branch of a tree which he trimmed with his knife into a rough crutch.

'I hope the *maire's* house did not burn down?' said Mavie to him one time.

'Oh no!' he laughed. 'It was well done that. It kept them occupied. The good Garnichon was too busy with his broken head to think of anything else, and M. le Maire was very unhappy in his stomach where monsieur jumped upon it.'

The sun sank behind Jersey at last in a wonderful sky of palest lucent green flushed with amber and crimson, till all the colours faded, above and below, and the face of the sea grew cold, and the voice of it held something of a challenge and a menace.

'Now,' said Le Normand, when Mavie had begun to shiver with cold and eagerness, 'we will go, for we shall go slowly;' and they set off along the shore towards Port Bail.

The going was, as he said, slow and heavy, and for Jack a veritable purgatory which nothing but the greater hope beyond could have carried him through. With his crutch on one side, and Le Normand's strong arm on the other, he managed to get along indeed, but all the blood in his body seemed to concentrate in his dangling leg, and it was shot with pains as from white-hot probes. He ground his teeth hard, and his face was twisted like a gargoyle, but no word of complaint escaped him. He shut his eyes and stumped along through the darkness in what seemed a horrible nightmare that had no end.

Their guide avoided the village and led them round the estuary to the point opposite the semaphore station, and there they came without difficulty upon a boat drawn up on the sand.

'*V'là!* The good Maillot is equal to his word,' said Le Normand. 'And the sooner you are off the sooner you will get there, if it pleases the good God to favour you.'

With such assistance as Mavie could render, he managed to get the boat afloat, and between them they got Jack into it.

'We can never thank you for all your goodness, monsieur,' said Jack as he sank gratefully on to the thwart. 'Please pay for the boat out of this, and do what you will with the rest.'

'Whatever is left shall go to the further thwarting of Monsieur Cornu and Garnichon,' laughed Le Normand as he crushed the note into his pocket, and was surprised next morning to discover the amount of it. But as he peered at Jack in the darkness his face sobered.

'Think you can manage it?' he asked doubtfully.

'I'll manage it. And again our most grateful thanks!'

'Take this, ma'm'selle; you may need it;' and he pushed into her hand the flask of cognac which he had come upon as he stowed away the note. 'The good Pierre has left you three oars, I see, and a rag of a sail. It may ease your course if the wind comes off the land. Now listen! On the left are the Ecréhos. They are the nearest, but there is no one living there since George Hamon carried away his two dumb men, and it would be dangerous to try to make them in the dark. On the right are the Grunes. You will hear the sea on them and avoid them. Keep due west and get well out before daylight. Yonder is the North Star; you can steer by that. The tide will give you all the northing you want, and you should be about opposite Sercq by the time you see it.'

They wrung his hand gratefully, and he gave their little craft its final shove into deep water, and stood, with the water up to his knees, watching till the darkness swallowed them.

'He's a brave boy,' he said to himself, with a doubtful shake of the head. 'If only his strength will last out!'

*(To be continued.)*

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# STRANGE TALES OF THE CANADIAN WEST.

By W. J. Barclay.

ANY a curious tale has been told by adventurous travellers when in pre-settlement days they penetrated the vast solitudes of prairie, forest, or mountain-valley. In the summer of 1862 there was a great rush to the newly discovered gold-mines of Cariboo. A party of over a hundred gold-seekers from Ontario and Quebec made the journey overland *vid* St Paul, Fort Garry, the prairies, and across the Rockies by the Leatherhead Pass. Descending the Fraser on rafts and in canoes, they found their greatest trials in its tumultuous waters, more than one life being lost in the rapids of the Grand Cañon. The circumstances attending the death of a Torontonian named Carpenter were singular. His party consisted of three other men from the same city, Messrs Fletcher, Handcock, and Alexander. When they arrived at the rapids they explored the cañon, it being agreed by lot that Fletcher and Handcock

should portage the outfit while Carpenter and Alexander ran the rapids in the canoe. In midstream the canoe struck a rock and upset. Alexander was a strong swimmer, and managed to reach the shore in safety; but Carpenter appeared stunned, and sank immediately. While exploring the cañon his companions had noticed Carpenter making some memoranda in his note-book, which he replaced in an inner pocket of his coat and left on the bank before entering the canoe. His sorrowing companions found the entry to be: 'Arrived at Grand Cañon, ran the cañon, and was drowned.'

The phenomena of Nature sometimes took a tragical, sometimes a puzzling form. During a storm on the prairies near the south branch of the Saskatchewan a rain of fire suddenly descended upon a camp of Cree Indians and burned everything around them. Thirty-two Crees perished in the flames. The ground was burned deeply for a considerable distance, and only one or two of the party who stood near a deep slough were able to save themselves by jumping into the water. It was not a flash of lightning, but a rain of fire that lasted for some moments.

Different from this meteoric shower was a magnetic storm that swept over Lake Isle à la Crosse in the winter of 1869. A party of Indians and half-breeds were crossing the lake on the ice, when suddenly their hair stood up on end, the hair of the dogs turned the wrong way, and the woollen blankets belonging to the party even evinced signs of becoming upright.

The Rev. John M'Dougall, pioneer missionary of Saskatchewan, relates how he saw a wonderful mirage while travelling with his native wife on the high land near the Red Deer River. They were one hundred and fifty miles from the mountains, yet under the spell of the mirage they were brought so close that the horses appeared to be heading right into them. Watching the panorama, they could see beyond the mountains a large body of water, with hills in the background. Then on the water a steamer came into view standing on her course, with a long trail of smoke falling astern. The mirage had lifted that scene, distant at least seven hundred miles in British Columbia, thousands of feet into the heavens, to make it visible on the prairie across the Rocky Mountains.

There once lay on the lonely summit of a hill far out on the prairie between the North and South Saskatchewans, a huge block of metal. It was a medicine-stone of surpassing virtue among the Indians over a vast territory. No band of Crees, Blackfeet, or Sarcees would pass in the vicinity without paying a visit to this great medicine-stone to lay their offerings upon it to propitiate the mysterious powers dwelling therein. Strange stories were told in the lodges concerning this stone. Old men remembered having heard men say that they were once able to lift it, but yearly it had grown in weight so that no single man could carry it. It is little wonder that Indian superstition was stirred by this stone. It was not of this world; it had fallen from heaven. It was, in fact, a meteorite. In the year 1869 the missionary of Victoria, a small settlement north-east of Edmonton, caused the stone to be brought in to the mission. When the Indians heard of the desecration they were loud in expression of their regret, while the old medicine-men declared its removal would be followed by war, disease, and the disappearance of the buffalo. It is curious as a coincidence that in the following year the plague of smallpox swept over the Saskatchewan country with fearful violence, leaving whole camps of victims to rot unburied on the plains. The plague was accompanied by the afflictions of tribal war, carried on, in spite of the disease, with unparalleled ferocity; while a few short years sufficed for the extermination of the countless buffalo herds. The stone was afterwards shipped to Toronto, where the curious can now see it in the museum of Victoria University. It is also of interest to note that Iron Creek, Alberta, derives its name from this historic stone, for it was near its banks that it reposed so long a *manito* of the Red Man.

A strange adventure befell Captain Denny of the North-West mounted police in the summer of 1875. From the fort on Old Man River he took a trip to the foothills of the mountains, about forty miles distant, for the purpose of fishing and deer-hunting. He was accompanied by an Indian guide. The hunt was successful, both the captain and his guide killing a deer. He sent the Indian back to the fort with the horses loaded with the venison, while he inflated a rubber boat brought for the purpose, in which he purposed returning to the fort, fishing on the way. During the morning he made good headway down the river, only once having trouble at a rather nasty rapid, in the middle of which he stuck on a flat stone, and was upset in getting off. He got a thorough wetting before he caught his boat again. About noon the weather began to look threatening, heavy banks of clouds gathering in the north. The thunderstorms along the mountains are usually of short duration, but very severe while they last. When the storm broke the captain sought shelter in a clump of timber on the south bank, and during a lull in its fury he plainly heard the drums beating in an Indian camp, and the accompanying 'Hi-ya' mingling with the sound. Leaving his boat drawn up on the shore and safely tied, he made his way towards the sound. The storm came down worse than ever, and the lightning was blinding as he made his way through the timber. In an open glade the Indian camp of about twenty lodges lay before him plainly visible, two hundred yards away, with a band of horses grazing on the farther side, the gleam of fires shining through the open entrances of the lodges. This was surprising, as the Indians do not move about in the wet if they can help it, and their lodges are kept closed through superstitious fear of the thunder. Captain Denny stood for a few seconds watching the scene, considering which lodge

to make for. He had made a step or two towards that nearest him, when he seemed to be surrounded with a blaze of lightning, and the crash of thunder stunned him and caused him to fall from the shock. A large tree was struck not far off; he could hear the rending of wood. It was several minutes before he was able to rise and look around. But, to his unutterable astonishment and terror, the camp had disappeared. Where a large Indian camp had stood in full view, the voices of its inhabitants distinctly audible, nothing remained in sight but an empty glade surrounded by storm-tossed trees. Little wonder that the captain, before he could gather his wits together, turned and ran, dropping his gun in his course. When lack of breath caused him to sit down on the bank of the river, a quarter of a mile away, he determined to leave his boat and walk to the fort rather than approach the spot again. The fifteen miles made a hard journey, but he arrived about midnight, draggled and worn-out. The story told to his brother officers next morning at the breakfast-table caused only laughter and chaff as a freak of the imagination. But the captain was firmly convinced of the reality of the experience. He was determined to proceed to the spot again and bring back his boat and gun. With an Indian and Blackfoot interpreter he returned that day, finding no difficulty in locating the place; but it was vacant, without sign of any recent camp. A few rings of stones overgrown with grass showed where an old camp had been many years before. The Indian related how the Blackfeet had surprised and slaughtered a camp of Crees at this spot, and two bleached skulls found among the grass were evident proof of the story.

Archdeacon Winter, a Church of England missionary among the tribes on the shores of Hudson Bay, related a strange experience to a friend of the writer. He was returning to the mission at Fort Churchill after a visit to a distant tribe in his pastorate, and had camped one day's journey from home. During the night he had a vivid dream of his wife calling to him to wake up as he was in danger. The impression was so strong that he immediately woke, and was horrified to find the camp in the possession of a great polar bear, snarling and making signs of attack when he sat up. With a cry he roused his Indian driver, and together they succeeded in killing the fierce intruder. On arrival at the mission next day, Archdeacon Winter found his wife had been greatly perturbed over a dream the previous night, in which she saw a large bear attacking the camp where he was lying asleep. In terror she called to him, and woke up in her excitement. The vision had been so realistic that she slept no more, and an anxious interval was spent until his arrival. A comparison of time showed the Archdeacon and his wife that their visions had been coincident, and a case of genuine telepathy.

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# THE BURIED TALENT.

By ROSAMOND KENDALL.

CARL BRANDT sat on his high stool in the little office of the wayside station of Nehata. Though it was on the great railway-line running direct from Chicago and the West to the great cities of the East, there was no bustle of going and coming at Nehata. Around the little depôt the murmuring of a noble river was answered only by the whispering of the leaves in the virgin forest. On the banks of this river, in a clearing in the forest, the crude, unfinished little townlet of Nehata was hidden. In his solitude, Carl bent his dark head in close attention, not over a ledger, but over a tattered volume of Beethoven's sonatas. He conned it with absorption, as though to him it were a thrilling romance.

The tinkle of a telegraph-bell broke the silence. He jumped from his stool, passed through the small, dusty waiting-room on to the platform—if platform it could be called, for it consisted but of thick, uneven boards laid on a level with the permanent way. The telegraph-wires had signalled to him that the six o'clock express running between the West and Chicago had passed the last signalling-point, and in five minutes would whirl like a tornado through the station. It was his duty, amongst many other things, to close the gates of the level-crossing near at hand. The work at Nehata station was divided between Carl and the stationmaster. There were no porters—why should there be? If any one came or went the whole village knew, and a large contingent of friends and idlers assembled to give a helping hand if needed.

Having closed the gates and exchanged a word of greeting with a wagoner whom he advised not to risk crossing before the train passed, Carl returned, and stood near the edge of the platform, gazing down the line. He could hear the distant murmur of the approaching train, see its powerful forelights looking no larger than dancing fireflies on a summer night. The murmur became a deafening roar and the dancing fireflies blinding lights as the mighty engine, dragging in its wake its load of brilliantly lighted saloons, dining-cars, sleeping-apartments, thundered past the solitary figure at the rate of fifty-five miles an hour.

Carl had stood so near as almost to endanger his life; a few feet nearer and he would have been sucked in with the mighty onrush. When the train had passed he stood perfectly motionless, only heaving a sigh that was almost a sob. How he longed for

it to gather him up and sweep him along with it! To Carl the passing of this express was the event of the day. He never failed, if his duties permitted, to stand and watch it fly past. Other trains thundered past in the twenty-four hours, but none had taken hold of his imagination as this one had. It was the embodiment of romance to him. It flew with its precious burden, like a huge arrow of living light, straight from the wealthy cities of the West to the capital of the East. There, in imagination, Carl could see its passengers embarking on stately ships and sailing away to the cities of the Old World—the cities where the world's musicians had lived and were living. But every night it thundered past and left him standing alone, in winter to the silence of the deep snow, and in summer to the cheerful, shrill chirp of myriads of crickets.

A loud, impatient 'Hallo!' from the wagoner at the closed gate awoke Carl from his trance, and he hastened to take up his duties again. After opening the gates he locked up the office, as no train would pass for more than an hour, and went home to his early supper. He walked across the river-bridge, stood dreamily for a moment gazing at the flowing water, then a little farther on lifted the latch of the door of a wooden cottage standing by the roadside without any enclosing railings. There was no one in the homely, comfortable kitchen, but the red glow from a closed anthracite stove lit it with a cheerful radiance. Carl's mother, who was much in demand as a skilled needlewoman, had gone some distance away, and to-night he had to get his own supper.

He closed the door behind him, and walked straight through the kitchen and up the creaky stair to his own room. He returned in a short time, carrying something tenderly in his hand. It was an old violin that had been his father's. He sat down on a low stool by the stove, and soon the strains of a haunting melody, full of longing and pathos, floated through the little room; it was a melody to stir in the hearts of a multitude a longing to be something they were not, a longing to live life on a higher plane, a melody to drag once more to the light of day the ideals and aspirations buried deep in the heart by years of selfishness and indolence. But only the wooden walls and rafters heard, as Carl with deep, dark, mysterious eyes looked into space and saw things that could not be put into words.

So absorbed was he that he did not hear the door open. A woman stood on the threshold, and as she took in the picture a look of terror crossed her pale, careworn face. It was a face of unusual beauty and refinement, marred by great sorrow.

Carl looked up, abruptly stopped playing, and carefully put down his violin.

'My boy! haven't you had your supper yet?'

'I'm sorry, mother, I forgot. I did intend to have all ready for you.' He bent upon her a look of tender solicitude, lighted the oil-lamp, and bustled about with cheerful alacrity to get the supper. While he swallowed his hasty meal his mother told him of a promise made to her that day for his advancement.

It was not the vision of future advancement that occupied Carl's mind as he returned to work; it was his mother's look of terror. He knew, but scarcely realised, why she held his music in such abhorrence. He never played knowingly in her presence, feeling the pain it gave her. To-night he had forgotten time.

Margaret Brandt had suffered so much in her life that to her music was not a God-given gift, a voice of inspiration which began where words left off; it was evil, a subtle instrument of the devil which he used to drag men's souls down to perdition. To music she attributed all her husband's shortcomings. Carl's father had been a German musician of no mean talent. There was no romance of mystery enveloping the names of the great cities of the Old World to her. They conjured up a vision of dazzle and glitter and excitement, of temptation and gradual degradation, and final unspeakable catastrophe that ever after haunted her dreams and waking hours. It was her wish that her son should grow up in ignorance of music, lest he should be an indolent ne'er-do-well. It was her highest ambition that he should become a prosperous business man in this growing community—prosaic, methodical, hard-working, and honoured. Contrary to her wishes, his father had taught him to play the violin before he went out of their lives, partly to give his wife uneasiness, and partly because he could not help it, his pupil was so apt and eager.

Alas for human plans! Little Carl was a born-genius. His father had musical aptitude, fostered by careful training, and then degraded by evil living. But Carl was one of those rare beings to whom God has revealed His mysteries that they may interpret them to their fellow-men. He knew what the leaves whispered to each other as they rustled in the soft breezes of a summer night. The waters of the stately river murmured an audible message to him from the lands through which they had flowed. The gorgeous sunset, flaming like myriad torches above the quiet, even world of winter, was more to him than a splendid pageant—it was a triumphant chorus sung by the dying day to the Maker of all things. He could translate it into sweet sounds on his violin; and if any one had chanced to ask him what he played, he would have answered simply, 'It is the sunset.' His genius grew as he grew, for it was not a part of him; it was the whole. Every breath he drew, everything he saw and felt, contributed.

For some time after the cottage door had closed upon Carl, his mother moved restlessly about the kitchen; then, as though she had taken a resolution, she took up the lamp from the table and stole upstairs into his little room. She took the violin out of its case and looked at it with bitter resentment; then, in a paroxysm of passion, she raised it above her head, dashed it upon the ground, and stamped

upon it until it was no better than useless driftwood for evoking sweet sounds.

When Carl returned home at the close of his day's work he found his mother lying insensible against the shattered fragments of his beloved violin. After the kindly neighbour whom Carl had summoned to his assistance had gone, he sat through the silent watches of the night by his mother's bedside. 'Twas then that he understood from her delirious ravings, as he had never understood before, the force of the terror that obsessed her.

'Forgive me, Carl,' she said to him one night, laying her thin, transparent hand upon his. 'I thought it was for the best.'

'I forgive you, mother. I'll never play in your presence again unless you wish me to do so, and I'll never strive to leave this place for a wider sphere without your consent,' Carl said solemnly. 'But,' he added with youthful dignity, 'you can never crush the music out of my soul. That will only cease with life. I know it is a God-given gift.'

The subject was not mentioned between them again during the many weary months Carl's mother dragged on an existence of semi-invalidism. But when he ministered to her with tender devotion her poor, wistful eyes would follow him with a pleading look as though asking forgiveness. Day after day Carl dispensed tickets from the little office-window, and every night he watched the express flash past on its way from the great cities and plains of the West to the dazzling cities of the East. His genius was like a mighty river pent up between rocky banks. The force of the current had dug out a channel for itself, where the water flowed so deep and swift that none noticed how strong was the tide; it was pent up by the strong bonds of his love for his mother. While he was ministering to this broken, wronged woman, his soul was attuned to the still, sad music of humanity. He learnt the lesson that Christ taught—that there is no privilege and joy on earth like that of service. When he was twenty-two years of age her tired, troubled spirit was ready to quit its frail tenement.

'Carl,' she said to him, with the light of eternity shining in her face, 'I have lost my terror for you. When I am gone, go back, if you wish, into the great world where your father sinned so deeply. If your happiness is there, earn your living by your music. My fears have all gone. I know you will be steadfast and true.'

It was five minutes to six; the express had been signalled. After closing the gates, Carl stood on the platform to see it rush past as usual, when something happened that had never happened in his experience. Instead of thundering past, the train slowed down and came to a standstill with many a snort and shriek. One of the darky train-attendants sprang on to the platform, and, seeing Carl, shouted, 'Here, young fellah! you are the man we want. We've Madame Voghera on board, and she wants to send a telegram to Chicago. She's to sing there in less than three hours, and the man that plays for her has gone and trapped his finger taking my job from me. Serves him right! Just hustle! We don't want to miss time.'

Carl leaped on to the high step from the low platform, and then followed the darky attendant down the middle aisle of the crowded compartments, and through the brilliant dining-car where the people were dining with such a display of sparkling glass and white napery as he had never seen before. He followed his stalwart guide through the crowded cars as one in a dream. For three years he had envied the people in this train, and dreamed of the romances and the divers destinies they were flying towards while he was left stranded. Now that he could look them in the face he was oblivious of their presence. All he realised was that he was being taken for an audience with the greatest singer of her day. The name of the brilliant star in the musical world was as familiar to him as that of the well-known stars of the heavenly constellation, and, as he thought, as far away. Now he was going to hear the voice of the great *diva!* She was going to address him!

The attendant flung open the door of the private saloon, and ushered Carl into what appeared to be a luxurious drawing-room, heavy with the perfume of rare flowers. There were three occupants, but Carl had eyes only for one—a beautiful woman in the prime of life. She had thrown aside her heavy cloak, for the saloon was warm. Her graceful figure, in its clinging white gown, and her beautiful, proud head were outlined sharply against the dark green of the high-backed chair. How beautiful she was! A queen in looks was this Queen of Song. Carl stood up straight and stiff before her, resisting a desire to fall on one knee as became a courtier.

But it was not she who addressed him. The voice of a dejected-looking young man broke the silence by saying in sharp, peremptory tones, 'I want this message telegraphed at once: "To Victor Foster, The Central Hall, Chicago.—Mayo has injured his hand, and is unable to play. Procure the best accompanist you can on short notice.—VOGHERA." Kindly let me see you have not bungled the message. I am unable to write it myself.'

Carl handed him the slip of paper, but his attention was still all for the *prima donna*. There was some magnetic power in the ardent gaze of his dark eyes, for Madame Voghera was returning his look with evident interest.

'Ah madame,' he said with a catch in his voice, 'I think I should die happy if I played but once for you!' The words slipped out unintentionally. It was a simple statement, with no presumption of desire or request in it.

'If *you* played! Are you mad?' the angry, scornful voice of the young man asked. 'Do you realise who this lady is? She doesn't go around begging country bumpkins to play for her. Why, the greatest musicians'——

'Gently, Mayo—gently!' Madame Voghera interrupted, with a low, rippling laugh of amusement and a silencing wave of her hand towards the speaker. 'Country bumpkin fits this gentleman no better than it does you. He has the hands and brows of a musician, if I am any judge; and I should be, for I have seen all that are, and all that pretend to be, the world over.'

Carl never forgot in after-years that the first time those tones of liquid gold fell upon his ear they were used in his defence.

'So you think you could play for me to-night?' she asked, leaning forward and looking with approval, not unmixed with amusement, at the straight, dignified young figure before her. 'Wouldn't you be nervous? There will be five thousand people there, and I am hard to please.'

'I should think only of your voice, madame, not of the people.'

The answer seemed to please her. She was a woman of caprice, and now, with laughter in her eyes, rose to her feet, took the slip of paper out of the hands of the reluctant Mayo, and slowly tore it into shreds. 'Well, you shall,' she said. 'I'm willing to risk it. Anyway, you can't spoil my reputation. —Mayo,' she continued with a smile of mischief, 'you will have to lend him a dress-suit. He is about your size.'

'Madame,' Carl said, with a note of hesitation, 'perhaps I may not be able to come.'

'You are afraid! You are backing out!' she said, turning quickly.

'No, madame; but my duty lies here. The stationmaster may not release me.'

'Oh, nonsense!—Send him to me,' she said to the darky porter.—If *I* want you, that is enough.'

The train was delayed for another ten minutes while Madame Voghera explained to the stationmaster of Nehata depôt that she had need of his clerk and porter, and that at a moment's notice. She would have delayed the train with as little concern if an emperor had been on board.

'Now,' she exclaimed as the train was once more under way, 'sit down here and tell me all about yourself. I am tired of reading, and the journey is tedious. Somehow I feel you are one of us.'

Thus was Carl gathered up and swept into the great world from which he received grateful adulation.

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# ABOUT ANIMALS.

By Mrs Gorges.

I HAVE been reading a quaint little American story, 'Anna Malann,' which, homely as it is, has a touch that thrilled my heart, as it would the heart of every lover of animals, of every one who feels for their helplessness, and for the misery which so many suffer from man's cruelty and indifference to their 'rights.' 'It seemed to me,' said Anna, 'there wasn't a minute of the whole living day that there wasn't something cruel or unjust or dreadful done to poor helpless creatur's even right around us; and what must it be take the whole world over? I says. I was nigh about crazy, and I'd seem to hear such a noise of whips swishing, and sticks pounding, and kicks sounding hollow against creatur's' sides, and then a whining and moaning and crying out of the beings one calls dumb, that I couldn't stand it anyhow. . . . I made up my mind I'd got to have a finger in this pie.' How she got her finger in and kept it there forms the subject of this delightful little sketch, one of several in a small American book named *Dumb Foxglove*.

She begins life by hot revolt against the doctrines held by the New England community in which she lived, 'that animals hasn't got no rights as folks has.' . . . "Why, ain't they folks anyway?" I says to myself. "What makes the difference? They act like folks, they're good or they're bad, they're lazy or industrious, they're noisy or quiet, pleasant or ugly, selfish or free-handed, peaceable or snarly. In short, they've got ways. There's no two creatur's just alike, no more than there is folks. They take sick like folks too, and they don't like to suffer no more'n folks do; and, come to the last, they die like folks. And why haven't they got any rights?"'

So Anna Malann determined that she would give up her life to the animals, because they were so badly treated in this life, and had no compensation before them; for she could not get away from the stern New England theology which denied the hope of a future to them. 'Me and all the real folks that's had everything in this world—rights, and laws to protect their rights, and—and souls, us all inside heaven, and them that's been put upon and worried and tortured all their days—them outside of it all! Oh! I couldn't stand it. . . . You see, folks are generally so busy saving their own souls and other people's—heathen and all—they can't attend to righting the awful wrongs done to creatur's, and it's natural, I know. But I've got a leaning that way, and I'm so made that I seem to know how to help animals and coax folks to be good to them. So I just tell God right out all about it: that I feel I must give up my whole life, day in and day out, to helping and comforting these creatur's He has made, and made so like folks in everything except just not having souls. . . . I tell Him I love Him, and want to serve Him, but I've got such a terrible aching and burning over the things done to these creatur's that I can't attend to the other things folks tell me is the highest, most important ones. I

haven't got time for all the meetings—the sewing society, the temperance and teachers' meetings, and the anti-smoking society. I'm drove day and night looking after suffering creatur's, fetching home them that's lost, nursing the sick, cherking up the lonesome and home-sick. Why, you wouldn't believe how full my hands be! And so I tell Him, plain but humble and respectful, that if He thinks best to say because I give up the work and duty of a professor I must give up the rewards too, why, I've nothing to say. He knows best, understanding the whole case, and I know He'll do right.'

So when Anna Malann—her real name was Ann Ellis, but her boys called her Animal Ann because of her 'settin' so much on creatur's'—was free to choose her own life she decided to settle in a small village, one with but a few houses, and these tenanted by young couples and their small children. She believed in getting hold of the young. She found an ideal place, some eight or ten cottages, each inhabited by a 'large small family.' These cottages had been built by the people themselves on ground between two roads, which was a kind of 'no man's land' and rent free. Here Anna found virgin soil to work on, with a result which will surprise no one who knows the power of first impressions with children. But Anna herself, as she related the story to the writer of her simple tale, remarked on the extraordinary goodness of the boys in that village, and said it was no merit of hers that they were so tender-hearted to animals that they must just have been born good, and maybe she ought just to have shifted to where they were harder-hearted and wanted teaching.

Anna herself never preached or indeed taught in the usual acceptation of the word, but she was very good to the children, and naturally they copied her in the loving care she took of animals in distress, beginning by wishing to please her, and finding love and interest in the service.

The story opens with the blank astonishment of a lady travelling in New England at seeing boys gathered round a poor dog who has evidently met with an accident, and is dying. One of the boys is holding the dog across his knees in an attitude calculated to ease the poor animal, but very irksome to himself, while another has brought cold water. They are so intent on striving to soothe him, so concerned over his pain, that they only notice the lady who comes to gaze in her astonishment by 'Hush!' and an upraised hand to warn her against disturbing the sick dog. But the dog was dying, the tender little hands could do no more, and the patient creature seemed to find rest in them, as, with a wistful look in the pathetic brown eyes, they closed in death. When assured of this, the boy who had been supporting the dog released himself gently from his strained position, and laid the creature down as tenderly as if he could still be hurt. Yet, as transpired, it was only a stray dog whom the boys had found in this state, the result probably of having been run over. 'We'll take him to Anna Malann,' they said; and the spectator of this strange little drama followed, to find out who this wonderful Anna Malann might be who could transform the proverbial 'boy' into an angel of mercy! And she tells the story of Anna Malann's life and aims as she was told it by Anna herself.

That animals have no rights has been the keynote to their treatment by men and women during the centuries, and more than all by the children of the successive generations, who imitate what they see and hear from the 'grown-ups,' with keen delight in cruelty growing from the sense of power which hurting or killing the 'creatur's' gives them. It begins when they are so young that the habit is ingrained. Who has not witnessed a wee toddler getting hold of a kitten or a puppy, not to pet or play with, but to torment almost to the verge of torture, while the mother looks complacently on? 'It amuses baby,' she says if any one ventures to remonstrate; while 'It's mine!' comes defiantly from the youngster if his feelings are appealed to. But should the victim be goaded into a scratch or a bite in self-defence a terrible reckoning awaits it. No treatment, even to starvation or expulsion, is too bad, while baby howls over the prick received, the tiny drop of blood oozing out. How often I have wished I could make the child feel once the pain he had been inflicting! But to the mother it seemed all right. The 'creatur's' were only playthings for her child—they had no rights; and yet otherwise she was a kind-hearted woman. And there are thousands like her. But a change has come over the world, and a growing conviction that we know too little of the animals around us to dare to regard them with contempt or treat them with cruelty.

Take Cardinal Newman's words on the subject: 'Could anything be more marvellous or startling—unless we were used to it—than that we should have a race of beings about us whom we do see yet as little know their state or can describe their interests or their destiny as we can tell of the inhabitants of the sun and moon? It is indeed a very overwhelming thought, when we get to fix our minds upon it, that we periodically use—I may say hold intercourse with—creatures who are as much strangers to us, as mysterious, as if they were the fabulous, unearthly beings, more powerful than man and yet his slaves, which Eastern superstitions have invented. We have more real knowledge about the angels than about the animals. They have apparently passions, habits, and a certain accountableness; but all is mystery about them. We do not know whether they can sin or not, whether they are under punishment, whether they are to live after this life; we inflict very great sufferings on a portion of them, and they in turn every now and then retaliate upon us as if by a wonderful law. Cast your thoughts abroad on the whole number of them, large and small, in vast forests, or in the water, or in the air, and then say whether the presence of such countless multitudes, so various in their natures, so strange and wild in their shapes, living

on the earth without ascertainable object, is not as mysterious as anything Scripture says about the angels.'

The same mystery was at the bottom of the New England woman's question, 'Why aren't they folks anyway?' Luther believed there was a future of happiness for them, 'delivered from the bondage of creation;' so did John Wesley and Charles Kingsley, and many another from among the 'folks' who lived close to God.

Anna Malann's heart would have been gladdened could she have listened to the words of Archdeacon Wilberforce some little time ago at a garden-party in aid of Our Dumb Friends League. He does not like the name of the society, but consoles himself that one could read it as a League of Dumb Friends taking care of animals whose language they could not master. It is they who are dumb. He looks upon animals as having retained much of the intuitive knowledge that we have lost. In Eden, he imagines, all kinds of intuitive channels existed between man and animals. Now we are obliged to address each other by making raucous sounds through the larynx, while animals have retained their beautiful old language of communicating their thoughts to one another by intuition. Imagine how one dog talks to another! Mankind has lost that power. 'Mankind are ten times more dependent upon animals than animals are upon men,' added Archdeacon Wilberforce; and he asked if they did not believe that animals had a soul. He ranked himself with men like Bishop Butler, Charles Kingsley, Dean Stanley, and others, who believed intensely in their continuity beyond the grave.

So far goes Archdeacon Wilberforce. But one who has thought deeply on the subject of animals finds them in some respects more richly endowed than man himself—these poor slaves who have borne so much at his hands. Lord Avebury's more recent investigations have led him to the conclusion that the difference between the minds of animals and those of men is one of degree rather than of quality. With regard to the senses of hearing and sight, he has found that some animals can hear sounds inaudible to us, and can perceive rays of light that are invisible to the human eye. Atmospheric vibrations varying from thirty-three to thirty thousand per second strike the human ear and produce the sense of sound. But certain animals can hear vibrations more rapid than these—that is, they can hear higher notes than we can. In the same way vibrations of the ether impinging on the human retina produce the sense of colour. By the aid of the thermometer and of photography respectively we have discovered the existence of rays beyond red at one end of the spectrum and beyond violet at the other. Lord Avebury has found that animals are sensitive to rays beyond the violet end. It is, therefore, quite possible that the world around us is to animals 'full of music which we cannot hear, of colours which we cannot see, and of sounds which we cannot conceive.'

But long before science had revealed this as a fact, the poet had divined it.

> For beast and bird have seen and heard
> That which man knoweth not,

wrote Mrs Alexander in a flash of inspiration in her noble verses, 'The Burial of Moses.'

In connection with this subject I remember a curious incident. Riding home across country from a desolate Irish village in the west, I came to a 'boreen' on one side of which stood the ruins of three or four cabins—cottages I can scarcely call them, though the walls (now roofless), the gable-ends in particular, were thicker and better built than usual. Ghastly enough they looked, the bright spring sun shining upon them; but I had often seen them, and was passing without a thought. Suddenly my horse, a beautiful black thorough-bred, came to a dead stop, and, fixing his eyes on a particular spot in front of him, refused to advance. I coaxed, I scolded, I even let him feel I had a whip, in vain. The blaze of sunshine was so vivid that the smallest animal—a caterpillar, a worm—could not have escaped being seen on the spot where he had fixed his terrified gaze; but there was absolutely nothing visible. The conviction that he saw something or some one that I did not forced itself on me, and gave me a cold shiver in all the brightness. I felt an uncanny awe of that invisible terror; and, jumping down, I wound the bridle round my wrist and tried to lead on the frightened horse. In this I at last succeeded; although he wheeled and started, I yet got him past, but it was hard work, and not till we regained the high-road did his fear seem to subside. I have no solution to the mystery; we did not believe in 'ghosts' in those days. But I have wondered since, in the light of further 'happenings,' if those ruined walls and roofless gables had been the scene of an eviction—a bygone and forgotten tragedy.

## IN THE HILLS.

Free from worldly bond and tether,
Let me on the moor recline,
Wrapped in robes of purple heather,
Drinking of the hill-gods' wine;
Then earth's kingdoms set together
Are a realm less rich than mine!

Here—above all thoughts of labour
And beyond all calls of care—
Let me bury scythe and sabre,
Leave a while life's sword and share,
Take the red grouse for a neighbour,
Loiter in the blackcock's lair.

Once the summit winds have wound me,
Like a slow, unfolded scroll,
Doubt and care shall roll from round me
As the mountain shadows roll,
Till the sunlight that has crowned me
Light the dark hills of my soul.

WILL H. OGILVIE.

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# FASHION AND HONEYMOONS.

IT was a remark of the learned Selden that marriage is the act of a man's life which least concerns his acquaintances, yet it is the very act of his life they most busy themselves about; and this interest shows itself in fiction, from whose pages the sound of wedding-bells is rarely altogether absent.

The honeymoon, as we know it, is of comparatively recent origin, and the changes of manners and customs which have attended the wedding have not left the observance of the period untouched. The term honeymoon—the first month after marriage, 'when there is nothing but tenderness and pleasure'—had originally no reference to a period of a month, but compared the affection of newly married persons to the changing moon, which is no sooner full than it begins to wane. Hulvet in his dictionary, published in 1552, calls it a term proverbially applied to the newly married, 'whiche wyll not fall out at the fyrst,' but the one loveth the other at the beginning exceedingly, the livelihood of their exceeding love appearing to assuage, 'ye which time the vulgar people cal the honeymone.'

In the upper classes this period was most frequently spent in receiving company at home—at the house of the lady's father or guardian. In a letter from 'An Honest Citizen' in the *Guardian* for 1713 we read: 'They tell me I must appear in my wedding suit for the first month at least, after which I am resolved to come again to my every day's clothes, for at present every day is Sunday with me. I fancy everybody observes me as I walk the street. *P.S.*—I forgot to tell you of my white gloves, which they say, too, I must wear all the first month.' He likewise regards the opinion that as the novelty of the lover has more charms than a wedding suit, a man should keep his finery for the latter seasons of marriage, and not begin to dress till the honeymoon is over.

Private marriages were then preferred, principally on the ground of expense, many inconvenient and annoying ceremonies being attendant on public celebrations. Gay in his *Trivia* mentions some:

> Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,
> And with their vellum thunder shake the pile,
> To greet the new-made bride.

And a number of the *Spectator* for 1712 contains a letter from a bridegroom complaining of being awakened the morning after his wedding by the thunder of a set of drums. These unsuitable warlike sounds, he fears, have been ominous to many matches, 'and sometimes proved a prelude to a Battle in the Honeymoon.' Fees had to be paid also to the various 'Marrow-bone and Cleaver' Clubs for their rough music. Misson, the French Huguenot, in his *Travels in England*, published at the close of the seventeenth century, tells us of parties marrying late at night in their chamber, and very often at some country house. 'They increase their common Bill of Fare for some days, they dance, they play, they give themselves up for some time to pleasure; but all this they generally do without noise and among very near relations.' He further informs us that after having made merry that day and the next, the happy pair took a trip into the country, 'and there divert themselves very pleasantly.' Fine clothes seem to have been donned by all parties after the ceremony, the bride being often married in a mob-cap. A chaperon during the honeymoon was considered *bon-ton* in the odd etiquette of those days. Mrs Montagu, the queen of the blue-stockings, writing her first letter to her mother after her marriage from Dover Street in 1742, finds the house very good and convenient, and hopes she shall spend many happy days in it: 'Happy I am sure they will be if I can make them so to the person who has thus obliged me. This day we shall spend in town, to-morrow we return to our Box in Kentish Town, and then away to Yorkshire. Madame Sully and I will write our travels as we go.' On the other hand, Gilbert West, writing in 1754, tells us that the elder Pitt and his bride, Lady Hester, came down to Wickham alone, 'and have continued alone ever since, and I imagine will continue during their stay in that Paradisiacal solitude, tho' by the quantity of provisions which Mr Campion (the *chef*) brought with him, we conclude he expected some


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visitants from town.' And Madame D'Arblay describes the marriage of a gallant colonel and his bride by special license in a drawing-room after dinner, the ladies sitting quietly with their work-boxes, netting-cases, and so forth while the ceremony proceeded. 'Afterwards, at seven o'clock, the bride and bridegroom set off for a friend's house in Hertfordshire by themselves, attended by servants with white favours.'

With the advent of railways the custom of making a wedding-tour became more common, and included frequently a visit to the Continent. Mrs Gaskell, in *Wives and Daughters*, makes one of the characters remark, 'When I was married, him and me went in a post-chaise to his father's house, a matter of twenty mile off at the outside, and sat down to as good a supper amongst his friends and relations as you'd wish to see. And that was my first wedding-jaunt. But now young folk go off to Paris, and think nothing of the cost.' On the other hand, the practical Miss Austen makes Edward Ferrers and Elinor Dashwood spend the first month after their marriage with their friend at the mansion-house, 'from whence they could superintend the progress of the parsonage and direct everything as they liked on the spot, could choose papers, project shrubberies, and invent a sweep. They had, in fact, nothing to wish for but the marriage of Colonel Brendon and Marianne, and rather better pasturage for their cows.' And tradesmen and their wives did not go far from home. 'Mr and Mrs Ludgate,' says Miss Edgeworth, 'went down in the hoy to Margate to spend the honeymoon in style.' To the proverbial unhappiness of poets and men of genius in their married life there are some notable exceptions. Though Byron has his fling at the 'treacle-moon,' and Voltaire speaks of the *lune de miel* being followed by the *lune de l'absinthe*, we read of Coleridge extending his honeymoon from one month to three. A few days after his marriage, in October 1795, we find him writing to Thomas Poole: 'We are settled—nay, quite domesticated—at Clevedon, our comfortable cot. The prospect around is perhaps more various than any in the kingdom. Mine eye gluttonizes the sea, the distant islands, the opposite coast.' The thought that he was married at Chatterton's church gives 'a tinge of melancholy to the solemn joy I feel united to the woman I love best of all created beings—Mrs Coleridge—I like to write the name.' Tennyson also visited this spot, the resting-place of Arthur Hallam. 'It seemed a kind of consecration to go there.' Later on, as a honeymoon-house, a little villa at Coniston Water was selected, where time sped in drives and walks over the mountains, boating on the lake among the water-lilies, and by the islands where the heron built—he rowing, his wife steering. Mr Meredith, in *The Egoist*, makes one of his characters say, 'I have a friend who rowed his bride from the Houses of Parliament up the Thames to the Severn on into North Wales. They shot some pretty weirs and rapids.' The landscape, the exercise, and the occasional bit of danger are all to the good. 'The scene is always changing, and not too fast, and 'tis not too sublime, like big mountains, to tire them of their everlasting Ohs!' We know that the wonders of Rome did not avail to allay the growing sense of disillusionment with Mr Casaubon which inspired the newly wed Dorothea Brooke. 'On a wedding journey,' says George Eliot, 'the express object of which is to isolate two people on the ground that they are all the world to each other, the sense of disagreement is, to say the least, confounding and stultifying.' Mr Dombey found his honeymoon in Paris with Edith Granger—the defiant woman united to him but arrayed with her whole soul against him—dull enough. 'I believe Mrs Dombey found it dull too,' he adds. 'She mentioned once or twice that she thought so.'

Elopements and secret marriages were once as common in fact as in fiction. When John Scott made his runaway match in 1772, on his arrival at Morpeth the Queen's Head Inn there was full, and he and his wife obtained their wedding-night's lodging only by the especial civility of the landlord and his spouse, who gave up their own room. The honeymoon was passed under difficulties. Their funds were exhausted, they had not a home to go to, and they knew not what their friends would say. 'I have married lastly, and have neither house nor home to offer my wife,' he writes; 'but it is my determination to provide for the woman I love as soon as I can find the means of doing so.' And accordingly the future Lord Eldon turned from the comfort of an Oxford fellowship to the arduous struggles of the law. The early wedded life of Becky Sharp and Rawdon Crawley in their Brompton lodgings is sympathetically described by Thackeray. He ordered in 'a piano and half a nursery-house full of flowers, and a heap of good things.' We find him converted into a very happy and submissive married man. His former haunts knew him no more. His secluded wife, ever smiling and cheerful, his little, comfortable lodgings, snug meals, and homely evenings, had all the charm of novelty and secrecy. The elopement of Bella Wilper with John Rokesmith was countenanced, to say the least of it, by one of her parents, who partakes with them of the marriage dinner at the Greenwich hotel, 'in the very room where pa and the lovely woman had once dined together.' We take leave of her 'fast developing a perfect genius for home—all the Loves and Graces seemed (her husband thought) to have taken domestic service with her and to help her to make home engaging.' By way of contrast we have the home-coming of Dora and David Copperfield, which is sufficiently sad reading. Brighton was dear to Thackeray, and we find George Sedley and Amelia Osborne choosing that spot for their honeymoon, 'and having engaged apartments at the Ship Inn, they enjoyed themselves there in great comfort and quietude until Jos presently joined them.'

Sometimes we hear of couples parting at the church door. Such was involuntarily the case

with Southey, who, after his marriage to Mrs Coleridge's sister, journeyed with an uncle through Spain and Portugal, while his wife took up her abode at Bristol with the wedding-ring upon her breast. For a week after their secret wedding Robert Browning and his bride resumed their old life before journeying to the Continent. Actors, by reason of their calling, cannot as a rule indulge in a prolonged honeymoon. Upon the marriage of J. P. Kemble with Mrs Brereton in 1787, we hear of their eating the wedding dinner with the Bannister family in Trith Street, Soho—an early dinner, as both Bannister and Mrs Kemble acted in the *West Indian* that evening. The day following she was put up in the playbills as Mrs Kemble for Lady Anne in *Richard III.*; but it was another than her husband 'who in the part of that monster exclaims to her so ungallantly, "With all my heart I hate you."' When Edmund Kean, in his twenty-first year, married in 1808, we gather that the wedding fee was paid from the sum of ten shillings lent by the bride's-maid. 'Returning to Cheltenham (from Stroud), the wedding party hastened to the Dog Tavern, where the hostess furnished the poor players with a wedding breakfast at her own expense.' Charles Kean married Miss Ellen Tree on the last day of their Dublin engagement (their union not being immediately made public), and on that same evening, by an odd coincidence, they performed together in *The Honeymoon*.

The reaction against mid-Victorian sentiment apparent in so many phases of life has not been without its effect on the observance of honeymoons. The remarks of Mr Meredith voiced what many may have thought: 'Many a character of happiest auspices has irreparable mischief done it by the ordinary honeymoon.' A *tête-à-tête* solitude may conduce to boredom, as an escape from which a stay at a crowded hotel is not uncommon. A trip in a motor has many advantages over a long railway journey, and in a few years' time who knows but that a honeymoon in an air-ship may not be the fashion for those who can afford it? But one hopes that the precedent of the fair American who declared she had passed a most enjoyable honeymoon—by herself—will not be extensively followed.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER LI.—HOW THEY CAME THROUGH DEEP WATERS.

With his sound leg braced against the after-thwart, Jack set himself to strenuous labour. His other leg pained him horribly, and he bitterly resented the drain it had made on his strength. But Mavie was safely out of France. That was everything, and he was determined to get her across to Sercq if he burst blood-vessels over it or lost a leg. He set himself to a long, steady stroke with the clumsy oars, and thanked God that the sea was smooth.

And now, curiously, there fell again between them such a silence and restraint as had never obtained while their course was hedged with doubts and difficulties. Now, when the back of their enterprise seemed broken, they had little to say, though before their tongues had played freely. But he was thinking of that which had run so wildly in his head when they sat among the sandhills, and he was fearing that his unbridled thoughts had found tongue against his will and told her more than she had dreamed of. And so a buckle on his lips now, and uttermost caution in word and look.

And she? 'They are coming—they are coming to part us!' How the words rang in her ears, sang in her mind and heart a new song whose meaning as yet she hardly knew herself. For this, after all, was only John Sax; little Jack Sax, whom she had rated and ordered about all her life; though he was big enough now, in truth. It was only Jack Sax! only Jack Sax! But it was Jack Sax in quite a new rôle, and it was Jack Sax risking his life and liberty for her, and rejoicing in the doing of it. And it was Jack Sax valiant and resourceful; and, moreover, wounded and suffering, and that for her. She had enough to think about.

'Couldn't I help you, Jack?' she asked timidly at last.

'Not yet. Later perhaps;' and he strained at his oars, till the sweat rolled down his face, to make a good offing before daylight; and she sank back into her thoughts, rebuffed.

They heard the waves washing over the Grunes on the right at last, and Jack welcomed the sound as a sign of progress, and tugged at his oars with dull fury. For rowing with only one leg as a brace was desperately hard work, and took far more out of him than if his energies had been more evenly applied. He pulled with one side of his body, while the rest of him throbbed with pain. His strokes became slower and heavier. Each time he stopped to rest he hopefully tried which way the wind was blowing, if perchance he might try the sail for relief; but it always came right over their bows, and he was too little of a sailor to attempt constant tacking.

'Do let me help, Jack,' pleaded Mavie once more, 'please!'

'You can try,' he said, as he leaned forward over his oars for a rest, and did his best to reduce his panting bellows within bounds. He dropped the remaining oar into the forward rowlock, and she crept past him and took her seat.

'Keep time with me,' he said, and bent again to his work.

The oar seemed monstrous large and clumsy. Her

fingers could hardly grip it, and felt strangely feeble. The waves, small as they were, upset her calculations. Her oar was always either skimming the top or buried so deep that she could hardly get it out again in time. She did her best to keep time with the broad, swinging back in front which, she was unpleasantly conscious, was doing all the work, and showed no resentment when she bumped against it at every fourth stroke or so. She bit her lips and was ready to cry with resentment at her own weakness and lack of skill.

'Jack, I'm not helping you!' she said at last, when her wrists were nearly off and her pride was in rags.

As he stopped rowing and leaned forward again over his oars she drew in hers, and when he lifted one arm for her to creep past astern again, above the lapping of the water she heard his heart thumping furiously inside him as her head pressed against him with a sudden roll of the boat.

When she sank down again the water was playing about her ankles, and she cried out, 'Oh Jack, we're sinking!'

'Feel about for something to bail with.' And she groped till she found a shallow tin scoop, and set feverishly to work under the impression that they were in deadly peril.

'Do take a longer rest, Jack!' she urged as he bent to his work again.

'We must get on—get on—get on,' he said; and she peered anxiously at him through the dimness, for there was that in his tone which reminded her of her sudden wakening in the sandhills.

Then the slight breeze seemed to die away completely. The sea was very smooth, and they plodded slowly on, the only moving thing in a great silence and stillness.

The darkness thinned, and she could see how white and weary he was, his lips a thin, straight line, his face rigid as stone.

There came a sudden pulse of light in the east, and as her face turned gratefully towards it for a moment, Jack, bending to his stroke, collapsed and fell forward with his head almost in her lap, and lay there motionless. His hands had let go the oars and drooped helplessly in the water that had collected in the bottom of the boat again, and when she looked at it she saw that it was tinged red. To ease his side and equalise his rowing, he had put the other leg to use, and the wound in it had opened and bled again.

She saw the oars slip through the rowlocks, and knew she ought to save them. She made ineffectual grabs at them as they floated past, but they were beyond her reach.

She hastily filled the tin with clear water from the sea and dashed it in his face, and he sighed heavily as though all the breath were going out of him. Then he caught his breath again with a sob, but still lay motionless. She scooped up more water and bathed his face and head gently. She caught sight of the flask of cognac Le Normand had given her; and, pulling out the cork in a frenzy with teeth and fingers, she turned his head and dropped some into his mouth, and he swallowed it, and then rolled over so that he was sitting with his back against the side of the boat. And presently he opened his eyes sleepily and looked at her with a dreadful unknowing stare that froze her blood.

There is surely no look in human eyes so dreadful as that unconscious, unrecognising stare of the eyes we know, but which no longer know us. Hate, scorn, contempt we understand, and endure or resent. These are human, and have a soul behind them, even though it be a twisted one. But the awful blank gaze of the unsouled eyes is full of terror for most of us—unless we are accustomed to madhouses or fever-wards.

Never before had Mavie seen those honest blue eyes rest on her save in fullest friendliness and devotion. But now——

'Who?' he jerked hoarsely. 'Who is it? Who are you?'

'I'm Mavie, Jack dear,' she said piteously, and wrung her hands, and sat gazing back at him in desperation.

Then the reddened water washing to and fro set her to frantic bailing again, and as soon as that was within bounds she knelt and rolled up the leg of his wide trouser, in spite of his foolish remonstrative hands, which tried feebly to push hers away. She unloosed the reeking red bandage, and washed it over the side, and bathed the dreadful leg, and then bandaged it up again as tightly as she could.

And all the time he stared fixedly at her with those terrible unrecognising eyes which made her hands tremble and her blood run cold.

The sun was up before her work was done, and the sight of it, and the smoothness of the sea, put a little heart into her.

If only she could have got out of sight of those dreadful eyes; but they followed her slightest movement with a weird and terrifying questioning which made her afraid to move yet would not let her remain still.

When she looked abroad she saw blue islands right ahead and far away on the right and on the left; while behind them, and not nearly so far away, lay the long yellow line of the French dunes. She wondered which was Sercq, and how they were to get there.

The fanning of a slight breeze coming off the French coast reminded her of Le Normand's words, and she wondered if she could hoist the sail. No matter which island she made for, they were all English.

She climbed over the thwarts, and Jack's unseeing eyes followed her. She unrolled the sail—but a rag of a sail, as Le Normand had said, and just as well for her, perhaps—and strove to comprehend it.

Common-sense told her to fit the stouter end of the pole into the round hole in the front seat; and

then, pulling this rope and that, after many mistakes she succeeded in hauling the small, square sail with its jerking boom into position, and tied the ropes to the seats in a way that might have led to catastrophe.

Fortunately the light breeze was dead astern, and she was rejoiced to see the water alongside slipping slowly past her. The small craft, however, jerked about like a restive horse; the sail was now full and now empty; and her wits being bent to their work, she argued that just as a horse needs a rein to guide it, so a boat needed a rudder to keep it straight before the wind.

Pierre Maillot never used a rudder, placing more reliance on the sweep of an oar over the stern. There fortunately was the spare oar, and there was a hole in the stern. She fitted these together, and found that by a stroke here and a stroke there she could keep her sail full. And all the time that wide, unwinking stare followed her every movement, and gave her a fresh shock each time she caught it upon her.

She sat down beside Jack and bathed his face and forehead with sea-water again, and then she drew his head against her knee in motherly fashion, hoping the dreadful staring eyes would close and he would perhaps fall asleep.

But, weary as his body was, his mind was in a tumult, and every now and again some dim thought of his mission would flit across his tangled brain, and he would struggle briefly to rise and be doing.

'I—must—get—her—home,' he said hoarsely one time; and Mavie had to pull in her oar and press him down by the shoulders, lest in his vacuous efforts he should tumble overboard.

'I—must—get—her—home. I—must—get—her—home,' again and again.

'We are going home, Jack,' she said to soothe him.

'Who is it?' turning his vacant stare on her.

'I am Mavie, and we are going home.'

He gazed at her and began again, 'I—must—get—her—home.'

The long, rugged island in front seemed to get no nearer, though the wind drove them towards it steadily; and as Mavie watched it anxiously she perceived that it was slipping past them as surely as if it were afloat. The tide which had carried them north for three or four hours had turned, and was now on its eight hours' course to the south.

All day long they drifted with it, and her heart sank as the island she had hoped to reach dropped away to the north till it was nearly out of sight, and another to the south rose higher and higher. She turned the boat's head hopefully towards it, but the wind fell and the sail drooped idly against the mast, and her hopes drooped with it.

She was hungry and thirsty, and she had nothing but the flask of cognac. She tried a sip, but it was nauseous to her. It sent a brief fire running through her veins, indeed, but her throat was drier than ever.

She wondered if she ought to give more to Jack. It had seemed to revive him before. And then she feared it might only increase his fever, and she dared not. Instead, she kept the bandage on his leg damped constantly with sea-water, and laved his hot hands and head, he regarding her with stark wonder all the time.

Soon after midday it seemed to her that the more distant island to the north was drawing nearer again, and presently they were drifting helplessly past it, nearer this time than the last, she was sure; but she could do nothing but sit patiently and watch it pass, till it lay far away to the south again. And, hungry and thirsty, and overwhelmed with fears, she laid her hot head on her arms on the side of the boat and sobbed helplessly, striving her best to disturb as little as might be the still more helpless one by her side. For, indeed, it seemed to her that they might drift to and fro in this fashion until they died of hunger, unless a wind should come and carry them back into captivity or forward into safety.

And as she sobbed in utter weakness and despair, and found herself, for the first time in her life, the infinitely small face to face with the infinitely great, she came upon the elemental need of every overtried soul, and prayed as she had never prayed before. And this absolute self-surrender and casting of herself upon a higher Power brought her to a tranquillity of mind and quiet acquiescence in whatever might come which surprised even herself when she mused upon the matter afterwards.

Her fears left her. She had done all she could. The rest lay with God. If they were to die, there in the boat, they were to die, and that was the end of it. Bodily weakness, you will say. It is when the body is weakest that the soul burns brightest at times. When earth falls away heaven shows the more clearly.

And so she sat, with quiet hands folded on her knees—such times as she was not bailing the boat or laving Jack's hot head and hands—and watched the islands swing to and fro before her, and wondered patiently how long it took people to die outright of hunger and thirst. The thirst was torment, but she no longer felt hungry, though no food had passed her lips for over four-and-twenty hours, and their meals before that had been inadequate and precarious.

When they swung away to the south of the island which she thought must be Sercq, the setting sun was casting a shimmering pathway of gold right across the sea, and they lay idly rocking in it till, all in a moment, it was gone and the waters became purple and then the colour of lead; and the waves, which had seemed friendly in the sun, became sullen and threatening. A wind came out of the west, too, and she had to get up and pull weakly at this rope and that until the sail dropped, lest they should get blown back to France.

Jack had dozed at times during the day, for which she was thankful. He had never moved from the

place into which he had dropped, and lay for the most part with his head against her knee. When she had to move she laid the heavy head gently against the thwart, and he would murmur, 'Get—her—home,' and then doze off again.

It was a moonless night, and the brilliancy and number of the stars were a revelation to her. She sat and watched and wondered vaguely about them, especially as to those which every now and again loosed their hold and dropped from zenith to horizon, and disappeared in a silence that was more overpowering in its vastness than would have been the rushings and crashings which never came. But she was past speculation as to the why and wherefore. She simply sat and watched and wondered, and when the water began to wash about her feet she bailed it out mechanically.

She never knew how that long night passed, and so it is probable that she slept at times. When she was awake she was not afraid—except of being blown back to France. The loneliness and darkness had no more terrors for her. She accepted them as part of the sequence of events to which she was committed. And the stars were friendly; and this broken man by her side, though no longer entirely himself, and startling at times by reason of his affliction, was her friend, and had come to that pass through his devotion to her; and—and—— She had sobbed away her fears in broken prayers, and so she sat patiently waiting the end, whatever it might be.

Once, when she woke up shivering from a dull doze, her hand touched the thwart and found it damp, and she remembered leaning down and licking it gratefully, for her tongue felt like a withered leaf and her throat was hard and dry as a bone.

When the sky in the east softened and broke to the dawn they were drifting down south again. A faint wind blew from off the coast of France, and Mavie crawled weakly over the seats to raise her sail. But small as it was, her strength was smaller, and the ropes were stiff with the damps of the night. By hanging all her weight on to the rope she got a corner part-way up; then she twisted the rope round a seat and crept back to her place, and sank down, overcome even with this exertion.

She was roused by strong hands lifting her gently and passing her into another boat, with the water running out of her shoes. Then Jack was lifted in, soaking wet, and giving no sign of life.

'Who?' she whispered; and a cheerful voice said, 'It's all right, ma'm'selle. We were on the lookout for you. Yonder's Sercq, and we're all friends there.—Throw out some of that water, Phil, or she'll be too much of a drag on us.' And she broke down and sobbed silently for very gratitude.

Then there was the splashing of bailed water, and presently a younger man, tall and comely, stepped in over the side; and with a turn of the helm the great sail up above bellied out, and the boat heeled over, and they were running swiftly for Sercq.

There was a dance of laughter in the younger man's eyes as he turned to Mavie. 'Carette—that's my wife—is wanting badly to see you, ma'm'selle. Monsieur promised to bring you back this way, and she has been at us every day to keep a lookout, as she said it was quite time you were coming. And here you are, and she will be glad. How did he get hurt?'

'Shot—in the leg.'

'Ah, Jeanne Falla will tackle that all right. She's been aching for some one to nurse and coddle, and she can cure a shot-wound better than any man I know.'

'We are starving,' said Mavie feebly.

'*Nom-de-nom!* why didn't we bring something? But then we did not know. But there's water in the keg there, George.' And never had she tasted anything so delicious as that long, deep draught from the bailing-tin.

Steep, red-brown cliffs rose suddenly before them; there were hailing voices from the shore and answers from their boat; then their keel ran grating up a shingly beach, and she was lifted out.

Strong arms raised her till she was sitting on strong clasped hands. 'Arms round our necks, ma'm'selle, if you don't mind, and you will be safer. It is a steep way,' from Phil Carré; and she was borne away through a dark tunnel in the cliff, and up along a winding road between lofty green hills where flaming gorse and feathery bracken waved a breezy welcome, and behind them was the crunch of the heavy feet of those who carried Jack shoulder-high.

Up and up the winding way, through another long tunnel, this time of overarching trees which cast a chequered shade on the runlet-bordered road, till they came to the level at the top and set her down in the grass for a moment while they got their wind again.

Then on through lanes fragrant with honeysuckle, and the sky overhead was deep, cloudless blue, and the faces of those they met were honest and kindly, and from the chimneys of the squat stone houses curled thin blue wreaths of sweet wood-smoke which spoke of food and cooking, and it seemed to Mavie as if these stalwart sailor-men with their rhythmic stride were carrying her right up into heaven.

They set her down at last before a wooden gate, and so, leaning on Phil Carré's arm, she came to Beaumanoir. But before she had taken ten steps up the path the door flew open, and Carette came flying along among the flowers, her face ablaze with welcome and the enjoyment of seeing her in such guise, just as she had hoped.

At the wanness of the sweet, tired face, however, her greeting changed its character without losing any of its warmth.

'Oh, my dear,' she cried, 'you have suffered!' And she elbowed Phil away and took his place.

'She is starving, my little one,' said Carré. 'Get her food—quick, quick! Soup and wine, and——

Where is Aunt Jeanne? Here is monsieur sorely wounded,' as Jack's bearers hove in sight.

'Ah, ha! And who is wanting me?' and Aunt Jeanne herself came hurrying down the stair. 'Mademoiselle is hurt?' at sight of Mavie sunk down on the side of the great square bed of dried bracken, out of which stared at her four round, childish eyes full of wonder.

'No, no,' cried Carette, as she produced from one cupboard bread, from another a plate and spoon, ladled out soup from a pot on the fire, and poured out a glass of red wine, and had it all ready for Mavie on a corner of the table in less time than it takes to tell; 'ma'm'selle is only starving. It is monsieur there who is wounded. Take him right up the stair to the back bedroom, Uncle George, and Aunt Jeanne will see to him. Here is hot water if you need it, and Phil will bring him up some soup and wine.'

With the courtesy of a fine nature, she left Mavie to herself for a while, dying as she was, as she herself would have said, to question her as to all that had happened. But as she moved swiftly to and fro her eyes were ever on the slight, graceful figure, and one could see from the look in them that her expectations were satisfied.

At sight of Jack's leg Aunt Jeanne broke into exclamations. '*Ma fé!* his measure is overfull, I trow! A man has no right to be going about with a leg like that!'

'Well, maybe he couldn't help it,' said Phil. 'Anyway, you're the one to cure it, Aunt Jeanne, and the harder the job the greater the glory.'

'All very well!' grumbled she cheerfully. 'But common-sense would save half the troubles of life, and some of you men never have more than you can stuff into a pipe. The man's starving, too.'

'Here's soup and wine. What about a drop of cognac?'

'Soften his throat with wine, and drop some soup into him. No cognac. His blood is hot enough—what he has left. That leg does not please me. It ought to have been seen to. A nice, clean wound, tackled at once, is all right. But this'—— and she shook her head forebodingly.

'What if I went across and brought over a doctor from Peter Port?' he suggested doubtfully, lest she should take it as a reflection on her own skill. But even he could see that it was a bad case.

'*Mon gyu*, Phil, I think you'd better. I doubt it's gone too far for me, and he's too fine a *gars* to lose a leg.'

'There's a fair wind. I'll be back this afternoon. Who, now?'

'Bring Dr Martin from the Grange Road. You know Miss Mauger's School? It's two doors from there.'

'I know Miss Mauger's School,' said Phil, with twinkles in his eyes, and set off at once without a word of his business even to Carette, lest the women's hearts should be troubled unduly.

'I'm just dying to hear all about it,' said Carette when Mavie had slowly tempered the first pangs of her hunger. 'But I'm not going to let you speak one word till you've had a proper sleep. Come along! You're just worn-out, and there will be time enough to talk later on.'

'Yes, I am tired, and you are very good. Will you please find out for me how—how Jack is?'

'He's all right in Aunt Jeanne's hands. Just you go to sleep. And when you wake up we will see if we can't find one of my dresses that will fit you; though, *ma fé!* you will never look prettier than you do in those things.'

Mavie was still sleeping the sleep of the rescued when Phil Carré came in with Dr Martin, and the doctor's face grew almost as long as Aunt Jeanne's over Jack's leg, and he was no less disturbed than she had been at the inattention which had suffered it to get into such a state.

'He is a well-made *gars*, and we must save him his leg,' he said. 'But it will need care. If you can give me a bed, Mistress Falla, I will remain for a day or two till we see how it goes.' For, you see, one did not go over to Sercq every day in those times, and such an opportunity was not to be missed.

*(To be continued.)*

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# HOW I DISCOVERED FRANCE.

PART II.

ALWAYS think it a good plan to make no delay in getting to find my way about a new place; so after dinner I set out to walk round the town. The first thing I did was to make friends with an Irishman who could speak no English. I forget exactly how I did it. I fancy that I must have lost my way and then started to inquire. Anyhow, he guided me to the post-office, where I picked up my letters. The Irishman had lived at Amiens since he was two years old.

Next day I started out to visit schools, and as a preliminary I went to the Hôtel de Ville (the Town Hall), which is the centre of organisation. There I made the acquaintance of the Chef de Bureau of the Mairie, and found that he spoke practically perfect English, in addition to which he knows other European languages. He gave me information which enabled me to go straight to what I wanted. Having finished my investigations into education, I proceeded to view some of the antique buildings and beautiful spots on the river. The river is the Somme, on the banks of which a great

deal of the old town is built. This city dates from before the Roman occupation, and there are at the present time buildings which must be several hundred years old. One street, called the Rue des Tripes, has also marked on it that it is the Rue Antonin of the eleventh century. The Cathedral dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and is said to be the most perfect specimen of Gothic architecture in the world. It is most truly a magnificent building. I felt that I could spend days in it and yet find new beauties. Even yet I am constantly realising the existence of beautiful parts of the Cathedral which I did not note on my visit, as I keep up a correspondence with the Chef de Bureau, and receive picture post-cards of new views. I have some views which remind me strikingly of the English city of Norwich, with its river in the foreground and its beautiful Cathedral in the background. Amiens has the distinction of having been the home for many years of the great writer Jules Verne, so many of whose imaginings have been turned into solid prosaic facts, and he was buried there on the 28th March 1905 with great state.

I left Amiens with a good deal of regret, because there was so much which I had not had time to see. I had not gone very far when an old, familiar strain smote upon my ears, and I came across a small boy singing the once universal 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay.' It made me feel that 'Oh what a happy land is England!' ought to be turned into 'Oh what a happy land is France!' if it takes so many years for the popular music-hall ditty to seize upon the soul and body of the small boy. It gives one a decent chance of being dead before that happens. I met no untoward incident until I arrived at a very nice small town. Usually when I arrived at a town where I proposed to lunch there was no difficulty in deciding upon the place, because it was a case of Hobson's choice. But here I dismounted at a town cross where there were an Hôtel du Commerce, a *patisserie* and *hôtel*, and a restaurant. I hesitated, and the man who hesitates is lost. One is always safe at the Hôtel du Commerce; but the proprietor of the *patisserie*, which looked very smart, appeared and spoke to me. In answer to my inquiry, '*Quel prix déjeuner?*' he answered, '*Un franc.*' I thought it uncommonly cheap, but decided to have a shot at it. I had an excellent *déjeuner* of six courses, and a bottle of white wine. As the courses succeeded each other, each beautifully cooked and savoury, especially the chicken—real chicken, not one of those with as many legs as a centipede, such as one gets in 'the best hotels'—I realised that there was some mistake. The one franc lunch was what is called by tradesmen 'a leading line.' First you are led in by a smart advertisement, and then you are let in by the smart advertiser. But the successful and happy digestion of a good lunch or dinner ought never to be marred by any thought of the reckoning. This is good philosophy, the neglect of which makes dyspeptics of many otherwise intelligent men. So I enjoyed my lunch, and was only surprised by its moderation when the demand was for three francs, or a modest half-crown. But I made mine host a little speech, in which I complimented him on his lunch, and informed him that I knew the language well enough to understand that he had said 'one franc.' He took the money and the rebuke quite as if both were in the day's work. Then I mounted my bicycle, and started for Beauvais with a smile on my face and music in my heart.

I had only gone about three hundred yards when I realised that there was music somewhere else, and of a kind which the cyclist does not like. It was a regular 'tick-tick-tick,' which suggested the crocodile in *Peter Pan*. It was the crocodile, but he was not after me. I had left him at the *patisserie*, and he expected me back, having taken measures to that end. I found a French 'Blakey's boot-protector,' with three nice prongs, sticking in the tread of my back-tire. I did not take it out, but cycled back about a hundred yards to a cycle-repairing place which I had observed, and the punctures were repaired in a very short time. But while I was removing my pack I discovered that the fastenings had been tampered with, and that if I had been a little longer in learning the fact my whole kit would have tumbled out on the road. I had found the 'Blakey' too soon for the crocodile, and did not have to seek the hospitality of his hotel.

In due time I arrived at Beauvais, and put up at the Hôtel des Balances, in the great square. How I decided upon that hotel is quite a remarkable example of the principle of *solvitur ambulando*. It was 'All Saints' Day,' or *La Toussaint*, as it is called in France, and that time is a general holiday throughout the country. I arrived at Beauvais at half-past four, after having cycled about forty-five miles, and found the streets crowded with people. As I passed through the great square I came to a narrow exit from it, and found the crowd massed there. I had to pull up suddenly to avoid running into a group of old people, with the result that I fell off. Three soldiers picked me up, with many expressions of concern, but there was no damage. However, on looking round me, I saw the Hôtel des Balances; and as I had lost mine, and they seemed to have a plurality there, I said 'Kismet' and entered.

I began very soon to explore the ancient city. I visited the Cathedral, the Palais de Justice, and the partly ruinous church of St Etienne. Ultimately I found my way into a *café chantant*, where I heard some very poor singing. One lady sang well, and when the plate was passed round for her collection—this happened after each song—I put in twopence. As one halfpenny is the usual contribution, doubtless derived from ecclesiastical custom, my princely contribution drew so much attention to me that I left abruptly.

Next day was the great day of the festival, and

as I wanted to see everything possible, I was about at half-past seven in the morning. This was 'All Souls' Day,' when the departed are commemorated, whether they were saints or not. People lay wreaths on the graves of their friends, and there was a truly magnificent procession from the Cathedral through the city and back, a litany being chanted as the procession wended its way, the Archbishop bringing up the rear.

I received a most delicate attention from the landlady of my hotel, showing the extreme kindliness which is offered to strangers. I was at breakfast on the morning of my arrival, waited on by a very smart boy. I asked for coffee. In France, as one values his life or his digestion, one ought not to have tea. You cannot have a digestion without life; and I am inclined to think—but I do not know—that it is hardly worth while to have life without a digestion. I like to have the French *petit déjeuner*, or breakfast of coffee and rolls only, in the morning, and to follow the national custom when I am in France. But my little waiter brought me a fluid which I did not recognise at once. I examined it carefully, and came to the conclusion that it was intended for tea. To make quite sure, I asked my boy-waiter, and he smiled a delighted smile at my intelligence. Taking in the situation, I went to the proprietress and explained that I was one of those peculiar English people who never drank tea, and that I should like some of the delightful coffee which could be had nowhere except in a French hotel. She was a little disappointed about the tea, but pleased with the compliments about the coffee; and the coffee deserved the compliments.

On leaving Beauvais, which is notable, among many other things, for being the seat of the tapestry manufactures of the French Government, I had easy going for a time. But then I came to a long hill which I had to walk, and after that I found myself on one of the military roads which the great Napoleon employed his soldiers in making in their short intervals of peace. This gave me very rough work practically all the way into Paris. I passed through Noailles, Ste Geneviève, Puiseux, Chambly, Beaumont, and so to St Denis, the burial-place of the French kings, and practically part of Paris. Chambly has a fine old parish church which looks more like an English parish church than any which I saw in France. At Beaumont I had a splendid view of the river Oise, broad, clay-coloured, and slow, as I stood on a high bridge which spans the river. At Puiseux the bad road really begins; but over a few miles of it I found a broad path at the side, which was intended for cyclists, and I was able to get up a fine pace. As I got near St Denis, the proximity of which I realised by the smell long before it was in sight, I found that though the path remained the same, I was the only cyclist who was using it. I had a suspicion that I must have passed a notice forbidding cycling without seeing it, but I pursued my way with every appearance of unconscious innocence. I passed a gendarme, who looked as if he wished to say something, but I was gone before he could get it out. At last I met another, who seemed to have more presence of mind, for he promptly stopped me. We had a pleasant conversation, in which I explained that I was a wandering Englishman who had mistaken the footpath for a cycling track, and then he pointed to a tree beside which we were standing, with the remark, '*Savez-vous lire?*' I admitted that I could, and saw the notice forbidding cycling on a board about a yard wide. Perhaps the reader may be surprised that a traveller from Scotland should describe himself as 'English.' Several times I tried to convince people that there was a difference between *Ecossais* and *Anglais*, but I gave it up, as it lost me time.

I had intended to take train from St Denis into Paris, as I was rather afraid of the street traffic. But I found myself going so comfortably that I went right on, and passing along the Boulevard Strasbourg, romped along the Grand Boulevard, and so to the Rue St Honoré, where I put up at a French hotel—that is to say, an hotel where they did not cater for English people. As I proceeded along the Grand Boulevard I saw a cab in front of me knock down a man, who was promptly carried off to hospital; and I concluded that it was safer to cycle than to walk.

I need not say anything about the days which I spent in Paris. They were very interesting to me, as I visited some splendid schools, but this might not interest my readers. Paris is always a delightful place. It is well known that it is the place to which good Americans go when they die; but some of the other kind go there while they live. It attracts all nationalities. I met a delightful old Irish lady at the hotel. She seemed about eighty years old, but was full of energy, though very lame. She spoke English with a perfect accent, and told Irish stories with a magnificent Irish brogue, while she could almost surpass the natives in her volubility in their own language. One of her stories was *à propos* of one of the cries of the Paris streets, the newspaper *La Patrie*, which appears in the afternoon. The boys call it 'La-pa-three'—the first two syllables short and the last long—with a strong accent on it. An old Irish priest, who heard the cry for the first time resounding in his ears from all sides, said, 'Shure, what are they cryin' "a-past three" for, when it's five o'clock?'

My time drew to a close; and as I did not want to cover old ground on my return, I took train to Amiens, where I spent a night at my old hotel; and next day I started out for Dunkirk by St Pol and St Omer. I had left myself only three days, but this allowed easy stages of about forty miles each day. I liked the towns through which I passed on this part of the journey; they were very quaint, and reminded me of such towns as Haddington and Berwick. I had lunch the first day at Frevant, a town between Doullens and St Pol, at

an hotel the name of which took my fancy—the Hôtel du Coq Chantant, or 'Hotel of the Crowing Cock.' I had soup, beef, and roast-duck, with fruit and beer, for two shillings, and proceeded to St Pol for the night. Next day it occurred to me that as a detour of a few miles from my route would take me to the battlefield of Agincourt, where Henry the Fifth of England gained his great victory in 1415, I ought to go there. So I did. And I saw just about as much as I saw at Crécy. The visiting of a battlefield is often as disappointing as going down a coal-mine. I have done both, and am bound to say that Sheridan's philosophy on such matters is distinctly alluring, though decidedly immoral. When his son Tom asked permission to go down a coal-mine, his father asked the reason. The son answered, 'Oh, only to be able to say that I have been down;' and the witty parent said, 'Good heavens, Tom, can't you do that without going down?'

Having visited Azincourt, as it is spelled in French, I could have gone due north to St Omer, but I took a wrong byroad, and when I found myself some miles across country I concluded that I might as well get to my original route. But I began to think myself cleverer than I was, and tried to cut off a few miles in reaching a splendid road which is almost mathematically straight. I got into a coal-mining district with the most awful cart-roads, passing through the mining villages of Pernes, Aumerval, and Ferfay, until at last I struck the road, and then had a fine run to a small town called Thèrouanne. By this time it was pitch-dark, and was beginning to rain; so I stopped at a chemist's shop and asked about the remainder of the road to St Omer. The chemist gave me a terrible account of the road—'*pas belle*,' '*très mauvaise*,' '*descente rapide*' were the terms used. However, I thought I had better get on, so I mounted again and faced the rain, which was now coming down heavily. Thèrouanne must stand fairly high, for I ran almost the whole distance of about eleven miles on a free wheel, with a rapid descent near St Omer, arriving at the Grand Hôtel du Commerce at seven o'clock. At this hotel I had really the best dinner of the whole tour. I have often wondered since whether it was that the meals were really so superlatively good, or whether the sauce made them so. To be in the open air all day and every day, indulging in hard exercise all the time, would give an appetite for a dish of boiled tin-tacks, if it were not for the points.

The following day I had a comparatively easy run, most of the distance being along the bank of the canal, to Dnukirk. It was blowing a westerly gale, so that I had a few miles with the wind against and across me, and then about twenty miles before the wind. I arrived early at Dunkirk, put my luggage on board the Gibson steamer, and then proceeded to see the sights. In due time we sailed, and I was comfortably at home twenty-nine hours after we started from the harbour of Dunkerque. I had seen cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, talked with all sorts of people, and learned more French than I had ever been taught at school, received some glimpses of French homes, and had only had one hour of rain in three weeks. I had thoroughly enjoyed myself, and had got to know more of the country in this short time than in several previous visits made in the ordinary way. And I had received nothing but kindness everywhere—except from the crocodile; and I have no doubt I should have received kindness from him too if I had stayed at his hotel. So I think I am quite correct in saying that that is 'How I Discovered France.'

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# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

CHAPTER I.—*continued.*

DUNCAN the shepherd and the man from Dallachy had been at the bottle all the long winter afternoon, and were mellow and garrulous. A mixed atmosphere of *bonhomie* and servility towards the well-clad stranger encompassed them, as they eyed him standing with his back to the fire, thawing his chilled bones, his clothes steaming. He was thirty-five or thereabouts. A large man, lean and well built, with quick gestures, and a transfixing eye, where fair-play and courage shone, redeeming his square and unhandsome face. Obvious physical strength spoke in his strong neck and broad shoulders. He might have been some big, masterful Judge of Session of the period but for his sweeping moustache, the hall-mark of the open air on his face and hands, and the jingle of a scabbard on the floor as he moved. He turned to spread his hands before the blazing peats, the winter wind roaring down the chimney sending the smoke to the rafters.

'A wild night, sir,' began the inquisitive Duncan. 'Were ye for travellin' far?'

''Tis a wild night,' was the reply. 'I am far enough for one night.'

'Ye would come fra' Inverness maybe?' said the man from Dallachy.

The gentleman glanced at the fuddled rustics. 'Much farther perhaps,' he said, a spark of mischief in his eye.

'Ye winna mind them, sir,' interposed Bell quietly. 'The malt's abune the meal, as ye see.'

He smiled good-naturedly.

'I'll warrant those two can toss the bowl till the

dawning, my lass.—What say you, my good fellows? Will you join me in another flagon?'

Duncan's rheumy eye brightened. 'Thanks to ye, sir. Your pleasure, sir!'

'An' no offence, I hope, sir, at our speirin' a question or twa,' said the other man. 'We're lonely folk in the Glen in the winter, meetin' wi' few strangers, an' we maybe get into the habit o' speirin' when we have a chance. There's nothin' o' harm in it.'

'Who knows? Who knows?' said the stranger casually, warming his hands at the fire. '"He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."'

'Ay. Now, whar' did I hear that before?' murmured Duncan, edging nearer the liquor that Bell put on the table.

'Hoot, man, Duncan!' quoth the Dallachy man, 'it's in the Gospel.—Ye see, sir,' he said to the new-comer apologetically, 'he has very little English.'

'Never mind the Gospel. Gi'e me the Gaelic,' said Duncan, touched on the raw; and a brisk debate between them on the merits of the Gaelic *versus* English rose over the steaming tumblers.

The stranger stretched his tired legs in front of the ruddy blaze, and listened in half-interested amusement. He might kill a little time, he thought, as well with them as by himself, and the inn looked clean and comfortable, welcome after his ride in the churlish snow.

'Bring me something to eat—anything,' he said, in a lull of the furious spate of words between the two men.

'Wheesht, then, Duncan,' the Dallachy man said. 'The gentleman will be wearyin' o' us and oor noise. I'll agree with ye King Solomon himsel' spoke the Gaelic if that'll satisfy ye. Here's to ye, Duncan! —My respects, sir!'

He took up his glass, Duncan did the same, and they stood up. 'I give you,' said the Gael:

> 'A trap for the fox,
> A snare for the gled;
> An' a thrawn neck for Boneypart.'

He drank the savage North-country toast, swaying slightly on his feet.

The stranger held up his hand.

'Nay! 'Tis a poor and muddy business to drink curses to your enemies in the field. Napoleon is worth fighting; the greatest soldier yet seen, though I do not love him. His presence is worth thousands to France. Any ensign will tell you of the adoring legions that will die for him. 'Tis a great gift this loyalty, and 'tis great to be able to inspire it! Nay! I drink no halter to his neck, nor to any good soldier's.'

The two others looked at him but half-understanding, and then at each other.

'Maybe,'— began one; 'maybe'—

'Maybe I'm a spy. I read your silly thoughts.' He laughed aloud. 'A most useful spy in a snow-storm in the wilds of Morayshire! My good fellows, I'— He broke off, and poured out some claret. 'Come, I drink "Success to King George and Wellington!"'

The three rose to the toast.

'But if you are so bloodthirsty,' he continued, as they sat down, 'why are you not with the Colours?'

'I doot we're baith owre auld for fechtin' now. We're no' as slamp as we were; but I did my share, sir. I had a musket at Bunker Hill wi' Clinton,' said the man Ross.

'And I,' said Duncan proudly—'I have given two good sons to the 79th. Lord send them safe hame!'

The stranger's eyes shone. He saw again the blood-stained village street of Fuentes Onoro.

'Amen!' he said. 'They did good work on the 3rd of May last, I have heard.'

'They did, sir! They did!' old Duncan exclaimed. 'Hear what the *Gazette* said. Mr Grant, the minister o' Abernethy, reads it oot o' his pulpit. They tell me there's mair folk gangs to the kirk since he began it. He gave me this ane last week.' He produced a well-thumbed paper, and read aloud, punctuated by hiccups:

'"The commanding officer fallen, the village could not, it seemed, hold out any longer, when a small body of troops arrived, and with determined gallantry charged the French and drove them over the Duas Casas. The honours of this glorious business fell equally to the 79th Regiment, which fought with splendid courage, losing many men and officers, and to Major Laurie, an officer of Light Dragoons, who, at the head of a single troop cut off from the main body, by a signal act of bravery at a critical moment, and after a hand-to-hand fight, disabled a dangerous gun, he and his men having been in the saddle for twelve hours previously."'

The traveller looked at the fire and said nothing, as Duncan carefully folded up the paper and continued, 'An' I have a letter from my son Donald, brought by Corporal Sinclair o' Rothes (him that lost a leg at Albuera), tellin' me about the fecht; an' forbye that, the same Major Laurie is the best pistol-shot in the army.'

'That's a big word,' said the stranger, smiling, and seemed about to say more, when Bell entered and set about the laying of the table.

'Kippered salmon an' some ribs o' beef, sir. All the fare we ha' beside us this weather,' said she.

'May I never have a worse supper, or have a worse night to sup in,' said the traveller, as he seated himself at the table and fell to hungrily. 'Hark to the storm!'

'Speakin' o' Major Laurie,' continued the talkative Duncan. 'His cousin the laird died last hairst, an' the Major was the next in line, an' fell heir to Errachdale Tower an' the bonny lands o' the same near the mouth o' the Spey. I wish they were mine. I wad as lief be at the Tower as sodgerin' wi' Wellington. It's the Major that has got as fine a place as there is on the lang rin o' Spey. The

Lord send that he mak's as guid a laird as he is a sodger! They tell me that he's a stranger to Moray, but there's some word o' him comin' hame.'

'By the same token, the sooner he's hame the better,' said the other man, lighting his pipe. 'There's them that thinks his leddy wadna greet her een oot gin he never cam'.' The traveller looked at the speaker, a faint scorn in the poise of his chin, growing in his smouldering eyes.

'Oot o' sight, oot o' mind,' the man went on, nodding vulgarly, knowingly, over his glass. 'Sir Archie is a fine figure o' a man, although the stories o' him round the country-side are as thick as blaeberries. He's never far away fra' the side o' the leddy at Errachdale morn, noon, or night.'

The flagon at the traveller's elbow fell with a crash as he rose quickly to his feet, smothering a low, inarticulate cry, the smoulder in his eyes leaping to a blaze.

'Wha'sh matter, sir?' hiccuped Duncan.

'Naught! 'Tis naught. My clumsiness! I thought I heard a knock at the door. 'Twas the storm only!' he said quickly, brusquely, as he pushed his plate away, and rose, leaving the remainder of his supper untasted.

'Ay! ay!' the man Ross murmured drowsily. 'The storm, sure enough. As ye were sayin', "He that increaseth knowledge increasheth—hic—shorrow." The leddy at'——

'Enough! Cease this scurvy gossip in my presence,' the traveller struck in haughtily, 'and keep gentlewomen's names out of your alehouse babble.' He swung out of the room. The two men were too far gone to read any significance into his order or its imperious tone. Indeed, they had scarcely heard it, and sat blinking at each other in owlish silence.

The traveller went out of the room into the kitchen.

'Give these carrion room here, or anywhere out of my sight. They are nearly asleep already,' he said to the woman. 'I shall rest by the fire in the room until early morning. Here is for the lawin'!'

He took out a sovereign or two, tossed one on the table, and returned the rest to his pocket.

Murdo, watching through the chink of the cupboard, saw the glitter of the coins and heard their solid clink. In his plight their jingle stirred his senses, falling on him like sweet, sudden music amid the desert of his prospects. The bright sight of them wrought an instantaneous magical change in him, setting his nimble thoughts a-dancing. Clearer visions of escape across the snow-clad hills arose, the money helping him on his road, handy to cross Greedy Peter's palm with at Arisaig Sound, when he would get a passage from him out through the Islands in the *Keturah* lugger. The sovereigns were as good as in his pocket, he thought. Certainly there would be more of them in the traveller's keeping, for he was well dressed and looked a gentleman. The good red gold! Was there anything like it? He smiled for the first time for a fortnight. His luck was going to hold after all! Like most of the legions of those who live by the worst of their wits, he possessed an extraordinary resiliency of nature, and years of evasion of the law and more than his share of luck had fostered it. A tonic quality lay in the sight and sound of the money. He felt pleasurably elated, his cautious breathing coming quicker, as he focussed his plans, and the image of the gallows joined a goodly company of half-forgotten, disagreeable shadows in the dingy background of his mind. His face relaxed again in a grim smile.

Meanwhile, with some coaxing, Bell had managed the difficult task of steering the two muddled cronies into a couple of chairs in the kitchen. Once there, they slept promptly and audibly.

The gentleman had returned to the other room, and Murdo through the chink saw his smouldering eyes and unreadable face as he stood staring into the red heart of the burning peats. Then Murdo opened the door of his hiding-place noiselessly, and stole to the back-door, his little, bright, cunning eyes meeting the watching woman's big, honest, gray ones. He beckoned to her. She looked at the two men in the kitchen. They were sound asleep, snoring, and half-insensible. Bell came softly towards Murdo, with a brave smile trembling on the brink of tears. He drew her towards him. His strong arms were round her. She was silent for a minute or two, almost happy, almost forgetting the little handbill and its dreadful accusing words, '*Wanted! Murder!*'

She broke her troubled silence with a whispered, 'Murdo, ye maun gang ere mornin'. I ken; ye needna gainsay me. Ye're bein' hunted for—for—— Murdo, I've twa or three shillin's. Gin they wad help ye west owre the hills to'——

'Twa or three shillin's! Twa or three buckies wad be as muckle use to me,' he rejoined contemptuously. 'I maun risk owre the hills my lee lane, it seems, an' sorn my bite an' sup fra' strangers by night like a gangrel.' He contrived a sorrowful undernote, a suggestion of vague regrets. His voice might have been the good man's pursued by adversity.

Her clasp tightened round him, and the knave stole a furtive glance or two at her.

'Ay,' he repeated, 'my lee lane!' He sighed heavily, and loosened his arm just a trifle. The woman, clinging to him, could not see his calculating eye, and would not have read it though she could. She only knew that he was in danger, only heard in his voice the premonition of parting.

'I'll gang wi' ye to the West Coast,' she said. 'Take me wi' you, Murdo! Take me!'

'I've to get there masel' first. The siller's the thing! An' where's the siller to come fra'?' He took another stealthy look at her. 'Gin I got the siller ye could join me there, Bell.' Joy leaped in her eyes at the thought, and he saw it.

'Bell,' he said, drawing her closer to him, 'ye can help me gin ye like.'

'Gin I like!' she echoed. 'Gin I like! My heart's sair that I canna.'

'But ye can, my dear; ay, easily.' A new quality stole into his voice as he looked at her and weighed his chances. He was tender and passionate by turns. He whispered a few words. His eyes, meeting hers, devoured them, as he took her hands in his.

'Ye can. Listen. The traveller in there'—he nodded at the room where the traveller sat—'he—you saw—the—the gold.'

Something in her silence, in the sudden startled catch in her breathing, almost abashed him for the moment. She slowly withdrew her hands and raised her drooping head, her eyes wide, as she looked at him.

'Murdo! what mean ye? A guest in my father's house, though it's but an inn.'

The man craftily smothered his anger, inwardly cursing her qualms. There was only sorrow in his face and in the cadence of his voice as he answered.

'An' ye pretend that yours is the sair heart because ye canna help me!' he said sadly.

She turned her head away, her fears struggling with her heart.

'The man will come by no harm, I tell ye,' he went on. 'A word will do it. Tell him when he starts to tak' the left-han' road at the Nether Wood,' he whispered.

'I—I canna, Murdo. Dinna ask me,' she said, but she spoke below her breath, and her eyes were no longer seeking his. Her whispered 'Dinna ask me' came welcome to his impatient ears. He knew, as all bad men and most good ones do, that a woman's 'Dinna ask me' oft translates 'Mercy, pray you! For I love you.' He could scarcely restrain a chuckle as he felt her defences falling. Now was the time to play his ace.

'Gin I had the siller, Bell, I would win to Arisaig, an' I had thoughts that ye wad join me there.' He lied with ease, smoothly and in a minor key. 'But it seems that's no' to be,' he added bitterly, 'an' a' because ye winna tell an unkenned rider his wrang road up Speyside for a mile or twa. I'll swear, Bell, he'll come by no harm. But if ye winna, ye winna, an' I'll as like as not stand in the dock o' a Justiciar Coort at Inverness.' His arms were round her again. 'My God, woman! ye ken what that means. I winna haud a dog's chance!'

The poor lass buried her face in her hands, her bosom heaving tumultuously. He waited for her to speak, but she was frozen dumb with misery.

'A dog's chance!' he repeated. 'But I doubt if ye care! Weel, I've miles in front o' me, an' I maun start. Is't good-bye, Bell?'

She burst into passionate weeping, Murdo watching her, masking his sulky anger. His vocation gave him no time for tears, but he understood hers.

'Ance I get the siller, never fear, my lass, I'll send for ye. Mind ye'll tell him to tak' the left-hand road at the Nether Wood.'

He bent and kissed her. The devil uses Love as often as Hate, if it but mark a sign-post on his well-beloved path of least resistance. She surrendered without knowing it, and fled, weeping, back to the house.

The man closed the back-door after him, and faced the mirk night with a certain black, and in part admirable, resolution. Measuring his chances against the law as he bent to the gale, he was tickled by the side-issue of an ancient problem.

'Women want kittle handlin'. She kens I'm wanted for the—the bit o' a mischance on the Moor o' Dava; but I was nearly beat to gar her put the traveller wi' the siller on the wrang road,' he soliloquised with a whimsical evil grin as he vanished into the night.

In the tavern, the traveller still sat staring into the heart of the fire. Once or twice he rose and looked impatiently out of the window into the blackness. Once he opened the door, swiftly closing it again against a blast that shook the little house and flung an armful of snow into the room, almost overturning the lamp. Plainly to ride farther that night would be folly. 'I must wait until morning,' he said to himself. 'I must wait.' As the night wore on, tired lines crept into his square face. He paced up and down the room restlessly, apparently with no thought of sleep. The regular snoring of the two men in the kitchen sounded through the wall, and he heard them with a spice of envy in his disgust. Once he drew his sword and made one or two rapid passes with a master's hand and eye. The peats burned low, and still he paced up and down, his eyes smouldering, something looking out of them, something of anger, disquiet, scorn, of all three.

A chance word in the wayside inn had touched him more sharply than the French bayonet at Aldeaponte. For this was a gentleman and a fine soldier, Ludovic Laurie, home with a wound from the blood-drenched Peninsula; just promoted to colonel's rank in one of His Majesty's regiments of Dragoons, and hastening North to his wife, and to the little son he had never seen, at the Tower above the river on old Speyside.

*(To be continued.)*

# A NATIONAL APPLE-SHOW.

By J. T. BEALBY, Author of *Fruit-Ranching in British Columbia*, &c.

MR F. W. SEYMOUR, a Justice of the Peace of Maywood, in the state of Illinois, U.S.A., a 'debonair blade' of seventy-five summers, fell a victim recently to the irresistible charms of the apple-pie of a winsome widow eight years his junior. The recipe which the happy bride advises her sisters to use when they blushingly think of going and doing likewise is this: 'Make your pie-crust rich, slice your apples thin, put in plenty of them, and use lots of sugar.' And the gallant Justice of the Peace admits us to his confidence in these words: 'Her apple-pie got me. I always did like apple-pie; but I never did get real apple-pie until I ate her apple-pie.'

Now, as there are said to be two hundred and nine different ways of cooking the apple, what debonair bachelor, we wonder, be he seventy-five or twenty-five, can hope to escape the fall of man, with which the apple has such fatal association? That this alluring fruit does sometimes turn the tables we know from the defeat of the swifter-footed Atalanta by Hippomenes (or Melanion). But it is essentially an ally of the sex that is alone remarkable for personal charms. Once the object of the loftiest aspirations of human desire, as prefigured in the golden apples of the Hesperides or Isles of the Blest, and in the religious beliefs of the ancient Scandinavians held to be the very food of the gods, the apple has now become a staple article in the diet of the people in several of the countries of the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that it should be made the sole and principal object of a gigantic show to which the epithet 'national' has been applied, and applied neither inaptly nor incorrectly.

From the 7th to the 13th December 1908, there was exhibited at Spokane, the largest and most influential city in the interior of the American state (not city) of Washington, the largest collection of apples ever brought together in one place since the world began. This gigantic display and competition was organised and carried through with the energy, thoroughness, and enthusiasm which in a pre-eminent degree are characteristic of the spirit of Western America. The prizes that were offered amounted to no less an aggregate than seven thousand two hundred and thirty-five pounds, the individual awards ranging from two shillings up to the large sum of two hundred and twenty-five pounds. In the prize-list were not only money awards, not only silver cups, medals, and diplomas, but even a round dozen of fruit-farms of two, five, and eight acres each, as well as nursery stock (young fruit-trees), horticultural implements, and other necessaries for the orchard — for example, spraying material.

The show was opened by no less a dignitary than President Roosevelt himself, who, standing in a room in his official residence, the White House, in the city of Washington, at 10.30 A.M. on Monday the 7th December in the year named, officially declared open the greatest apple-show the world had up to that moment witnessed, by pressing an electric button. Not only does this fact bear emphatic testimony to the high estimation in which the apple is held on the American continent (U.S.A. and Canada), but it amply justifies the designation applied to the show itself as the National (American) Apple-Show.

Why the city of Spokane came to be selected as the scene of this vast (and may we not also say unique?) exhibition is easily understood. During the last ten or a dozen years the two Pacific states of Oregon and Washington have come prominently to the front as producers of apples of superlative quality; and immediately north of the state of Washington lies the Canadian province of British Columbia, which is fast winning a reputation as the producer of some of the finest apples grown anywhere in the world. The Hood River district of Oregon is a household word west of the Mississippi, and even in the markets of Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York for all that is excellent in apples and strawberries; and there are several other districts, such as Wenatchee and Yakima in Washington, which are rapidly forging ahead into the front rank as not unworthy rivals of the older Hood River district.

Spokane stands, as it were, at the gate of this Western Garden of Eden, so that the apples which might naturally be expected to figure on the exhibition tables were grown comparatively close to her own doors.

The prize-money, large as the amount is, was raised by subscription by the energy of the public-spirited citizens of Spokane. The number of visitors who passed the turnstiles to view this great display of the 'big red apple' during the week is computed to have exceeded one hundred thousand. In spite of this, when the balance-sheet came to be made up after the show was over, there appeared a deficiency of three thousand five hundred dollars. But it was a deficiency of very short duration. Within the course of little more than twenty-four hours after the fact was made public the whole of the money necessary to wipe out the deficit was subscribed, one hundred of the leading citizens of Spokane each contributing thirty-five dollars.

It should be mentioned that all entries in the several competitions were absolutely free, except that each exhibitor was required to pay for a single entrance-ticket of the value of one dollar. The total amount obtained from this source did not

exceed two hundred and fifty dollars (fifty-two pounds), or 7 per cent. of the total prize-money.

Prizes were given for displays by states, counties, districts, and foreign countries, as well as for exhibits by private individuals, and were awarded for excellence in packed boxes and packed barrels, collections or displays of apples from irrigated and non-irrigated orchards, fruit grown by women, by-products made from the apple—for example, apple-butter, jelly, marmalade, vinegar, cider, canned and evaporated apples, and so on; and, finally, for photographic reproductions of orchard scenes. But no other fruit was exhibited except the apple and products made from the apple. It was all apples—apples—apples.

The blue ribbon of the whole show was a prize of two hundred and twenty-five pounds awarded for a whole railway-car load (a truckload of twelve and a half short or American tons), consisting of six hundred and thirty packed boxes, each weighing forty pounds; with a second prize of one hundred and three pounds, and a third of forty-one pounds. In addition, three or four extra or special awards fell, as it were automatically, to the fortunate winner of the first prize.

These champion honours of the show were carried off by Michael Horan, a fruit-rancher of Wenatchee, Washington. The total amount of money which accrued to him in consequence of the judges' award was nearly eight hundred and seventy-five pounds, and included the value of the prize itself (two hundred and twenty-five pounds), a special award of forty-one pounds because the apples of the winning carload were grown in the Wenatchee Valley; sixty-two pounds, being the price paid for thirty boxes selected by the donor of the special prize just mentioned; spraying material to the value of forty-six pounds presented by a firm of manufacturing chemists; and, finally, the price of the remaining six hundred boxes of the carload, amounting to close upon five hundred pounds. The purchaser of these six hundred boxes was an English firm, Messrs D. Crossley & Sons, of Liverpool. The carload was made up of mixed varieties of apples.

Contrary to what might be expected, Mr Horan was not brought up to the fruit-growing business. He had been engaged as a horse-breaker in California and as a breeder of cattle in Washington, and had no practical knowledge of the growing of fruit until a few years ago. He planted his orchard in 1900, when land was worth about twenty pounds an acre. His orchard runs to fifty acres, and in 1908, after the show, he was offered four hundred pounds an acre for it, but refused to sell.

The second prize was won by Mr H. M. Gilbert, of North Yakima, Washington, with a carload of Winesap apples. He may be classed as an expert horticulturist, having started in the business sixteen years ago. He now owns an orchard of four hundred acres, irrigated by a private ditch. The land cost him eight pounds per acre. He has several times refused to take six hundred pounds per acre for it. The carload which he exhibited represented one-fifth of the crop grown on three and a half acres of Winesap-trees, the trees being some eight, some ten, years old.

It is a remarkable fact, however, that the great majority of the orchardists of the West in the states of Oregon and Washington, where the cultivation of the apple and other fruits is carried on in a thoroughly scientific spirit, are or were originally amateurs—that is to say, men who were not brought up to fruit-growing, but to divers other callings, and have only turned their attention to the production of fruit at a later stage of their career.

By far the larger number of the exhibitors at Spokane were, of course, Americans; but the American growers did not by any means carry off all the honours. The neighbouring Canadian province of British Columbia entered for a comparatively few contests, but came out with flying colours by winning a remarkably high percentage of her entries. Indeed, one British Columbia exhibitor, Mr F. R. E. De Hart, of Kelowna, a charming little town in the famous Okanagan Valley, had the honour of being the winner of the highest aggregate in prize-money (setting aside price realised for fruit sold) of all the exhibitors—namely, eight hundred and eighteen pounds. His wins included fifteen first prizes, and consisted not only of money awards, but embraced ten acres of irrigated fruit-land. His most important win was for the 'best individual, county, district, state, or provincial exhibit of apples,' and gained him a prize of more than a hundred pounds, a silver cup, and over one pound each for two of the boxes shown in his exhibit. Altogether, a dozen exhibitors from British Columbia (including the writer of this paper, who had twelve prizes to his credit) brought home a total of thirty-four first prizes, seventeen second prizes, and twenty-six of lower denominations. Numbering 6 per cent. of the total number of exhibitors, they nevertheless carried away 10 per cent. of the aggregate number of awards.

A unique award was a reproduction in gilded metal of the largest apple in the show. This proved to be a monster of the Wolf River variety, which bumped the scales at thirty-one ounces, or only one ounce short of two pounds, and measured seventeen and a half inches in circumference; and yet this Brobdingnagian apple was left far behind by the winner of the same contest in the show of 1909—namely, a Woolwich infant of forty-one ounces, or over two and a half pounds, and measuring seventeen and one-eighth inches in circumference. It was an apple of the Spokane Beauty variety.

The show was repeated in the following year, but was held at an earlier date—namely, 15th to 20th November, the exhibition being opened, in a similar manner to the first show, by President Taft pressing an electric button in the White House in the city of Washington.

The prize-list was very similar to that of the first

year, except that the commercial aspects of the industry were brought more prominently to the front. Instead of one class for carload competitions, there were this time no less than twelve, the first premium in each case being two hundred and fifty dollars, and the second one hundred dollars. In addition, there was a grand prize of one thousand dollars awarded to the champion carload selected from the winners of the twelve classes, and a second of five hundred dollars. This, the blue ribbon of the whole show, was won by Messrs Tronson and Guthrie, of Eagle Point, Oregon, with six hundred and thirty boxes of Spitzenberg apples; and the second by the Sawyer Land Company, of Sunnyside, Washington, for a carload of Grimes's Golden apples.

The total earnings of the winners of the first prize, Messrs Tronson & Guthrie, amounted to four thousand four hundred dollars (over nine hundred pounds), and included one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars prize-money, and three thousand one hundred and fifty dollars, the price of the fruit at five dollars a box of forty pounds. The total costs of production, including picking, grading, packing, boxing, and freight (railway) charges to Spokane, were six hundred and fifty dollars. Thus the net revenue was three thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars (seven hundred and seventy-three pounds). The apples themselves were the pick of two thousand eight hundred boxes gathered from a five-acre orchard of sixteen-year-old trees. The ordinary commercial value of the produce of the five acres was about one thousand six hundred and fifty pounds, or at the rate of over three hundred and thirty pounds per acre, equivalent to a net return of over two hundred pounds per acre.

Mr Tronson, it is interesting to find, is an Englishman by birth, being a native of Devonshire. He emigrated to Canada in the eighties, settling in Manitoba, where he served with the Winnipeg Rifles during the Riel Rebellion of 1885. After being engaged ten years in the flour and jute business at Portland, Oregon, he proceeded to Southern Oregon in 1906, and with his partner, Mr Guthrie, bought one hundred and twenty-six acres of orchard for eleven thousand dollars (two thousand two hundred and eighty pounds). Its present value (beginning of 1910) is put at sixty thousand dollars (twelve thousand three hundred and seventy pounds).

Mr W. W. Sawyer, the winner of the second prize, was originally a window-trimmer in the cities of Chicago, Milwaukee, and Portland, and only began to grow fruit six years ago.

British Columbia again carried off several prizes. Her individual exhibitors were more numerous, and her proportion of wins rose to 15 per cent. of the total number, but the prizes were more evenly distributed among the several competitors than was the case in 1908.

The objects which the promoters of this great show have had before them may be briefly summarised as follows: to render the apple popular as a national food and a national fruit, to assist growers in the cultivation and marketing of their fruit, to encourage the growing of sounder and better fruit and heavier yields, to supply the ever-increasing demand for high-quality commercial apples, to demonstrate to the west of America the possibilities of intensive cultivation, and to show to the east of America the value to the whole country of this development.

Professor H. E. Van Deman, the principal judge in 1909, and one of the foremost experts in pomology in the United States, writing to the managers after the show was over, said: 'There never was such an apple-show in all the history of the world, and there may never be another as good; but we hope there will be far better ones in the future, and that there can be any one with his eyes open can see. The country, north as well as south, can and does produce apples of the highest grade grown anywhere in all the world.'

The apple-growing industry in the north-west of the United States has all grown up since 1845, when a few trees, dragged across the great plains by an ox-team, were planted in fertile soil near Oregon City, in the Willamette River Valley in the state of Oregon. Prior to 1900 very few apples were sent out of this part of the States; but during the last six or eight years there has been a tremendous increase, and during the next few years the increase will be still more rapid. The total production of apples from the four states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana is estimated to reach in 1915 a total of ninety-seven thousand five hundred carloads, equal to three thousand nine hundred trains of twenty-five cars each, or seventy-eight trains every day for fifty days.

## A SEASIDE GARDEN.

Here where I lie, hid in a grassy nest,
The flowers stand sentinel to guard my sleep;
Far down below the cliff, itself at rest,
The summer sea lies basking, fathoms deep.

Here is a world of wings, of perfumed airs,
Pinions of woodland birds and fleecy cloud;
Those magic flights and songs my spirit shares,
The lilies and the larkspurs think aloud.

Have we not done with grief a little space,
Oh restless heart! and all foreboding fears,
To gaze awhile at Nature's radiant face
And sing a roundelay to the good years?

Years rich in promise and some guerdon won,
Now hope buds like a flower; and joy, the bee,
Dreams in the scented calyx wrapped in sun.
Surely the gods are gracious unto thee!

Yes, those far gods shall pause while weaving fate
To hear maybe from their immortal sphere
The wafted song of Peace grown incarnate,
Who lends a glory to the garden here.

CONSTANCE FARMAR.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# HUNTER OF CARRIGAGALLOCH.

By C. EDWARDES.

## CHAPTER I.

TWO years ago chance as much as anything else brought my sister Muriel and me to Cronin's Hotel in Mahoon of County Clare, and having played us that trick, proceeded to play us another of a different kind. It was not a comfortable house, this of the Cronins', but there were compensations. I may mention two or three of them—the strong local colour, the play of the gray-headed jackdaws on the tops of the chimneys visible from our bedroom windows, the interesting chatter of Patsy Cronin himself, his old mother, the maid-servant with the husky voice and untidy black hair, the scenery, and other matters.

To call it a hotel was rank extravagance, and only a patriotic old lady like Mrs Cronin, brought up on English hardships (her phrase), could have had the audacity to assure an Englishman by letter, as she did, that her house possessed every modern convenience for gentlefolks. Her two screeds on the subject were pretty specimens of Irish eloquence and imagination. But in saying that the Mahoon atmosphere was the finest in the world she did not tell much of a fib. The frowsiness, dirt, and unreasonable dearness of the hotel would have sent us elsewhere very quickly but for an accident. There were brass edges to the stairs, and, slipping on one of these the day after our arrival, I sprained an ankle, and was Mrs Cronin's unwilling prisoner for more than a fortnight. In that time I learnt a great deal about the habits of jackdaws in the nesting season. They carried rubbish into the chimneys with curious contempt for the blue smoke that eddied therefrom, and clattered incessantly, no doubt about the beautiful eggs with which they hoped by-and-by to adorn their nests.

It was during this time that Muriel made the acquaintance of Dermot Hunter, which seemed to me a pity.

The Hunters of Carrigagalloch had been the one important family of Mahoon for about two centuries and a half. Rather more than a mile from the town, on a knoll by the river, was the castle-keep of Carrigagalloch, and behind it a medley of rocks and gorse-bushes, as well as green glades, tall old mossy ash-trees, primroses, anemones, and a straight-faced white house with broken windows at the end of a disconsolate avenue, gapped like Mrs Cronin's lower jaw when she talked. The house had bred Hunters without pause for several generations, but Dermot was the last of them. Any one who knows Ireland will realise the place.

As a rule, in County Clare, I imagine a landlord is not an appreciated person if he tries to enforce what he believes to be his rights as a property-owner. Dermot Hunter was not such a man. According to Mrs Cronin and a sufficiency of reason, his father before him had died of a broken heart and softening of the brain, due to cattle-houghing, boycotting, a determination to collect his rents at all costs, and the Land Commission, which cut down his income by two-fifths. He left a nominal few hundreds a year to his son, who straightway began to get rid of them in a sociable way which won for him the regard of the worst sort of Mahoon's mankind. Bit by bit his land changed hands, and just before our coming the last of the furniture had been sold by auction. Two rooms and a kitchen were now enough for him and the old woman who looked after him.

'Yes, sure,' said Mrs Cronin in talking of him, 'the poor boy is drinking something terrible. Give him time and he'll die in the road, unless he drops lifeless in a tap-room. There's no saving him at all, at all. He has the fine heart, but no sense.'

She told of the scamps who were helping him to his ruin—a brace of O'Sheas, a Sullivan, and a Spillane, though their names do not signify. These and others assembled in his desolate mansion-house of evenings for cards and whisky. She said he sometimes slept in his clothes for a week at a time. I passed on this report to Muriel, who flushed and said she did not believe it.

This was the first direct intimation to me that


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my impressionable sister had already seen too much of this young scapegrace.

My own introduction to him followed the next morning. I was watching three of the jackdaws with the backbone of a trout on one of the roofs when he blundered up the stairs, knocked violently, and asked if he might enter.

He was a remarkable specimen of a young Irishman, tall and broad and lean, with black hair, very blue eyes, and faultless other features, save that his mouth suggested weakness.

'Real hard for you, this is, sir,' he began. 'The idea of such a thing, getting damaged like that. Let 's see if I can't cheer you a bit.'

But for his smile, which was startlingly winsome, I might have resented such an invasion. The English temperament and the Irish are discordant to that degree. But there was no resisting the kindliness and candour added to his smile. His laugh when he smashed a chair by sitting on it was good to hear, and his condemnation of the Cronins for their unscrupulousness was congenially forcible. He had a number of amusing Irish tales to tell, and these also helped. During the hour he spent with me I forgot that he had a reputation, good or bad. But when he rose to go he suddenly became pensive.

'Ah, musha, Mr Steen!' he said, shaking his head at the window, 'I could envy those birds their courtships and hopes. Faith, I could! But you're laughing at me!'

'Not at you, but your "musha,"' I assured him.

'Oh!' said he. 'That's all right. It's no affectation. It comes easy. I'm only a Cromwell Irishman, but I'm soaked in the distressful country's ways for all that. It's a blackguard I am besides, or pretty much; and an Irish blackguard's no better than any other. A decent crow can give points to a man like me. And so I'll be off before I make a fool of myself.'

He strode out, shrugging his shoulders, and banged my door. The pair of jackdaws outside that had inspired his remorse were scared by the noise and flew in opposite directions.

He came up three or four times after this, and then abruptly left Mahoon. But the mischief with Muriel was done by then.

I had ventured a hope or two that she would not see too much of the fascinating young scapegrace who was so often now in the neighbourhood of the hotel, and she had championed him as good women will champion handsome young spendthrifts all the world over. She knew he was under a curse. I had done my best by then to suggest wiser ways to Hunter. He bore my prosiness patiently, but reckoned himself a bad egg for ever and ever, and mocked his doom.

Muriel came to me on this our tenth morning in Mahoon and confessed.

She was very white about it. Hunter had not by any means proposed to her the previous evening in the rickety parlour downstairs, but he had told her he could not trust himself to see her again. They had shaken hands and parted.

'It is farewell for ever in this life, Miss Steen,' he had said; 'and you may guess why. The Lord send you some one better than myself who will love you as I do and deserve your love! That's all about it. And don't tell your brother, or he will put the police upon me for my impudence.'

Muriel not only told me, but seemed to glory in the telling.

'You are not to say a word against him, Dick, ever,' she said afterwards. 'Remember that. He isn't so bad as you think him. He isn't bad at all, really. If his mother had lived, and if'——

She stopped and turned to me with a challenging expression that was oddly reminiscent of Dermot Hunter himself.

'Yes,' she whispered on, 'of course I love him, and if you want to be good to me never speak of him again.'

Muriel and I had grown up together more in sympathy, perhaps, than most brothers and sisters. I was sorry for her, but as glad as man could be that Dermot Hunter had removed himself. All she knew was that he had taken the first train to Dublin, and that a padlock was on the rusty gate of his demesne. She had walked to Carrigagalloch before breakfast and seen the chain and padlock.

'Forget him,' I said, 'and good luck to him for his honesty in clearing away like that!'

'Yes, Dick,' she said. 'Good luck to him!' And then she left me to my diverting friends in cripple-dom, the jackdaws.

Two of them had found that the smoke in one of the chimneys was more than they had bargained for in their domestic arrangements. Their language as they hopped round the vent and turned their beaks this way and that sounded at least rude.

. . . . . .

I now began to get about, and a couple of drives in the Cronin car made me think better of Mahoon. The gorse splashed its gold about the landscapes enchantingly in the sunlight; there were rivers in all the valleys, and blue hills on the horizons. The roadside humours were also enlivening—goats and pigs, asses in carts and astray about the roads, wrinkled old ladies in warm red skirts, shy little maids peeping from behind sod walls, and cool young Irishmen a yard high soliciting pennies 'for a football.'

Even the hotel developed unexpected illusions.

It was not surprising that Muriel had found her way to the hearts of the Cronins and their rough-headed maid. She had a knack of delving to people's affections and discerning virtues hidden from common eyes. There were fewer hairs in the soup and puddings than before, and the plates and cutlery were now fairly clean. But the respect with which the loafers outside the hotel took off their caps to her when we started for our first airing was to me the most illuminating proof of Muriel's powers on the sensitive Irish nature. I was nobody.

Their salutations were all for her, and her cheeks showed she knew it.

Patsy Cronin himself did us the honour to drive us on these occasions, and he also showed the same regard for Muriel. His communications were much more over his left shoulder than his right—for her rather than me.

It was thus I learned that at the recent sale of Carrigagalloch furniture the Cronins had been the best bidders for many a once pretty thing. Patsy was overfond of dragging Dermot Hunter into the conversation when the landscapes were deficient in legends. There were the cups he had won at steeplechases, and his wild doings as a boy and Dublin collegian. And he irritated me much by the zest with which he recounted sundry of Hunter's feats of generosity of a kind easy, no doubt, to hot-blooded men with perverted notions of life and its responsibilities.

There was no checking him on this subject. Muriel listened and smiled, and now and then looked at me as much as to say that no harm could come of it, and that therefore I was not to interfere. I submitted accordingly to this inartistic whitewashing of a young rogue with what grace I could.

But it seemed serious when old Mrs Cronin herself began to give pointed hints about what had happened while I was nursing my foot and watching the jackdaws.

'Well, sir, and how is the beautiful young lady this morning? Ah, sure, and no wonder the squire ran away from her pretty eyes and delicate manners! It's not the like of Terence O'Shea and Rory Spillane he'd be keeping company with after such fine, softening society. She'll have done miracles with him, one same as if she was a saint in the almanacs. Yes, indeed!'

I suggested that she should not talk nonsense.

'Nonsense, is it, then?' she retorted. 'Those that know him will not think that; but I'll say no more about it, at all, at all.'

Nevertheless she said much more; and, piecing this and that together, I gathered that Muriel had been greatly too much with Hunter ere the climax. They had been seen together, for example, at a romantic green mound in the Carrigagalloch grounds which covered his father's bones; and once, in Mahoon's main street, they had met Rory Spillane together, and Dermot Hunter had taken no notice of him. If Muriel had been quite an ordinary girl all this would have been very disquieting. As it was, it only made me a little more vexed about those brass-tipped stairs of the inn.

A pig-fair now came upon the town, and filled the inn with garrulous and thirsty farmers. A large back room was opened up for their potations. One peep into it was a revelation, and the next day, in the midst of a nasty odour of stale tobacco and bad whisky, we made close acquaintance with its treasures of departed greatness.

Old Mrs Cronin showed us round.

'It's no lie I'm telling you, miss and sir,' she said. 'The pictures and silver cost me'—— the sum doesn't matter, credible or not; 'and if it was not all into the pocket of poor Mr Dermot I'd be calling myself names for my fooliahness.'

There were fine old Morland engravings, mezzotints and sporting prints, a Sheraton sideboard with several pieces of old Sheffield plate in perfect condition, a row of mahogany chairs embossed with a crest, old china, and a Florentine mosaic box about a foot long by six inches in width and depth. This last was on the sideboard, with a bouquet of suffocated daffodils in a cracked tumbler on its charming lid. It had a quilted yellow silk lining, and was packed with fruit and fish knives.

When we left the room the Florentine box went with us.

Mrs Cronin welcomed the opportunity to sell anything at a profit, and I bought this memento of Dermot Hunter and Carrigagalloch for Muriel. It stood on her dressing-table that night, suitably enough, for it was easy guessing that it had been a casket for jewels in its prime, before hard times and stupidity had reduced the fortunes of the Hunter family. Mrs Cronin was perhaps right in saying that Dermot would be 'the proud man' when he heard what fate had befallen it.

This was on the Wednesday, and we were to leave Mahoon on the Friday. But the next day an important little, old Dublin solicitor named Ross appeared at the inn and upset our arrangements.

We were at luncheon, and the maid brought up the news with the cheese.

'If you plaze, sir, there's a gintleman that says he must disturb you,' she reported.

'It's just that, Mr Steen,' said the gentleman himself, behind her. 'How do you do; and you also, Miss Steen?' His face puckered as he looked keenly at Muriel.—'And you may bring me any cold meat you have in the house, my girl.—I'm straight from five hours in the train, Mr Steen.'

He explained himself when the maid went for his meat. He was Mr Micah Ross, solicitor to the Hunter family in the days of Dermot's father's prosperity; and a wrathful Mr Micah Ross to boot.

'That unhappy boy, Mr Dermot, with whom you are already acquainted, yesterday morning gave me one of the shocks of my life, sir. It's a disgraceful proceeding, this tearing such a pretty property to tatters without consultation of those who might be presumed to feel an honest interest in his affairs.'

The cold meat interrupted him.

Muriel's face told its tale to both of us, but she went to the window while Mr Ross's luncheon was being laid.

Then, before I could get in a discreet word of inquiry about my concern in the maladministration of the Carrigagalloch estate, the solicitor went on: 'It's perfectly ridiculous, and I'm uncommonly glad to find you are still in Mahoon, Mr Steen. Dermot Hunter, poor, dear feather-headed lad, has a great regard for your intellectual attainments, and was sure you would give me the benefit

of your views. Just imagine it, now—a man like that, seven-and-twenty, and an M.A. of Dublin, tossing ten or twelve thousand pounds into the world's frying-pan without foreknowledge of what he was doing, and then coming and asking me to take him into my office as a clerk!'

Muriel glanced round.

'Yes, Miss Steen,' he added pointedly, 'that's what he did. "Make a useful man of me, if it isn't too late, Mr Ross," he said; and "Faith," said I, "you're a useful man already, Dermot Hunter, for wanting to be it." There's not many of us with such ideals. I don't know that I have them myself, and it's a hardened sinner I am to declare it.'

He jumped up to open the door for Muriel.

'And that's why you're hurrying off, my dear young lady, I'll warrant,' he said; 'having no liking for the society of hardened sinners.'

If, as I suspect, this was a snare to catch an emotion, it succeeded. Muriel faced him with a smile.

'I don't believe in hardened sinners,' she said. 'At least I have never met one, and never expect to.'

Mr Ross whispered an 'Ah!' of admiration, and shut the door. 'She's more fortunate than myself, Mr Steen,' he continued; 'but that's their way, God bless them! They read us by the light of their own pure hearts. Never a wonder Dermot Hunter loves her, sir. I could love her myself, if I hadn't children as old as she is. But'—noticing my impatience—'don't lose your temper with me, for there's no fear of his bothering her about his affections.'

I asked him rather curtly what I could do for him.

'Let me snatch a mouthful or two and I'll tell you,' he said.

He ate like a man reckless of his digestion.

'Mind you,' he then said, 'the Hunters of Carrigagalloch are a very grand stock. His father Lawrence and I quarrelled about cutting an entail. "Cut it if you will," said I, "but I'll be no party to it, and you may whistle for me afterwards until your apple-cart's upset." That's twenty-four years ago. If I'd had any idea he was tumbling to pieces in the meantime, I'd have swallowed my words as readily as this beef; but it's too late for regrets. Mr Steen, there's ten thousand pounds' worth of emeralds belonging to the Hunters of Carrigagalloch lying who knows where, and I'll spend a day here trying to get on their track. You are a barrister, I understand. Let us join minds and see what we can do for the boy.'

He pushed away his plate.

'That's family history. We'll call it secret family history, if you like. Napoleon, him they call Great, gave the stones as a necklace to Miss Euphemia Hunter in Paris, as a token of his appreciation of her wit and beauty. Her great-nephew Lawrence kept them here in the wilds, in defiance of my advice, and his son Dermot doesn't know a syllable about them.'

*(To be continued.)*

## THE GERMAN WORKMAN.

By Richard Thirsk.

In appearance the German workman suggests more the patient plodder than the alert artisan. Contrary to popular opinion, he is not giant-like in his proportions, being of medium height, stolid, moving leisurely with the air of one never in a hurry. His ideal is to be what he calls *Gemütlich*, which in this instance may be translated as the easy-going art of studying the comfort of No. 1 without ever considering the convenience of No. 2. 'Man, mind thyself,' is the principal tenet in his new creed. Nevertheless he is good-natured up to a point, which is reached when he suspects any interference with what he considers his legal rights. Then he will roar himself red in the face, threaten the most terrible things, finally going away triumphantly without attempting any one of them. Hans, he considers, is every whit as good as his master; and while he can be docile and obedient to hard-and-fast laws cramping the scope of his existence within very narrow bounds, his bearing towards his superiors is not always what the latter desire or might expect. Employers he tolerates as necessary evils, taking little or no interest in the tasks he performs for them. On this subject he is well lectured at the periodical conferences between masters and men, but with only partial success. Factory laws, however, compel him to take a certain amount of pride in his personal appearance, so that a stranger meeting him coming from his work wearing clothes innocent of all trace of toil, a bowler hat, and a clean white collar, might take him for a clerk in the office. Should the same observer see him at his work, clad in ragged overalls that are never washed from the day he puts them on until they are too filthy and torn to be worn longer, the deception vanishes.

Like man in general, the German workman is a bundle of contradictions. He has his good qualities as well as his bad ones, and what may be perfectly true of one phase of his life may also be a direct contradiction of some other phase. Often the dividing lines are very sharply defined, for the reason that he is still in the making, having scarcely survived his period of apprenticeship, since Germany is little more than two decades old in industrialism. He, the descendant of long generations of peasants, is lured into the workshop

by the promise of greater gain and easier conditions of labour. The first shock of the change from the field to the factory is still upon him; he has brought with him to the town the instincts and habits of the countryman, and he has not yet settled down to the altered conditions of his new sphere. Freedom from the deadening restraint of the overlord and a feeling of the power of unity make him less amenable than formerly to authority. He demands greater independence in public and private life, exhibiting a dangerous tendency to go to an opposite extreme. Like the giant in the fable, he is waking up to a knowledge of his own strength. As he continues to multiply in numbers in the towns these demands increase, and have already assumed such alarming proportions that the Government has been reluctantly compelled to modify many of its recent measures solely on his account.

The coming of the working-man marks the transformation of Germany from an agricultural to an industrial nation, and the metamorphosis has been so sudden that, progressive as the Government of the country has been in many ways, it has not been able to keep pace with the movement. What may be termed traces of feudalism still linger in different forms, acting as a drag on go-ahead commercialism. This likewise affects the workman, and also the conditions under which he labours. In some respects he is treated as an important unit in the State, which demands his personal service during twenty of the best years of his life, and claims a considerable share of his income from the time he begins to earn until he is old enough to obtain the pension which the State has husbanded for him against the time when he will no longer be able to work. In return for this it takes a fatherly interest in the details of his life, employing officials to see that he does not depart from the prescribed paths, and to make sure that he is politically sound.

This latter is the sorest point of all, having gradually got beyond official control. The threats and fears that held him in political subjection while he was still on the land have lost all their force; the working-man has burst the bonds that bound him; he has left behind the period of servitude and entire dependence on a bureaucratic Government which treats him socially and politically as a nonentity. Changed circumstances have roused him from his apathy, and he is beginning to take a keener interest in national affairs, so far, at least, as these concern his welfare. He feels that under present conditions he is merely instrumental in helping to bolster up a number of institutions which stand in the way of his natural development, and from which the benefits he receives are not in proportion to the services he is compelled to render to their maintenance. His loudest grumble is that he has no voice in national affairs, his part in the moulding of its destinies being limited to soldiering and handing over to the Treasury a large share of the fruits of his toil. In the course of a recent speech the Kaiser answered this complaint, telling those who are not satisfied with things as they are to quit the country, as he only wants contented and self-sacrificing subjects within his realm.

From time to time appeals for reform have been made to the various political parties; but the machinery of government is so complicated that even in those assemblies in which he has been granted the privilege of a vote he is rendered impotent by the weight of superior authority. Yet the Government views with concern the various movements inaugurated by the working-man, fearing that their ultimate end is to wrest from it much of its power. Hence the reluctance to grant any of the proposed reforms, and the desire to keep the workman idling in the hive, which those in authority consider is his right place. For this reason, more than from any other cause, the German workman is a Social Democrat. The obstinacy of the Government has driven him to this extremity, and the extraordinary growth of the party within recent times is the surest indication of the spreading unrest and dissatisfaction. Another straw marking the direction of this political current and pressure of the flood is the persistence with which public demonstrations are, in defiance of armed opposition, held against the Government. Such manifestations are not instigated so much from feelings of disloyalty, as many people are led to understand; at heart the German workman is proud of his country and of his Kaiser, who is to him the personification of national greatness. His indignation meetings are an outward expression of the hope that he may obtain from democracy what he has failed to obtain elsewhere: the right to be heard on that subject which affects him more than all else, since it touches his pocket—the subject of taxation.

So far as the average workman is concerned this is the whole subject of politics in a nutshell. Apart from taxes, his interests are limited; he considers he pays a staff of Ministers sufficiently well for devoting themselves to the intricate subject of politics, and so long as they do not make increased calls on his purse or his time he is passably contented. Even the Finance Minister enjoyed immunity from outside interference until the increased costs in all departments sent up the taxes by leaps and bounds. In order to meet these the cost of living has doubled within the last five years. From being a cheap country in which to live, Germany has now become one of the most expensive, and the workman is alarmed. On him the burden falls heaviest, curtailing or making prohibitive what pleasures and luxuries he may have been in the habit of permitting himself. With the general rise in prices comes no compensating rise in wages. Instead, the chances of permanent employment begin to diminish, and his natural pessimism forces him to the conclusion that life brings practically no compensations. His

working hours are long and his wages are small. Out of his twenty or twenty-eight shillings a week he has to pay three direct taxes: income-tax, town-tax, and church-tax—the last being enforced whether he attends church or not, and irrespective of his religious convictions. Direct taxes are based on the income-tax, which begins on yearly incomes of forty-five pounds a year and over; though in some districts the town or commune tax is levied on incomes of ten shillings a week. On forty-five pounds a year the tax amounts to fourteen shillings, while in some districts this figure is considerably higher.

A concrete example may better illustrate the scheme of taxation adopted in Germany. For the sake of clearness it may be advisable to keep to even figures, taking the case of a man earning two pounds a week, though it is by no means common for a German workman to earn as much. Out of this sum he has to pay thirty-six shillings income-tax, a little less than a quarter (or nine shillings) church-tax, and an average of forty-five shillings town-tax—in some towns this tax is three times more than the income-tax, thus bringing it up to five pounds eight shillings. According to the lowest average, the workman receiving two pounds a week is obliged to pay four pounds ten shillings yearly in direct taxation. Then there is the State insurance against accidents, the sickness-fund, and the old-age pension-fund, to which, if he hopes to receive any benefit, he must contribute another two pounds ten a year. In the case of a man earning two pounds a week or over, obligation to pay to these funds ceases though it is to his interest to continue payment. All workers earning less than this sum must, however, subscribe; and though, according to law, the master pays a part of the expenses, he generally takes it out of the weekly wage, so that in reality the worker pays. There remains to be added to the above taxes the house-tax, which is in most instances included in the rent, and taxes on railway-tickets and theatre-tickets, and for such an amusement as dancing, which is the most popular recreation of the rising generation of the working-classes.

Taking direct taxes together with the high indirect taxes, which embrace nearly all articles used at the table, also the complicated system of taxes on taxes, it becomes apparent that the working-man has to hand over to the Government the lion's share of his earnings. Many of these taxes have been made inevitable by the rapid development of the country; others have been caused by a forced growth not altogether justified or necessary. The ambition of those in authority to possess a large navy has caused an unprecedented rise in taxation within the last few years, and the necessity for more money to further the numerous schemes the Government has on hand is so urgent that statesmen are at their wits' end to know how to raise it. Already most things are taxed to the utmost extreme, and the nation is groaning under the burden. Even the most optimistic economists are agreed that the Government's income from all sources is wholly inadequate to meet expenses, and the enormous deficit is causing much uneasiness in financial circles. German credit was never lower than it is to-day, and occasionally there are rumours in banking circles of impending disaster. How much truth there is underlying these scares may be judged by the Government's extremity. Though new and higher taxes are imposed every year, the increased revenue derived from them is little more than a drop in the ocean, and those who hoped that imposts on nearly all imports would swell the vanishing State funds to the desired amount have been somewhat disappointed. In the interests of German manufactures these have had to be considerably modified. Nearly all countries except Great Britain have retaliated. Their answer was to retaliate by raising their tariffs against Germany, thus crippling German trade, obliging her to grant concessions which have brought the situation back to pretty much what it was before the introduction of increased imposts.

By keeping to the policy of Free Trade, Great Britain is conferring inestimable benefits on German commerce as well as on German finance. Several large factories, together with numerous smaller manufacturing concerns, employing among them thousands of German workmen, exist almost entirely on their trade with Britain and British colonies, much of the latter being done indirectly through the English markets. The proprietors of these concerns do not hesitate to state that were England to treat Germany on the tariff question as Germany treats England they would be obliged to dismiss the majority of their workmen. Nowhere was the recent parliamentary election watched with more engrossing interest than in Germany, and the result sent a shiver through the manufacturing community. It is conceded on all hands that any measure of Tariff Reform adopted in England would be accompanied by far-reaching results affecting most branches of German industry. One manufacturer told the writer that a policy of retaliation meant for him ruin. When so much hangs in the balance it is easy to understand why German employers dread Tariff Reform in England.

While on this subject it may be well to mention that it is not tariffs which make life so expensive for the German working-man so much as the forced and unnatural development of the country, the satisfying of the ambition of a few who are gaining vainglory by exploiting him. In the race for commercial supremacy Germany lost much ground at the beginning, since it did not take any important part in the competition until after the consolidation of the Empire in 1871. In their haste to make good this leeway statesmen have been tempted to force the pace much too fast for the working-man, on whose shoulders the burden has fallen heaviest—

so heavy, indeed, that where there are children the mother is obliged to go out and work part of the day in order to make ends meet. This is so general that it is looked upon as an essential part of her matrimonial duty. The more comfortably situated working-class families, living in a flat containing two rooms and a kitchen, nearly always let one of these rooms to what are called 'night-lodgers,' who come late in the evening and are obliged to vacate their room early on the following morning so that the family may have the use of it during the day. Often both rooms are filled with as many 'night-lodgers' as can be crowded into them, the parents and children sleeping in the kitchen. Because of this, overcrowding is general; yet the authorities only interfere when some criminal is wanted, from which class these 'night-lodgers' are largely recruited.

Under such conditions it is easy to understand that the German workman knows little or nothing of home-life, and it is to be feared that he has neither the ambition nor the activity to make the best use of the means at his hand for improving his lot and securing home comforts. In his flat he has no privacy, and looks upon it merely as a place in which to sleep. Occasionally one reads of the toil-worn man returning home from the day's labour to study scientific books in which he is interested. When the toiler's attention is drawn to such statements he merely says in his stolid way, 'You can read *anything* in the newspapers!' Doubtless there are exceptional individuals who prize books, but the great majority find more amusement in the beer-house, where they spend the evening playing cards and running up a bill with the landlord.

Yet it must be admitted that, although the conditions are so hard, there is less apparent poverty in Berlin than may be seen in Paris or in London. Certainly it does not stare at one through its rags and filth in the streets. The authorities see to that, compelling even the very poorest to keep up at least an air of cleanliness and sartorial respectability. Whenever they come across instances in which the official standard is not satisfied careful inquiries are made, and if it can be proved that drink or laziness is the cause, the man or the woman is sent to a house of correction. Since fathers and mothers are held responsible for their children, a ragged child is seldom or never seen. By some this grandmotherly control may be regarded as an interference with the liberty of the subject. There are occasions when the liberty of the individual becomes dangerous to the liberties and health of the masses. There is much to commend any interference which enforces cleanliness and self-respect.

Equally as commendable are the factory regulations and measures enforced in the interest of the workman's health. All workshops are under the strictest supervision; and besides being secured the regulation amount of space and light, the workman is also assured every possible protection from risk of personal injuries during the performance of his task. In the number of devices for preventing accidents, and for avoiding injury to health arising from dust or other causes attendant on labour, Germany is leading the way. This subject is naturally of paramount importance to the State accident and insurance department, which does all in its power to enforce precautions. There is in Berlin a permanent museum where inventions of this nature relating to nearly all branches of manufacture are practically demonstrated. Then, too, employers are in their own interest doing much for the health and comfort of their employés. In nearly all large factories each worker is provided with a locker in which to keep his working clothes. These he puts on when entering the workshop, changing again before leaving. There are also shower-baths where he may remove the grit and grease of his labour; and, in order to induce him to make use of these, he is permitted to stop work ten minutes before time.

Possibly the most interesting phase of the labour problem in Germany is the attempt which is being made to cope with the unemployed question. For some time labour bureaus of a more or less experimental nature have been established in various industrial centres. Recently the State has begun to recognise their value, and is endeavouring to unify these bureaus, organising them so that they may be controlled from a central office. The ultimate idea is to establish an institution that will assist both employer and employed, and which will be dependent for its success upon the co-operation of both. Daily reports, founded upon information given by employers, are to be published, advising those in search of work where they are most likely to find employment. So far the plan has not attained practical form. Many objections have been raised against it by a number of employers, who refuse to have anything to do with men coming from the labour bureau. Various reasons have been put forward, though the real objection is the ultimate possibility of the institution becoming instrumental in the formation of a strong combine of labour against capital.

In its present form the system is somewhat crude. The workman justly complains that it enforces obligations upon him that are sometimes more a hindrance than a help. Before being registered he must pay a fee of twopence halfpenny, entitling him to have his name entered in the books for a period of three months or until he finds employment. Then he must attend daily at the office from early morning until late in the afternoon, sitting among hundreds of others, who like himself are waiting patiently to hear their number called. How long he must wait depends entirely upon circumstances—perhaps for days, or it may even be for weeks. In the end he may only get employment for one day, and the next be back waiting at the office again. It is impossible to give any hint of the probable prospects of work, as the

labour bureau does not interview employers, but waits until they send to it. Consequently the possibility of a man's number being called while he is out seeking work on his own behalf prevents him from leaving the office. The man who is not present when the message arrives has no chance of benefiting by the labour bureau, as no arrangement is made for sending word to his home. Therefore the majority of capable workmen avoid the bureaus when they are out of work, preferring rather to take the chances of the man on the spot by personally interviewing likely employers.

At these labour bureaus the foreign workman finds no favour. Rigorous measures are enforced by the authorities, making it almost impossible for him to settle in the country. Their motto is, 'Germany for the Germans,' and the outsider is only permitted on sufferance under special conditions. Should he have the misfortune to find himself in reduced circumstances he is dealt with in a most arbitrary manner, being unceremoniously placed across the frontier within twenty-four hours. Sympathy and sentimentality are unknown words in the German official vocabulary. A severe distinction is made between practical government and misplaced charity. Germany deals effectively and thoroughly with the alien question. It will have nothing to do with the poor or the undesirable of other countries; hence there are very few foreigners engaged in German factories. Almost the only alien workers are the Italian labourers, who do a great deal of the navvy work for which the German has grown too proud, and the crowds of farm-hands who flock over the eastern border at seed-time and harvest to help in the fields which have been deserted in favour of the towns, and would otherwise remain idle for want of labour.

As has been hinted, the German workman is modest in his pleasures. He has his beer-house, which in summer is supplemented by his beer-garden, and with these he is content. The weekly visit to the beer-garden is such an outstanding feature in his life that no mention of him that omitted this phase of the subject could be considered complete. On Sundays and holidays, when the weather is fine, he wanders forth, *mit Kind und Kegel*, as he puts it—or, in other words, with wife and children and a sufficiency of food to supply their wants for the day—to some convenient restaurant in the neighbourhood of the town. There he arranges to meet friends, with whom he spends the time playing cards for low stakes and drinking beer, while his children amuse themselves building sand-castles, and his wife exchanges the latest gossip with her neighbours. Good-humour prevails. In contrast to the life among the middle and upper classes, there is neither stiffness nor ceremony, all mixing freely together with the familiarity of a large family. In the dancing-rooms adjoining these garden-restaurants the lads and lasses swing round to the strains of the giddy waltz. Sunday is their courting-day, the day for making acquaintances, and the free-and-easy atmosphere of the dancing-hall is fully taken advantage of by both sexes.

As an institution there is much to be said in favour of the German beer-garden. Yet it does not always merit the praise of some writers, who argue that the presence of wife and children helps to prevent drunkenness. They overlook the fact that the German workman is not what is known as a hard drinker, indulging in excess on pay-days and special occasions. Instead he is a constant tippler, drinking beer early and late, whenever the occasion offers, and nearly always carrying in his pocket a flask of *Schnaps* or coarse spirit. It is stated on reliable authority that men engaged in the building trades who can afford it consume as much as one pint of *Schnaps* and several quarts of beer daily; wherever they are working they keep the beer-bottle constantly beside them. This may account for their lack of energy and stolid indifference. Most masters would prefer to see their men more interested in sports than in beer-drinking, and some are making valiant attempts to excite interest in physical exercises, though the average German considers he has had more than enough bodily training during his military days to last him a lifetime. Nearly all employers aver that if they had a sharper and more intelligent class of workmen, taking more pride in their work and turning it out more expeditiously, they would be able to pay better wages and to shorten working hours.

With the advent of the German working-man have arisen many social and economic problems to which some solution must be found in the near future. Some say that the change from the country to the town has degenerated him morally, making him less reliable and less loyal. To this same source medical authorities trace the cause of the yearly increasing number of men physically unfit for military service, the appalling growth of insanity, and the steady decrease of the population. Germany is only beginning to feel what older industrial nations have long since experienced, and the truth is being slowly borne in upon those in authority that the changed conditions require changed methods of dealing with them. It is certain that the ranks of the German workman cannot in future swell with anything like the amazing rapidity of the last decade, the boom in industrialism having given way to a period of depression. Doubtless it is because he already begins to feel the pinch that he has commenced to assert himself more aggressively. Through his instrumentality important changes are impending. The atmosphere is heavy with unrest and discontent. He is biding his time, and certain it is that when it comes, and his political education is more advanced, the German workman is destined to play an important part in the affairs of his country, and possibly in the destiny of Europe.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER LII.—HOW THE GOLDEN DAYS CAME TO AN END.

IT was ten full days before Mavie was allowed to see Jack—days of anxiety and careful nursing; and though in the anxiety they could not prevent her keenest participation, in the nursing they would allow her not so much as a finger.

'*Non, non!*' said Aunt Jeanne peremptorily. 'You have done your part, my dear, and this is ours. And it's a pleasure one does not often get to nurse so good-looking a *gars*, and so patient. Are there many as good as that across there in England?'

'I don't know. I suppose so. But John Sax always was good and trustable, even when he was a little boy.'

'You have known him long?'

'Oh, ever since we were children; and I always wanted to be a boy then, and I used to bully him sadly.'

'I'm sure!' said Aunt Jeanne with a twinkle. 'But there'd have been a pretty girl spoiled if you had been, so *le bon Dieu* knew best after all.'

In those ten days she had got some dresses sent over from Peter Port, with the assistance of Dr Martin, who had undertaken all her bidding with zest. But she had begged her sailor-boy's costume from Carette, 'for,' said she, 'this has been a matter one would not forget, and they will serve to remind me of it all.'

'You won't forget,' laughed Carette. 'One does not go through such things to forget them;' for by this time, you may be sure, Carette knew the whole story from beginning to end, and never tired of questioning her as to its smallest details.

Mavie had also taken advantage of Dr Martin to write a very full account of their adventures to her mother, reassuring her as to their safety and comfort, and promising to come home at the first possible moment.

And almost the first words Jack Sax said to her when she was allowed into his room, and with difficulty kept out of her eyes her amazement and distress at his wan face and general feebleness, were, 'You ought to get home, Miss Mavie;' at which formality of address her brows pinched for a moment. 'George Hamon would get you across, and they will be looking for you.'

'Now, John Sax, you know as well as I do just what my mother would say. She would say, "You are quite right, dear. John Sax risked his life for you, and got wounded in your service, and the Lauristons never forget." Wouldn't she, now?'

'I dare say,' he said feebly, in no humour for dispute.

'And I have written to her telling her everything, and how splendidly you'——

'Please!' he said, with a feebly lifted hand. 'I only did what your father sent me to do. But I'm glad you have written. I shall soon be all right, now that the fever is gone and they're beginning to let me eat.'

'And the leg is going on all right? Oh Jack, I was so frightened for it! The doctor's face was this long, and the thought of you going about on one leg for the rest of your life!'

'Better one leg in England than two legs in France for the rest of one's life.'

'I don't know,' she said with a shiver. 'It was horrid to think of.'

The days of his convalescence were days of deepest delight to him—and of most grievous trial. He garnered them as a miser gloats over unlooked-for gains, as the desert wanderer treasures the drops in his shrinking bottle, not knowing when he may replenish it; for each rare day brought the final day nearer. And when it came—ah, well, a chill shot through his heart at thought of it; for here they were comrades once more, as they used to be on Brent-side, but with differences. In the old days Mavie was always commander-in-chief, and now she almost looked up to him, looked upon him at all events from quite a different point of view, for he had proved himself, and she approved him; and when the end came, and they were back in London, they must inevitably fall back into their proper positions in life, and those positions lay very wide apart.

No wonder that Jack, as he lay dreaming in the sunshine, with the bracken waving all about him and the wonderful blue plain of the sea stretching out in front, longed with all his heart and soul that they could just go on so for ever, just go on so, in simple happiness and content, untroubled by the complexities of life in the great world outside, until this little life ended in the larger life beyond—that full life in which even a banker's clerk might be considered the equal of his master's daughter if he had lived life clean and true. He thought much of Master Robert Burns, and found much to be said for the Revolution in France, with its breaking of the barriers between class and class and its opening of the ways to all who could climb.

And there could be no doubt about Mavie's happiness. Had she not cause, and did she not show it? For Jack was recovering, and was not going to be a pain in her heart all her life; and she was free, and they were going home. Yes, she was happy. And he wondered at times—he wondered; and then he would brace himself up with a sharp turn, and school himself to a soberness that seemed like stolidity.

'Are you not glad, then, to be getting strong again, Jack?' she asked him one day, when his only

response to some joyous flight of hers had been a relapse into preternatural gravity.

'Of course! Very grateful,' he jerked.

'Well, then?'—as much as to say, 'Why, then, look as though you were going to be hanged?'

'I think I would like to live and die in Sercq,' he said gloomily.

'Oh no, you wouldn't. You've got larger work than that to do in the world. You'd moulder here.'

'They all seem very happy.'

'They have come through their troubles;' and she told him some of the things Carette had told her while he lay sick.

She was, in fact, all that one would have expected from Mavie Lauriston to an old comrade suffering on her behalf; and in view of the inevitable ending of it all he found it somewhat hard to bear. For to himself he made no pretence as to that which was in him. Mavie was all in all to him—all heaven, and all earth, and all else. He would have given his life for her without one saving thought, but to give his life to her would not be permitted him. The joy of her presence, of her perfect comradeship and sweet sympathy; the delight she was to his eyes, to his mind, to his heart—all these, in view of the future, became poignant at times almost beyond the bearing. At times he would close his eyes on her beauty with a bitter sigh, and Mavie would anxiously ask, 'Does it hurt, Jack?' meaning his leg. And he would answer, 'Yes,' meaning his heart.

But all wounds heal in time, save such as are mortal, and the heart can stand more bruising than the body. And so the sun of those golden days drew all too quickly towards its setting, and the mists and darkness into which it was about to fall had for Jack no single ray of hope.

*(To be continued.)*

## ABOUT GAMBLING AND GAMBLERS.

MR RALPH NEVILL'S book, *Light Come, Light Go* (Macmillan & Company), which deals with gambling, gamesters, wagers, and the turf, is sadly interesting reading when one thinks of the almost universal ruin which has overtaken the vast majority of gamblers. The writer, indeed, points out, as one of the remarkable things about gambling, that no one ever seems to win. The vast majority of those addicted to play, even the most lucky, declare usually that on the whole they have lost! One regrets to find that speculation, gambling, and betting are flourishing amongst us as they never flourished before. Mr Nevill, who allows that humanity craves the excitement of the game, thinks it should be regulated and not entirely repressed. More than once Mr Nevill says he sees no difference between gambling on the Stock Exchange and gambling with cards or at roulette. In this country speculation on the Exchange is looked upon with the greatest tolerance by those who denounce the racecourse and the card-table. Gambling is here described as a departure from the received standards of civilised society to obtain proper value for its money; it receives a good deal more than it gives, or nothing at all. It must be understood that Mr Nevill writes not as a moralist, but rather as a pleasant and discursive chronicler of the great and small ones who thought gaming the pleasantest thing on earth, and were not happy without its excitement. The reader must make his own comments and deductions, and be his own moralist!

Mr Nevill tells of an author in no way successful in the literary world who suddenly purchased a fine estate, as if he had come into great wealth. When asked by a friend how the thing was done, he said that it was not by literary success, but by speculation, that he had been enabled to retire. 'I suppose you were given some good tips?' said his friend. 'Yes. Not taking them was the secret of my success.' The author knew City men in good positions to tell about a rise or fall in stocks. He tried to profit by his opportunities. He made known that he had a certain amount of money which it was his desire to increase by speculation. Tips flowed in, and he was asked to become a bear of this and a bull of that. When told to buy a certain stock he invariably sold it. When told of a coming fall he speculated for a rise. In every instance he acted contrary to the advice given. These men had given interested and not disinterested advice, and the moral drawn from this by the author is to take plenty of advice, and in the vast majority of cases to operate in an opposite way!

In the list of those addicted to gaming we are told that few great men have been really great card-players. Napoleon and Wellington were both poor hands at cards. Blücher, on the other hand, was immoderately fond of gambling, and during the occupation of Paris by the Allies lost large sums in the Palais Royal (recently described in this *Journal*). When losing he would blaspheme and glare at the croupiers. He played high, but could not bear that his son should follow in his footsteps. Blücher's son came gleefully to his father one day. 'Sir, you said I knew nothing about play, but here is proof that you have undervalued my talents,' pulling a bag of roubles from his pocket, won the previous night. 'And I said the truth,' was Blücher's reply. 'Sit down there and I will convince you.' In a few minutes old Blücher had won all his son's money at dice; and, pocketing the cash, he rose from the table, saying, 'Now you see that I was right when I told you that you would never win.'

General Wade, who made roads in the Highlands of Scotland after the Rebellion of '45, was an inveterate gamester. Elwes the miser had a passion for play, and once played two days and a night without intermission, and lost three thousand pounds. After playing all night with fashionable profligates, he would walk out about 4 A.M., meeting the cattle coming from his country farm to Smithfield, and stand in the cold and rain and haggle with a butcher for a shilling. He left half a million sterling to be divided between his two natural sons.

It is recorded of Rowlandson the artist that he remained at the hazard-table for thirty-six hours. Casanova played forty-two consecutive hours, and rose the winner, while his opponent fell in a dead faint. C. J. Fox, at Brooks's, played hazard for two consecutive hours, and rose a loser by eleven thousand pounds; by the age of twenty-five he had cost his father one hundred and forty thousand pounds; at thirty he had dissipated every shilling he could command, and had even borrowed from waiters. He played whist and piquet well; his misfortunes came from playing games of chance, particularly faro, and from horse-racing. Gamesters are very superstitious. Beau Brummell, who was ruined by gaming, lost a lucky sixpence with a hole in it; he gave it away to a cabby by a mistake, and was afraid 'that rascal Rothschild or some of his set had got hold of it.' At one sitting Brummell won at whist ten thousand pounds from G. H. Drummond, a banker; it was the first and last game the banker ever played, for his loss caused him to withdraw from banking. A certain Major Baggs won seventeen thousand pounds at hazard, the most popular game of the eighteenth century. Colonel Mellish of Blythe Hall, Doncaster, a versatile genius, who loved music, and could draw and paint, once owned thirty-eight race-horses, but left the turf a ruined man. He gambled away great sums at his own home, and once lost forty thousand pounds to the Prince Regent. At a London club he rose the loser of ninety-seven thousand pounds. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when enormous sums were spent in dress, carriages, and horseflesh, the Duchess of Devonshire lost one hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds. Whist was a good deal played, and one Lookup, who played humbug, died with a pack of cards in his hands, which caused Foote to say that 'Lookup was humbugged out of the world at last.' The memory, coolness, and judgment of General Scott, father-in-law of George Canning, who dieted himself on a dinner of boiled chicken and toast and water, were remarkable. He is said to have won two hundred thousand pounds at whist at Brooks's. 'With players such as these,' says Mr Nevill, 'whist became almost a religious function of a singularly profitable kind.'

Between 1780 and 1845 the West End of London was full of gambling-hells, the most popular of which were in St James's, St George's (Hanover Square), St Martin's in the Fields, Piccadilly, St James's Street, Pall Mall, St James's Square, and Jermyn Street. The least important and less reputable houses were kept by prize-fighters and bullies. The games principally played, besides English and French hazard, were rouge-et-noir and roulette. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century gambling in clubs began to decline. Now, we are told, there is practically no gambling in West End clubs, although there is a good deal of baccarat and poker played in private houses, ladies not infrequently joining in the play. Mr Nevill considers private gambling especially dangerous to young men—far more so than that at any public table.

The famous Crockford's, founded by William Crockford, son of a small fishmonger, had at one time one thousand two hundred members, and a luxurious club-house, the decorations of which cost ninety-four thousand pounds. The cook had a salary of one thousand two hundred pounds a year. The club-house still exists in an altered form as the Devonshire Club. The dice cost two thousand pounds a year. Crockford, who retired in 1840, made three hundred thousand pounds in the first two seasons. To a young man who asked him what was the best main to call at a game, he said, 'I tell you what it is, young man. You may call mains at hazard till your hair grows out of your hat and your toes grow out of your boots. My advice to you is not to call any mains at all!' At Crockford's, one servant who had been in the habit of lending money received five hundred pounds, nominally as a Christmas-box, in recognition of timely financial assistance. In one week a nobleman who subscribed one hundred pounds had won eighty thousand pounds on a moderate sum furnished by this waiter. Lord Sefton is said to have lost two hundred thousand pounds at Crockford's, during the gaming period losses and winnings amounting to five, ten, or fifteen thousand pounds being not uncommon. During 1780 no less than one hundred and eighty thousand pounds were lost in one week at the Cocoa-Tree, St James's Street. Sir John Bland dissipated his entire fortune at hazard, and lost as much as thirty-two thousand pounds at one sitting. He put an end to his life on the way between Calais and Paris. The Reverend Caleb Cotton, author of *Lacon; or, Many Things in Few Words*, won twenty-five thousand pounds and kept his winnings, part of which he invested in pictures. While suffering from an incurable disease he blew out his brains at Fontainebleau in 1832. Colonel Panton, who realised a fortune from a gaming-house in Piccadilly, invested his winnings in house property, and his name still survives in Panton Street, Haymarket. Colonel Dennis O'Kelly, who won the Derby twice, acted in a very miserly way towards his dependants. 'John, bring in the aaples,' was his request when asking for pine-apples. His servant once reported the non-arrival of the fish. 'Begorra,' said O'Kelly, 'if you can't get any fish, bring herrings.'

Mr Nevill has a list of extraordinary wagers.

'In 1735 Count de Buckeburg, a well-known German author, wagered that he would ride a horse from London to Edinburgh backwards. With the horse's head turned towards Edinburgh and his own face to London, the count accomplished his extraordinary feat in less than four days. Lord Orford once backed a drove of geese to beat a drove of turkeys in a race from Nottingham to London; and he won. On the occasion of the hanging of two men at the Old Bailey, a young nobleman who was present laid a hundred guineas to twenty that "the shorter of the two would give the last kick." Six minutes after the longer had given his dying kick the shorter expired, and the young nobleman thus won his wager. A young Scottish minister once backed himself to win one hundred guineas by reading six chapters of the Bible every hour for six weeks. A journeyman baker once stood on one leg twelve hours and three minutes for a wager. A pedestrian accomplished the laborious task on one occasion of walking backwards for nine hours at four miles an hour.'

The Duke of Queensberry, when Earl of March, for a wager sent a letter fifty miles within an hour by hand, which was done by the missive being enclosed in a cricket-ball, and then flung from one to the other by expert cricketers. A curious bet was one he had with Sir John Lade for a thousand guineas that he would produce a man to eat more at a meal than any one Sir John could find. Old Q. was unable to be present, but his agent wrote: 'My Lord,—I have not time to state particulars, but merely to acquaint your Grace that your man beat his antagonist by a pig and apple-pye.' A sporting farmer, on a barebacked steed, leapt over a dinner-table, with dishes, decanters, and lighted candelabra, in the Rochester Room, White Hart Inn, Aylesbury. Two gentlemen, in a coffee-house near Temple Bar, made a bet that one of them was to jump into seven feet of water with his clothes on, and to entirely undress himself in the water—which he accomplished in the time appointed. Mr Nevill once saw the same exploit done in the Cam on a very cold day. Captain Bennett engaged to trundle a hoop from Whitechapel to Ongar in Essex in three and a half hours, a distance of twenty-two miles, and this he did well within time. Mr Thacker, who had been assistant-master at Rugby, undertook at Lincoln for a wager of five pounds to make two thousand pens in ten hours. This he did two hours within time, and the quill-pens were sold by auction afterwards at the 'Green Dragon,' where the bet was made. In 1814 two gentlemen undertook to drink against each other, one in wine, the other in water, glass for glass, and he that gave in first was to be loser. The wine-drinker triumphed, and, contrary to what might have been expected, the water-drinker was afterwards confined to bed with an attack of gout. A man in Glasgow bet that he would cause all the bells of a well-frequented tavern to ring at the same time without touching them. He won his bet by turning off the main supply of gas suddenly, when the whole house was in darkness. Immediately every bell in every room and box was rung loudly.

Mr Nevill records how Charles Bulpett, an athlete, took five hundred pounds to two hundred pounds that he would ride a mile, run a mile, and walk a mile, three miles in all, within sixteen and a half minutes. This he did in sixteen minutes seven seconds, although handicapped by a game leg. The same athlete took one hundred pounds to twenty-five pounds that he would swim across the Thames in ordinary clothes from the Ship Inn, Greenwich. Bulpett entered the water dressed in a frock-coat and top-hat, with a cane in his hand. A boat followed his progress. He reached the opposite side easily, although carried one and a quarter miles down by the tide, and offered to repeat the exploit, but there were no takers.

The Palais Royal is mentioned as a place where a debauchee could run the whole course of his career. 'On the first floor were cafés where his spirits could be raised to any requisite pitch; on the second, gaming-rooms where he could lose his money and *salons* devoted to facile love—both, not unusually, ante-chambers to the pawnbrokers who resided above; whilst, if at the end of his tether and determined to end his troubles, he could repair to some of the shops on the ground floor, where daggers and pistols were very conveniently sold at reduced prices—every facility being thus provided for enjoying all the pleasures of life under one roof.' A story is related of a cook who strolled in here to the gaming-rooms of No. 113, and as he had no money, amused himself by watching others play, and ate oranges, a number of which he had brought with him. A thirsty player offered six sous for one of the oranges, which he accepted. He threw the six sous on the biribi-table, where he won six francs; this sum was increased to two hundred at roulette. He played on. At trente-et-quarante he was also successful, until he had a profit of five hundred thousand francs. When he told his master, the restaurant-keeper, the advice given was to play no more, and put his money in good securities.

Certain German health-resorts, such as Homburg, Baden-Baden, and Wiesbaden, were lifted from comparative obscurity to great prosperity by public gaming, which became illegal on 1st January 1873. Homburg was the creation of M. Blanc's Kursaal. The brothers Blanc, unsuccessful in France in a speculation with the semaphore telegraph, came to Frankfort prepared to set up public gaming-tables there. The authorities did not look with favour on the proposal, so the obscure village of Homburg was fixed upon, where the roulette-table was planted in a room of the principal inn. The Blancs obtained a concession to establish games of hazard in Homburg, built a Kursaal, and laid out public gardens, and soon the fashionable world flocked thither for gaming and health. And so Homburg grew and prospered. Mr Nevill relates how one of the

founders fell a victim to the fascination of his own gaming-tables:

'M. Blanc had been pondering what to give his wife on her birthday, when a peculiarly attractive parasol caught his eye as he was strolling amongst the shops, so he went in and inquired the price, which was twenty marks. The founder of the great gaming establishment was a careful man, and it seemed to him that to pay so much for a parasol was extravagant. Nevertheless he ordered it to be put aside for him, saying that he would call and pay for it later. On his way to the Casino the thought suddenly struck him, "To win twenty marks in the rooms is quite easy; numbers of people do it, but they don't stop, which is the reason I make so much money. Why shouldn't I win the price of this parasol, make my twenty marks, and walk out?" Walking up to a trente-et-quarante table, and unobtrusively stationing himself behind a group of players, M. Blanc furtively slipped twenty marks on the red. Black won. Forty marks on the red. Black won again. Eighty marks on the black. Red won. He now became excited, and, the money he had in his pocket being exhausted, edged towards an astonished *chef de partie*, to whom he was of course well known, and instructed him to place one hundred and sixty marks on red. The croupier dealt the cards, and announced that red had lost. By this time every one had realised that M. Blanc was staking against his own tables, and the whole room flocked to see such an extraordinary sight. The croupiers concluded that their chief had gone mad, for he stood looking fixedly at the cards, entirely absorbed in the effort to recover his losses and win the price of the parasol. To make a long story short, he continued to stake till he had lost about a thousand pounds, when of a sudden he realised the situation and rushed out of the rooms. He was, of course, considerably chaffed about this exploit, which was said to have been the only occasion on which he had been known to play. For many a day afterwards he used regretfully to say, "That was the dearest parasol I ever bought in my life."'

M. Blanc, even before the public gaming-resorts were closed by the Prussian Government, had fixed his attention upon a retreat in the principality of Monaco, then thinly populated and very poor. The operations there practically created the famous Monte Carlo; it became an institution, and the Riviera otherwise developed as a health-resort. Monte Carlo is now the only regular public gaming-place in Europe, although intermittent public gambling has been tolerated in Belgian health-resorts, notably at Ostend. Scarcely one in fifty who sit with a pile of silver at the roulette-table, we are told, goes away a winner; among the high gamblers at trente-et-quarante success is not so rare. The gross annual winnings of the bank at Monte Carlo at present are set down as one million two hundred thousand pounds. Of late years the profits of the Casino have averaged four thousand pounds a day. The annual profits average half a million sterling, and even in bad years the shareholders may count on 30 per cent. Large disbursements are made: six thousand pounds in charity, twenty thousand pounds for police, and nine thousand pounds for clergy and schools. When the English clergyman there found out that members of his congregation were accustomed to jot down the numbers of the hymns with a view of backing them at roulette he ceased to give out hymns under No. 36.

# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

## CHAPTER II.—AT THE NICK O' DUNBRACH.

OVER the hills a spur of red just tinged the east, the winter sun opening a staring, bloodshot eye.

All night long the gale raised its wild slogan. All night long cruel squadrons of driving snow scoured the hillside, whirled on the wind in billows of smoke, drumming round the thatch and down the wide chimney, the mellay of the weather steady and continuous, touching monotony but for the sense of danger struck in the shuddering gables of the lonely little tavern. Now, the morning breaking, the storm had spent, the sky was clearing, empty of snow save for a straggling feather or two floating aimlessly on the dying wind's slow breath.

The few scattered houses lay in a smother of white; the woods vague, amorphous; the road a long, faint wrinkle, curling along the hillside. The morning slowly cleared the sky, revealing the Glen, a strong elemental picture under the snow's magic, arresting in its giant outlines, in the rigidity of its uncompromising black and white; white, glistening white, pure and dazzling, covering the dark tartan of the valley from sky-line to sky-line; black, sullen black, where the zigzag of the Spey, galloping swift and swollen from the spates of a hundred mountain burns, cut harshly on the white solitude.

There was scarcely a sound. A collie's bark rang loud and welcome in the irksome silence, and the blackbird in the elm, ruffled after a meagre breakfast, broke off his soft chatter to call again, this time with a petulant ring in his full soprano, 'I knew it. *I knew it.* Winter fairly!'

Ludovic Laurie—or, to give him his territorial dignity, Errachdale—was standing in the doorway of the Buck Inn. The two rustics had left at day-break, and he was alone. He had landed from a sailing-ship at Inverness, on his way to see for the first time his inheritance in the Spey valley. A

wound sent him home from the Peninsula unwillingly, for the instinct of his race was to see a fight out, to leave nothing unfinished. He disliked doubt, distrusted compromise, hated half-measures. Action rather than thought spoke in his facial angles, soldiers' methods rather than silken ones in their lines; yet withal something unusual, unfathomable, idealist, shone in his large, prehensile eye, a sense of the dramatic, of the love of the colour and music of life, of deep, fierce passions, strong will, and the pride of race. His lithe figure etched against the snow suggested a blade of fine steel, loyal, unbreakable, one to whom the gods send many tests. '*Soyez Fidèle*' was the motto of his house.

He had sat long into the night, his thoughts swirling in cross-currents. Two hours of sleep had not sufficed for his tired mind and body. Hollows underlined his dark eyes, and his face was drawn and gray. His wounded shoulder gave a twinge as he straightened himself and took a long breath of the sharp winter morning. A whinny and the sound of a hoof from the stable close at hand recalled him from a half-reverie. He turned abruptly and went into the inn.

'I saw to the horse's feed, sir,' said Bell; 'but there's no man-body about the hoose to saddle her. 'Tis better weather for travellin',' she added.

'I'm used to campaigning, my lass,' he said; 'I shall start immediately,' and went round to the stable, saddled his mare, and led her out to the top of the brae, where the road from the Glen to the inn trailed faintly in the snow, flanked by drifts, here and there white humps marking the wayside bushes. He handed her a sovereign, wondering a little at her hesitation in taking it, at her faltered words of thanks. The woman watched him, hoping against hope that he might not ask his way through the Glen. Now he was in the saddle, his right foot almost in the off-stirrup. Another moment and he would be down the brae, and out of sight at the bend of the road. The mare moved off, picking two or three steps gingerly in the snow. The rider half-turned in the saddle and called out, 'I suppose the road to the Tower runs straight along the river all the way?'

The woman shaded her eyes with her hand.

'No,' she said. 'No. You take the second turnin' on the left at the Nether Wood, and save five miles, sir.' They say that an honest man or woman lies inartistically; like most aphorisms, a truth handcuffed by exceptions, half a lie. An honest lover can be an artist in lying. The woman's voice was clear and steady, but she still shaded her gray eyes, for she read graven against the snow the genesis of her betrayal of a guest, the ever-present six letters, '*Wanted*.'

'My thanks to you! The second turning on the left at the Nether Wood,' he repeated. 'My thanks to you!'

She watched him riding slowly down the brae, disappearing round a belt of firs towards the river, and stood listening for some faint echo of his horse's hoof-beat. None came. He was gone. She was very pale. She went into the house and sat down. It was deathly quiet. Something of reproach spoke in the familiar homely furnishings. The red brightness had gone from the hearth, although the fire burned. The clock spoke strangely loud. She sat for long in the chill silence, then looked down at the coin in her hand, and a sudden tear made a tiny splash on the gold as she rose wearily and busked the rooms silently, with haunted eyes, in the comfortless anodyne of routine.

The horseman rode slowly, for although the wind of the night had blown the snow from the middle of the road and made it passable, here and there the drifts stretched long arms across the path, and the mare stepped uneasily. To trot or even to hasten was impossible, thought her rider, with an impatient frown at the snow-covered scene around him. He drew rein for a breathing-space at a rise in the road, gazing with troubled brow into the distance. His thoughts harmonised with the conflict of the landscape. They were in black and white. Black, as he recalled the chance words in the Buck Inn. Black, as he thought of his name—*his*, Ludovic Laurie's—hawked round the country-side. Ignorant, malicious village gossip no doubt; but he winced. To have punished the lout in the inn was not of his sword's dignity. His pride, his loyalty to his wife's name, scorned the thought. His wife! He recalled her, bright and beautiful, as when he wooed her. At the memory the winter day brightened, the blessed early morning hour that so often lays a gentle hand on tired humanity played its gracious part, sending cool, sane thoughts to him. All his loyal instincts rose.

His wife! His glance instinctively lifted from the dark coil of the river to the hills, and his thoughts, winging back to four years before, became as white as the robed mountains around him. The austere winter sculpture was dislimned in a day-dream of midsummer and a green English county, with the rare witchery of the days when the corn is on the turn; of long evenings within sound of the sea; the magic of her warm grace; her radiant presence; the lights in the pools of her eyes; her sweet, low voice; the tremendous trifles of her delicate airs, her tricks of gesture; the song on her lip, her happy laughter in the enchanted woods that he and she had haunted and explored and loved, naming the friendly trees as children and lovers do, peopling the glades with the tender phantoms of dead and gone lovers of high romance. Most of all they conjured up sweet Rosalind and Orlando, when their wood became the love-lit Forest of Arden, and the startled deer heard them sing Amiens's song:

> Under the greenwood tree
> Who loves to lie with me,
> And turn his merry note
> Unto the sweet bird's throat,
> Come hither, come hither, come hither:
> Here shall he see
> No enemy
> But winter and rough weather.

Enchanted hours! Enchanted dreams! Soon he would be beside her, and see his son. A smile in his eye, he spurred the mare forward towards the Nether Wood.

It was nearly noon when he came abreast of it, its snow-laden, soaring pines intersected by the cross-roads. The height of the trees and the thickness of the wood kept the daylight feeble, even in midsummer; and now, in the first grip of winter, the curtain of the snow conspiring with the dark arms of the forest, one came on the cross-roads as on a startling, gloomy chamber. Errachdale pulled up the mare and looked round him swiftly, not in fear, but with a vague resentment at the sudden lowering of the light. He listened. There was not a sound. 'The second turning to the left, the lass said. Bless her for the short cut!' he said to himself and faced the horse to a narrowing road.

There were the footprints of two or three men, he noticed, going his way. Their company would be welcome, for with his black mood thrown off he felt in the mood for human speech. But they were nowhere to be seen. A peewit swooped round and round in his curious flight farther along the road at the edge of the wood, bleating as he flew. Back again he came in sudden gyrations, circling and dipping, piping his sad, moorland wail, like some lonely spirit of the wilds. Had Errachdale watched the bird's flight he might have guessed the presence of some one, for the peewit is a busybody, suspicious, inquisitive, and alert, resenting any intrusion on his beat of the moor or the forest. Many a weary stalker at the critical moment has cursed his uncanny clamour. It was round the lurking Murdo the Hill-Fox and Neil, one of his gang, that the peewit hovered and complained.

'A hawk tak' the bird!' whispered Murdo. 'I dinna want the rider to think we've been hidin'.' He peered through the bushes. 'He's comin'. Now! remember my orders.'

The two men cautiously picked their way through the trees, and came out on the road a hundred yards or so farther on, an elbow of the wood screening them from the horseman's view until he rounded the corner, and saw them, their backs to him, apparently co-travellers on the same road, trudging stolidly along in the snow.

Errachdale gave them good-morning as he overtook them, and the two men doffed their bonnets civilly.

'A good-mornin', sir,' said Murdo. 'Tis a middlin' road for travellin'.'

'It is. How far do you call it to the sea?' asked Errachdale. The horseman scanned the two men. Murdo passed muster, but the man Neil was a remarkable figure. His clothes were ragged to the point of dissolution. His brogues scarcely held together. In his bonnet were stitched three tawdry brooches crowned by a bedraggled feather, his coat boasting a single horn button, and (the most singular part of his gear) an array of sham medals, baubles in tin and brass devices, gewgaws bought at country fairs, pewter circlets of the size of a florin were fastened to his tattered coat, completely covering his lean chest. Very tall, gaunt, he was one moment in a gloomy abstraction and the next smiling foolishly.

'A matter o' nine miles or thereby, sir. We're gangin' that road, if we can be o' service to you,' said Murdo easily. His voice was as oily as that of any huckster's assistant. 'We are "floaters" on our way to Garmouth,' he continued; 'though it's little work we'll be doin', I'm thinkin', till Spey's doon.' He lowered his voice. 'Ye needna mind Neil, sir. He's got a "want," but he's harmless.' And Errachdale nodded in comprehension.

'We can travel together then, if I may, for it's a lonely country;' he said, and the three went forward, the horseman between the two men on foot.

He found Murdo an interesting, even an entertaining, companion. The man beguiled the lonely road with talk, rough but vivid, of the hills, of forest-lore, and the wild things of the mountain and the wind-swept moors. The chain of freemasonry is strong between sportsmen, and the soldier was a sportsman and a lover of the open. Murdo's talk interested him amazingly. The man himself enjoyed his make-believe conversation, for make-believe it was, in the sense that he was talking of set purpose, to be able to engage the whole of the horseman's attention when the proper moment came, near the Nick o' Dunerrach. So they covered the road, Murdo shortening the way with his glib tongue. Flashes of humour played in his speech. Crisp, home-made similes illuminated it. He made his points with the minimum of words, holding his auditor's attention with the rare instinct of the born *raconteur*, in a skilful blend of jest, incident, and dramatic reserve. An hour sped. He was telling of the finding of Wattie Douglas a few years before on the shore, with the skean-dhu in his throat, and of the legend told on the country-side of the Luck o' the Spey, when he broke off suddenly.

'We're comin' to a kittle bit o' the road at this turn to the left here, sir,' he said, just a glimmer of anxiety in his eye. 'Gin ye tak' my advice ye'll come off, and let Neil lead the mare for maybe a hundred yards.'

He turned abruptly to the left as he spoke, and walked ahead without even looking round. They entered on a bridle-path skirting the last few yards of the wood, an almost sheer descent dropping from the path. From far below came the hoarse grumble of a mountain stream in spate, louping angrily through its ravine. The snow-clad slopes above them gradually opened to a V-shaped imprint on the sky, a clean-cut notch in the mountains, the 'Nick o' Dunerrach,' far off the beaten track, in summer a place still and lonely, yet ruggedly pleasant; of heather and peat-moss, reed-bound tarns, and a stream's tiny thread, grim rocks and

adventurous birches; solitary, the silence ruffled in the faint runnel of the summer rills and the cry of wandering moorfowl. But on this winter day, with its naked trees standing like weird sentinels, fantastically bearded, its harsh outlines of ragged boulder and fanged scarps, its drear silence intensified by its deathly white pall, broken only by the steady voice of the torrent 'girning' like some imprisoned beast, the 'Nick' might have been a bleak outpost of some other and crueller world. Heartlessness was written over it by the winter's hand.

Colonel Laurie reined up the mare.

'This is surely the Back o' Beyond,' said he, as they stood in the throat of the little pass.

Murdo looked round at him.

'It will save us a guid Scots mile, sir, and I ken every inch o' the "Nick."' This was indeed about the one wholly true statement he had made that day.

The other dismounted, and gave the mare to the man Neil, the Hill-Fox and his henchman exchanging a swift, cautious glance.

Errachdale joined Murdo in front, and they went forward cautiously.

'As I was sayin',' Murdo went on, 'they got Alasdair the floater, and weel I mind the summer mornin' in Garmouth. There was the Sheriff there, and'——

He stopped suddenly, for the other was not listening. He had turned round to look at his horse standing across the path, and there was a sudden spark of speculation in his eyes as he saw Neil's head duck behind the beast's withers, the spark blazing into rage as the man reappeared with a grin, and deliberately pointed at him his own pistol, stolen from the holster. On the instant, and with amazing swiftness, Murdo whisked his sword out of his scabbard and threw it overhead into the ravine. It fell half-way down, the blade pointing upwards, a dull, blue streak against the bright snow, and its owner found himself weaponless between the two rascals, each covering him with a pistol.

'If ye but move a step, I fire,' the Hill-Fox announced calmly, his eye along the barrel. The three stood like carved men. A gust of rage shook the trapped man and passed, as the sense of his ludicrous impotence shackled him. No help was possible in the lonely pass. Never had he felt so helpless, so outwitted. They stood motionless for a long minute. Errachdale looked down at his empty scabbard, then at the two men, and contrived a laugh.

'The honours, shall we call them, are obviously with you,' he said, covering his discomfiture as best he could. 'If you call off your—your—second battalion I shall feel much more comfortable. His hand is not so steady as your own, and of all ways I should hate to die with a bullet in my back.'

The Hill-Fox grinned. Something in his prisoner's air and his cool speech tickled him.

'Put doon your pistol, Neil,' he called, but without taking his eye off his prisoner or lowering his own weapon.

'I suppose I ought to thank you,' said Errachdale. There was a pause. 'I'm getting a hospitable welcome to Speyside. May I ask what the devil do you want?'

'Siller, sir—siller,' quoth Murdo promptly, civilly, imperturbably.

'I presume you would not be above taking gold. But if I have none'——

'None?' said Murdo, his jaw falling perceptibly.

'None,' echoed the other. 'None worth counting. As a matter of fact, you can take what I have if I am set clear of this fool's trap and put on the straight road to the Tower of Errachdale.'

'Wha do you seek at the Tower?' asked the other.

'I had not thought of asking your or any one's permission to visit my own property.'

The Hill-Fox's cunning jowl narrowed. So this was the new laird! He would have either money or the command of it. Good!

'What siller have ye?' he asked suddenly.

'A couple of sovereigns and some small change. I had counted on being home ere this. You are welcome to what I have if I am free to go.'

'Then the tap, tail, and middle o' the business is that if ye've only twa sovereigns ye maun come wi' us. Ye'll be kept skaithless if'——

'If!' called his prisoner haughtily, and looked ready to spring.

'Ye forget. If ye move I fire. I was sayin' that ye'll be kept skaithless if I get my price, and my price I maun get! But this is winter weather, and we'll be movin'. We've only a mile to gang.—Come, Neil! lead the horse.'

There was nothing for it, thought the prisoner, as he looked into the other's pistol.

*(To be continued.)*

## FAIR EXCHANGE.

Little thoughts on rainbow wings
  Flutter round me as I sew—
Tiny, faint, elusive things,
Sweet with lavender, which springs
  In a spot where, all arow,
  Memories of summer grow.

Take these thoughts of mine, since they
  Every one fly north to you!
I would bind them, bid them stay,
But they go the swallows' way
  At the time when hyacinths blue
  Carpet all the woods anew.

Take them—they are all your own—
  Love and Hope their sponsors were;
But, since these my thoughts are flown,
Friend, I beg from you the loan
  Of such thoughts as you can spare
  To attend me everywhere.

DORITA M. FAIRLIE BUCK.

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# OLD VALPARAISO.

By Oswald H. Evans, F.G.S.

CONSIDERED from a European standpoint, no South American town can really be called old, unless indeed we allow the uncertain traditions of pre-Columbian days to count in the story of Cuzco, Quito, or Bogotá. If we omit the comparatively few instances in which a modern city has risen on the ruins of an earlier civilisation, the towns of the southern continent date at the earliest from the sixteenth century, usually owing their foundation and saintly name to the enterprise of some European barbarian who followed the consecrated banner of Spanish conquest.

If, as history relates, Don Pedro de Valdivia founded and named Valparaiso, he cannot have selected its site with any prophetic idea of its future importance as a port, for Chili has few more treacherous anchorages. The furious 'northers' to which it is subject during a part of the year sweep over the wide bay, forcing huge rollers shoreward, tearing ships from their moorings, and strewing the long wharves with wreckage.

The present paper does not deal with the more distant past of the 'sea-beholding city,' but glances lightly at the social life of its people about a hundred years ago.

A century ago the chief port of Chili was far from being the imposing and populous city which to-day lines the shore for miles, its earthquake-shattered houses gleaming white in the sunshine where they climb high on the precipitous hillsides, still facing the sea with stately aspect, although the catastrophe of the *noche triste* in August 1906 filled the streets with the ruins of earthquake and fire.

At that time its population—made up of 'Old Spaniards,' Creoles, half-bred *rotos*, and foreign merchants—did not exceed seven thousand souls; and the fringe of houses enclosing the one long, cobbled street that ran along the foot of the cliffs was narrower, for in the course of years the foreshore (upon which to-day much of the business part of the town is built) has been slowly widened by the silting up of rain-washed detritus from the hills, perhaps aided by the intermittent elevation of the whole coast-line, of which the frequent earth-tremors are the alarming accompaniments.

Even then the lofty hills surrounding the bay had been denuded of the woods which would seem to have clothed their slopes in the far-off days when small ships were built there, and when Drake and Cavendish, on their celebrated voyages, raided the chapel and storehouse that represented the future seaport. Three centuries of thoughtless wood-cutting to supply the ever-smouldering *braseros* with charcoal would play havoc with the most heavily timbered land, and the result of this lack of foresight is seen to-day in the bare and unsightly wastes which surround the city for miles with a zone of scorched grass and straggling brushwood, making its name, the Vale of Paradise, a stumbling-block to the astonished traveller.

Save that the town has spread farther round the bay, incorporating its former suburb Almendral, and climbed ever higher on the hillsides, the view presented from the sea has changed but little from that described by Captain David Porter, of the United States navy, whose frigate, the *Essex*, rounded Los Angeles point one beautiful afternoon early in the last century. 'Nothing whatever appeared,' he writes, 'to indicate our approach to the most important city in Chili' until the point was passed, and the vessel lay like that in Somerscale's celebrated picture, 'Off Valparaiso.' 'I sought with my glass the city of Valparaiso, or some proofs of our approach to it. First a long, sandy beach on the opposite side offered itself to my view; next a large drove of loaded mules coming down the side of the mountain by a zigzag pathway; and in an instant afterwards the whole town, shipping with their colours flying, and the forts, burst out, as it were, from behind the rocks.'

The *Essex* was the first man-of-war to fly the Stars and Stripes in the port of Valparaiso, and the mission on which her gallant captain had rounded the Horn into the Pacific was one which

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boded little good to British commerce in those seas. At that time the whale-fishery was the chief legitimate inducement to tempt English keels to those remote waters, for the jealous policy of Spain in regard to the trade of her colonies had hindered the development of other branches of commerce. Prior to the independence of the South American states, English ships other than men-of-war were, for the most part, whalers, privateers, or smugglers, and not infrequently all these pursuits were combined by enterprising captains. Our wretched war with America was then at its height, and Captain Porter—known in history as the father of one of America's most distinguished seamen of later days, and himself an officer whose narrative fills one with respect for his courage and humanity—was commissioned by his Government to strike a blow at Britain by clearing the Pacific of our whalers—a task which he carried out with complete success, for, one after another, nearly all the ships employed in the fishery fell into his hands, representing, with their valuable cargoes, a loss to England of about half a million pounds and three hundred and sixty seamen taken prisoners.

The arrival of the *Essex* was hailed with delight by the hospitable natives of Valparaiso, the majority of whom were sufficiently weak in geography to learn with surprise that North America was a place of some importance, capable of fitting out a ship of such large size. Arrangements were at once made for a brilliant round of festivities, 'society' arriving from the capital in order to take part in the reception. We catch a very interesting glimpse of the manners of a bygone age in the description given of the balls and dinners attended by the officers of the frigate. The Anglo-Americans, for their part, were greatly surprised to find that a great change had recently taken place in the state of affairs existing in Chili. Where they had anticipated a dubious reception from the Spanish authorities, they met instead with a warm welcome, the port-captain assuring Porter that the independent state looked to the United States for example and protection—a curious anticipation of future political questions which later on may have influenced the formulation of the Munroe Doctrine.

The first popular upheaval in favour of complete separation from Spain had, for the time being, met with a measure of success; but in the first flush of triumph the new nation had fallen into a danger almost as perilous to its well-being as that which threatened its existence from the northward, where, under cover of an assumed acquiescence in the new order of things, the Viceroy of Peru was forging chains for the rebellious province. To the disdainful tyranny of colonial government had succeeded the despotism of a family. Three young men, Miguel, José, and Luis Carrera, had seized the moment of anarchy to concentrate almost absolute power in their own hands by means of the army, over which they had acquired great influence. In this they were greatly aided by their sister, Doña Javiera, a lady of transcendent beauty and wit, to whose brilliant social talents and genius for political intrigue their remarkable position was largely due. The story of the three brothers and their beautiful sister is one that fascinates all students of Chilian history, not only on account of the evil influence exerted by the quartette on the course of events in those troublous times, but for the pathos of their ignominious end.

In those early days of revolution, known to Chilians as the times of the 'Old Country,' Valparaiso society was divided sharply into two political parties—'Patriots,' flaunting the tricolour in their hats, their ladies 'wearing their hair brushed gracefully over the left side of their faces;' and those who from interest or policy favoured the old régime, known as 'Saracens.' 'The ladies,' according to Captain Porter, 'seemed to have entered into the spirit of the revolution, and perhaps not without cause, as most of the patriots are young, dashing, native Chilians, and the adverse party are invariably crusty, old, formal Castilians.'

Since hostilities had not as yet opened on a serious scale, Don Luis Carrera, commander of the artillery at the mature age of nineteen years, found vent for his ardour in the cause of liberty by leading the idle youth through the streets of Santiago and Valparaiso, where, under cover of night, they defaced or pulled down the escutcheons on public offices and private residences which testified to the former domination of Spain.

In the midst of the strife of political parties and the dark war-clouds which loomed over the infant state, the first wholesome buds began to unfold on the growing tree of liberty. For the first time was seen the beautiful tricolour flag of Chili—red, white, and blue, with a single star in the quarter. Dashed to earth within a few months, the flag of independence was again raised by stout arms and bold hearts—English as well as Chilian—for under its folds Cochrane and Miller did heroic deeds on sea and land, and its hues were deepened by the blood of pure patriotism on many a hotly contested field. To-day it represents a vigorous and progressive people and a fair land extending from the tropic to the Antarctic Sea. To the student of South American history there is little reason for wonder that the sons of Chili worship the flag of their century-old republic with an almost fanatic ardour, however little their enthusiasm is appreciated by people who look down upon the Latin states from the lofty standpoint of a thousand years.

The same year that saw the flag first raised on Chilian soil was marked by the introduction of the printing-press and the publication of the first newspaper, the *Aurora de Chile*, edited by a priest named Camilo Enriquez, a fervent supporter of the national cause. Hitherto the outworn policy of Spain in regard to her colonies had left the people in the densest ignorance, for there was an embargo laid even upon books. The excesses which not

infrequently stained the lustre of patriot victories were in great measure the fruit of the short-sighted class legislation which arrested all healthy intellectual development outside the narrow professional limits of the Church and law.

Little did the gay company assembled to make merry with the officers of the *Essex* anticipate the dark days which were so speedily to fill their streets with mourning. Within a year the Spanish power was completely re-established in Chili; those patriots who had not fallen in battle or into the hands of the enemy had fled beyond the Andes; and Chili, humbled for a time to the very dust, was at the mercy of the Viceroy's bayonets. The vengeance exacted by the royalists for the sin of abortive rebellion was terrible. Arrests, confiscations, and imprisonments were the least evils. Scores of leading patriots, many of them men of ability and culture acquired in European travel, were packed like slaves in the holds of vessels and transported to Juan Fernandez, the island of Crusoe, or rather of Selkirk, where they languished miserably, devoid of the very necessaries of life, until the remnant of them was released some few years later by the first ship to fly the national flag. The punishment meted out under the name of the law was as nothing compared to the lawless excesses of the troops, into whose hands the unfortunate people were delivered, as it were, bound. To such lengths did one regiment carry its cruelty that an element of superstition entered into the feelings of the unfortunate victims, among whom the belief became current that the Talavera regiment embodied in its ranks literal fiends from hell. Many were prepared to swear that they had seen their tails!

A prophetic glance into the near future would indeed have cast a gloom over the assembly. Within a few months Porter was a prisoner of war, his ship a prize, and more than half his crew either killed or wounded. For the three Carreras the future held humiliation, public obloquy, a criminal trial, and the bullets of a firing-platoon. Don Bernardo O'Higgins, the brilliant son of the Irish peasant who became Viceroy of Peru, was soon to see the crushing defeat of Rancagua, where, after a desperate resistance against greatly superior forces, he draped his banner in crape, leaped his horse over the barricade, and cut a path through the ranks of the Spaniards with the remnant of his command. For him, indeed, it was reserved to see the cause triumphant, to hold the highest office as Supreme Director, but finally, by yet another turn of fortune's wheel, to die in exile.

At the moment, however, the cloud in the north seemed smaller than a man's hand, and gallant patriot youth and beauty merrily danced the *cueca* with all the warmth of their Latin temperament. Porter and his officers were, on the whole, favourably impressed, although at times their New England consciences were troubled at beholding on Sunday the *abandon* of the passionate country-dances. Several quaint Chilian customs attracted their attention, some of which have quite died out at the present day. Then, as now, the ladies disfigured their pretty faces—'handsome, notwithstanding the Chilian tinge'—with paint. This pernicious habit is still almost universal, for a Chilian belle would be considered slovenly did she omit to use freely this objectionable article of the toilet. The writer on one occasion saw a three-months'-old baby with its poor little face plentifully besmeared with brightly coloured cosmetic.

The custom of *maté* drinking, then general, is not now so common as it used to be; but the poorer classes still consume large quantities of the herb. It is prepared by infusing the dried leaves in boiling water in small, curiously shaped vessels formed of pottery or metal. A small, hollow gourd, with a portion of the stalk left on, is frequently used for the purpose, and this primitive utensil has evidently determined the shape of the pots of more pretentious fabric. The sweetened infusion is sucked up through a *bombilla*, a slender pipe which should be of silver, but is commonly of baser metal, its extremity terminating in a perforated, spoon-shaped expansion. In the old days the *maté* liquor was blown into a froth by one of the company, and then handed round among the guests, in a fashion rather startling to the European stranger. The infusion is served exceedingly hot, and Kotzebue the Russian navigator tells us that he was sadly scalded in his compliance with the Chilian custom. Instances of this sociable method of indulging in *maté* are not often to be met with; but on one occasion the writer saw the old custom carried out by a family party assembled at an inland farm, and the exquisite courtesy with which the host presented the *bombilla* to his chance-guest rendered it impossible to 'shun the bowl' which he had just prepared according to tradition.

A sweet jelly was handed round on a dish with a solitary spoon, which the partaker was careful to replace after use; and a glass of water was invariably taken after sweetmeats for some obscure medical reason. The Americans noted with surprise that every utensil of the table-service, with the exception of the knife-blades, was of solid silver; for at that time in western South America that metal was 'nothing accounted of,' such immense quantities were produced by the mines of Upper Peru.

The guests not taking part in the dancing sat on a raised dais, gentlemen and married ladies alone being provided with chairs, the unmarried sitting on the edge of the little platform. Some of the old houses in Santiago still have this dais in their large reception-rooms.

It has often been remarked that a similarity exists between the Chilians and the Irish, and this peculiarity was certainly emphasised by an incident which put a sudden stop to a banquet at which all the 'high life' of Valparaiso were assembled. Porter's second in command sighted a large war-

vessel making for the harbour, and at once a considerable number of Chilian officers—Don Luis Carrera among them—turned from the feast with glee at the prospect of a fight. All repaired to the frigate, which at once weighed anchor and stood out to sea to interview the stranger. To the disappointment of every one, and especially of the young ladies, who had hastened to points of vantage on the hills, the ship showed Portuguese colours, and the lively spectacle of a naval combat had to be postponed. The dashing Don Luis, all eagerness to board the enemy, turned distressingly sick before he regained the shore, for this was before the time when the Chilians became the best seamen on the Pacific coast.

The ladies of Valparaiso, whose bright eyes had filled with tears when disappointed of their sea-fight, had their dream fulfilled within a very few months, for the guns of a far-off war thundered over the sparkling waters of the bay, and set unaccustomed echoes rolling among the sleepy streets and sunny ] .ls of the old seaport. Soon after Captain Porter's successful cruise in Pacific waters, His Britannic Majesty's ships *Phœbe* and *Cherub* poked inquiring bowsprits round the point and ran in to anchor beside the bold American. As they were in a neutral port, hostilities were for the time suspended, the boats' crews fraternised over the *chicha* and wine ashore, and a fine interchange of courtesies followed between the rival captains.

Few people could be found nowadays to attempt the task of defending the foolish, fratricidal strife between Britain and America in the early years of last century. Small honour was gained by either combatant, and the less prejudiced feelings of the present day see reason in the American view of the controversy. The frigate-action in Valparaiso Bay supplies a comment on the cause of the war, the unquestioned gallantry of the personnel of both navies, and the feelings of mutual exasperation which did so much to estrange the two great sections of the Anglo-Saxon race. It must not be forgotten that in the crews of the American vessels there was no small proportion of born-Britons, many of them deserters from our navy—some attracted by the greater opportunities offered to them in the New World, but many, it is to be feared, fugitives from the system of tyranny and petty injustice which prevailed in many of our men-of-war at that period.

The motto-flag which Porter hoisted echoes the dispute which led to the war—'Free Trade and Sailors' Rights.' The British flew the long-winded rejoinder, 'God and our Country, British Sailors' Best Rights; Traitors offend both.' Surely this pennon, with its imposing punctuation, must have trailed alongside. The Americans, not to be outdone, made fitting answer with 'God, our Country, and Liberty; Tyrants offend both.' Under such noble sentiments did John Smith of Wapping bombard John Smith of Massachusetts, one may well hope, for the last time.

In spite of the superior force brought against him, the more marked as his crew was weakened by the need of manning the numerous prizes he had despatched to the United States, Porter made a gallant resistance, and in a hotly contested action, lasting for some hours, upheld the honour of his country until the *Essex* was on fire, almost on the point of sinking, and the crew, including the surviving officers, reduced to seventy-five men. Immediately on striking, he and his officers were released on parole and treated with respect and consideration by the commander of the victorious ships. One little middy on board the *Essex* became in after-years the famous Admiral Farragut.

In such manner the ladies of Old Valparaiso had their desire for a naval spectacle satisfied, doubtless little expecting that they had in prospect some twenty years of war, with all its horrors, in their own country.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER LIII.—HOW THEY CAME WITH EAGERNESS TO MEET ILL NEWS.

THEIR good friends of the island would hear no word of remuneration for all their kindness. To press the matter would have been to affront them. So they had to leave it at that, promising themselves, however, that what might be resented as payment might, if carefully gone about, be found acceptable in the form of presents from overseas, and Mavie had in her mind various things likely to be pleasing to Carette and the children which it would be her great joy to buy and send when she reached home.

The question of how to get across to England was solved, as soon as mooted, by George Hamon and young Phil Carré, who offered to run them over in Uncle George's big decked boat, which had had but little work to do since he stopped running cargoes of another description.

'It 'll feel almost like old times,' he said with a sparkle of the eye. 'Not but what these times are a thousand times better,' as his eye rested on the quiet face of his wife Rachel; 'but, all the same, a run on the straight will quicken one's blood and do no one any harm.'

And, choosing their day and their wind with care, they bade their good friends farewell, and made a quick twelve hours' run of it, and were off Poole Harbour before sunrise of the following day. And John Sax, as he watched Sercq sink into a blue film astern, had wondered to himself if life

would ever again offer him such fullness of joy as he had known there, and he thought not.

But even this short run into home waters was not without its dangers, and the nearer they drew to home the greater these grew.

For, just as they were running in past Brownsea Island, a couple of heavily manned cutters shot out and boarded them, to Uncle George's huge enjoyment, seeing that there had been times when he would have taken their coming very differently.

'Where are you from, and what's your cargo?' asked the gruff lieutenant in charge, as he climbed aboard, soured with a long night's watching.

'Two English passengers from Sercq,' said Uncle George with a twinkle.

'Search her!' ordered the lieutenant; and that was speedily done without any untoward discoveries.

But though disappointed in that direction, their captor had other means of working off his humour and proving himself unpleasant.

'The ships are wanting men,' he growled. 'You three will suit us very well.'

'Oh, but you must not! You dare not!' cried Mavie, all ablaze with indignation.

'Dare not! And who says "dare not" to'——

'I do!' blazed Mavie with a stamp of the foot. 'If you dare do any such thing I will go straight to the Regent and tell him of it. It is infamous even to think of such a thing.'

'God bless me, what a spitfire! And who may you be, miss, that talk so glib of the Regent and getting honest folks into trouble?'

'I am the daughter of Sir Charles Lauriston the banker. I have been detained in France by General Bonaparte for the last two years. My father sent this gentleman to procure my release, and this is the welcome we get to England!'

'Well, well!' he said, tipping up his cap and scratching the back of his head perplexedly. 'That may be so or it may not. You will come with me before a justice, and if you can make him believe it, it's all one to me. You've no contraband aboard, that's certain; but we want men, and we take 'em where we can.'

'Well, you won't get these. Take us to any one possessed of common-sense and proper authority, and that is all we require.'

'A spitfire, if ever I saw one!—Gubbins, stop your grinning at the lady or I'll give you something to grin for.'

'I worn't grinning at the lady,' growled Gubbins through his quid.

'Make for the quay there,' ordered the lieutenant; and George Hamon replied politely, 'That is where we were making for when monsieur interrupted us;' and they wafted slowly up the harbour, with the cutters alongside.

Fortunately for them, the justice whose opinion the lieutenant decided to take in this important matter proved to be a man of some position, a baronet, and yet withal possessed of Mavie's requirements of common-sense and authority, and not wholly unacquainted with social affairs in the Metropolis. He accepted her statement without a moment's hesitation, commended the Sercq men for their generous assistance, gave them a protection against all interference with their liberty by the press-men, and put himself entirely at Miss Lauriston's disposal for the furtherance of her journey to London.

'I cannot thank you enough, sir,' said Mavie. 'You see, I am anxious to get home now because we have been sadly delayed, and my mother is ill and is wanting me.'

'I would place my own carriage at your disposal, my dear young lady, only that I know you will be safer on the coach, since it carries the mails and goes armed. You will all breakfast with me here. I am a lonely bachelor, but Lieutenant Bloxham will suffice as chaperon, and then I will drive you across country to Southampton in time for the midday coach, which will deliver you safely in London this evening. And, when you think of it, you will tell your father that it has been a great pleasure to Gervaise Somers to be of service to his daughter.'

'He will thank you himself, Sir Gervaise, for I cannot,' said Mavie; and then he rang for his housekeeper, who curtsied her upstairs to trim her feathers.

And the moment she had gone he turned to Jack and said gravely, 'Her mother died last week. I saw it in the *News-Letter*, and mention was made of Miss Lauriston's detention by the Emperor. You will have to break it to her before you reach London.'

'That is the very worst news she could have,' said Jack, aghast. 'How am I to tell her?'

'You will find a way. Better perhaps before we get to Southampton; then her first grief can find vent in privacy.'

And Mavie, in the highest of spirits, could not understand why all the faces about her responded so heavily to her liveliness, and was inclined to set them down as of dull and bucolic mould.

They bade a hearty farewell to George Hamon and Phil Carré, and even to Lieutenant Bloxham now that his claws were clipped, and before midday were bowling along towards Southampton, Somers himself driving a mettlesome four of the horses which to some extent supplied the place of wife and family in his social economy.

Mavie had wished to sit alongside him on the box, and was much surprised at the insistence which constrained her to the stuffy inside of the coach. But she understood when, after an hour's ride, broken only by monosyllabic replies from Jack to all her sallies and diatribes, he gravely laid a hand on hers, and her heart gave a jump and her face flushed as though she knew what was coming. But it was something quite different.

'Mavie,' he said, and caught his breath with a choke at the blow he had to deal her, 'we have

gone through a good deal, and you have stood it all like a man. Can you stand a blow?'

'Oh Jack!' she gasped, whitening, aware now that this was not at all what she had expected, 'what is it?'

'There is trouble for you. Your mother'——

'Oh Jack, not dead! Don't say she is dead, Jack!'

'Yes, dear;' and in the tension of that terrible moment it seemed strange to neither of them that he should address her so. 'She is gone.'

'Oh Jack! Jack!' and she leaned her head against his shoulder and sobbed as if her heart would break; and he sat silent, having no words, but would have given much to have dared to comfort her in other ways.

The mettlesome four had covered many unobserved miles before the sweet, woeful face lifted for a moment to ask jerkily, 'How did you hear, Jack? And when was it?'

'Sir Gervaise saw it in the *News-Letter* last week. He asked me to tell you.'

'Last week! And we were so happy in Sercq! Oh Jack!'

'You could have done nothing, Mavie'——

'Except see her. Oh my dear! my dear! if I had only seen you once more!' and she put down her head again, heavy with weeping, and again her sobs went through him.

Barely two months had passed since Jack set out on his quest, but he was startled at the change that short time had made in Sir Charles. His hair was grayer, almost white at the temples, and his face was like the chiselled face on a tomb.

Mavie had gone away upstairs in Hepsy MacClootie's comforting care. They had made pretence of a hastily prepared meal, and Jack and Sir Charles and Charles lingered still at table while Jack rendered further account of his trust.

'I blame myself, sir, for letting her stop in Sercq; but she insisted, and I could not move her. We had, of course, no idea'——

'There is no blame in the matter, John, and you have done well. To have left you behind, wounded, would not have been like a Lauriston. Her mother quite understood.'

'See many French soldiers, Jack?' asked Charles.

'Plenty in Paris, marching to and fro, but they were mostly young ones and rather raw. The best are at the front no doubt.'

'And the people, John? Could you gather anything as to their general feeling towards Bonaparte as Emperor?'

'In Paris, sir, everybody seemed busy and content; the better classes very outlandishly dressed, and very gay and full of amusements. In Normandy they don't care much for the Empire; but if it settles the country and gives them rest they will be satisfied.'

'And Talleyrand? You could gather nothing from him, I presume?'

'Nothing, sir. He talked only of getting Miss Mavie away.'

'And you've paid first blood to France after all, Jack,' said Charles with a touch of envy. 'But I hope my chance will come before long. They think they can lick the world. Wait till they tackle us, and we'll show them!'

'May it be long!' said Sir Charles. 'When you have seen a battle, my boy, and the day after, you will never long for another; though you would do your duty, I know, if it came.'

'Well, I should think so, sir! What am I here for?'

'To learn life and all it can teach you, my boy, and your duty to your country and your fellows, and then to take your proper place in the world. Sometime, please God, you will be Lauriston of Lauristons, and our good John Sax here'—with a confiding hand on Jack's shoulder—'will be your trusty right hand.'

At which reference to the bank-stool Master Charles gave a little shrug of disdain. But to Jack Sax the trustful hand on his shoulder was ample recompense where none at all was needed, since what he had done was, in itself, its own reward, and he had rejoiced in the doing of it.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE ROYAL LETTER-BAG.

By W. T. Roberts.

ON an average, close on six hundred letters are received every day by His Majesty, and rather less than half that number by the Queen. To facilitate the delivery of their Majesties' correspondence, special arrangements exist at the General Post-Office for the sorting and clearing of the letters for the King and Queen. Two sorting-clerks are always on duty at the Post-Office attending to the letters coming through what is called in Post-Office parlance the 'royal road'—each particular branch of the sorting department being termed a 'road.' The royal letters are sorted and cleared at once when they come in; those for the King are delivered in a special post-bag to Buckingham Palace seven times a day, and those for Her Majesty four times.

The first letter-bag for the King is delivered at Buckingham Palace at 7 A.M., and contains the greater portion of the day's letters. It is handed to two clerks of the household, by whom it is opened, and who sort the mail into two separate classes, termed official and private. Usually the King's private correspondents mark their letters

'Personal' or 'Private,' and those not so marked are included in the batch of official letters. It takes about an hour to sort the letters into the two classes mentioned, and they are then sent up to the secretary's department to be dealt with by Lord Knollys and the assistant private secretaries.

All the letters in the official class are opened in this department. Every letter when it is opened is impressed with a rubber stamp bearing the royal crown, and initialled by the secretary who opens it, who also enters in a daily letter-book the name of the writer and the nature of its contents.

The official correspondence is sorted into three classes. The bulk of it is classified as home official and foreign official; but there are always a certain number of letters which do not come under either denomination, and these are put into a separate class termed miscellaneous. This class includes begging-letters, letters from people seeking the King's patronage for various charitable enterprises, and from autograph-hunters, and letters calling His Majesty's attention to a large variety of matters, such as the attainment by some person to a very old age, the performance of some conspicuous act of bravery, or some case of peculiar hardship or misfortune.

Occasionally the King's letter-bag contains a threatening letter. His Majesty receives fewer letters of this character than any European sovereign, and they as a rule come from people not altogether responsible for their actions. Such letters are handed to the detective department at Buckingham Palace.

All the other letters, together with the unopened private correspondence, are, after they have been dealt with in the secretary's department, sent to His Majesty's private writing-room, where the King goes through the whole correspondence with Lord Knollys.

His Majesty, of course, could not possibly read through each letter, but he sees by looking at the daily letter-book the business and purport of each, and indicates to his secretary the nature of the reply to be sent in a number of instances. As a rule, the late King replied to his private correspondence personally; when in London, if not otherwise engaged, he spent a couple of hours in the afternoon at the Marlborough Club answering letters; otherwise, he usually got through his personal correspondence in his private room before dinner, between half-past seven and half-past eight. One of King Edward's most regular private correspondents, by the way, was Prince Edward. It is not generally known that the sovereign is the constitutional guardian of the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, and is vested with complete control over his upbringing and education. Since the Prince left the royal schoolroom at Marlborough House, King Edward had written regularly to him, and received at least once a week a letter from the future heir to the throne.

It may be mentioned that the other mails delivered at Buckingham Palace are sorted and classified as they come in, but are not dealt with until the morning.

Apart from the correspondence already mentioned, the King is daily in receipt of despatches sent from the chief Government offices. These are enclosed in despatch-cases bearing a white enamel tablet with the words 'From the Treasury,' or whatever the office may be, 'to His Majesty the King.' The case is locked by the chief of the department from which it is sent, and it is always delivered by the messenger into the hands of one of the King's assistant private secretaries, who possesses a duplicate key.

When the King is absent from London, His Majesty's correspondence is dealt with, of course, in a different manner; but so perfect is the organisation in this matter that very little delay arises in dealing with the large volume of mail matter.

Wherever His Majesty may be, the letters are delivered to Buckingham Palace, and opened, sorted, and classified in the manner already described. When this is done they are despatched by special messenger twice a day to wherever the King may be staying, except when His Majesty is abroad, in which case they are sent from the Palace once a day by a King's Messenger. Should any letter contain matter of extreme urgency it is wired to His Majesty. This, of course, is done only with official letters; personal and private letters are sent on without being opened.

When His Majesty stays at any private house a writing-room is always included in the suite of apartments placed at his disposal, and the house is usually connected by a specially erected wire with the nearest telegraph-office, so that no delay may arise in the receipt of messages for His Majesty.

In regard to the many matters with which his very large correspondence was concerned, the late King had a remarkably retentive memory. A story was told by the late Sir Arthur Ellis, who was Comptroller of the King's Household, that on one occasion His Majesty received a letter addressed from a house in Shropshire, which the writer had forgotten to sign. The letter referred to the death of an old soldier, but Sir Arthur Ellis had no idea who had sent it. When, however, His Majesty saw the letter he at once recollected whose writing it was. The letter was from a Doctor A., who previously had some correspondence with the King about a Crimean pensioner. Altogether the doctor had only written four letters to His Majesty, who, however, recollected the doctor's handwriting at once when he saw it again after three years, and also all the circumstances in connection with the correspondence.

A very considerable portion of the late King's correspondence, it is perhaps hardly necessary to say, was conducted in French and German. When writing to a member of any foreign royal family both King Edward and Queen Alexandra wrote in French, which is invariably the language employed by royalties when corresponding with each other.

Queen Alexandra's correspondence is, of course, not so large as was that of King Edward. Her

Majesty receives from one hundred to one hundred and fifty letters daily, and has not in the strict meaning of the word any official correspondence to attend to. All letters not marked private are opened by Mr Greville, her private secretary, and dealt with much in the same way as the King's correspondence, the name of the writer and the nature of the contents of each letter being entered in a letter-book. When she was at Buckingham Palace Queen Alexandra usually devoted two hours every morning to going through her correspondence, in which work she was always assisted by Miss Knollys.

The writing-room in the Queen's suite of private apartments at Buckingham Palace is a very beautiful room, and contains a number of exquisite works of art, some of them being gifts to Queen Alexandra from different foreign royalties. Perhaps the most valuable of these is a cabinet by Gouthiere, which was a present from the Empress of Germany. When the Queen-Mother, as Princess of Wales, visited the castle at Potsdam some twelve or fifteen years ago, she greatly admired this almost priceless cabinet, and a little while later it was bestowed on her by the German Empress.

The Queen receives an extraordinarily large number of appeals for help. It is rarely that a day passes without Her Majesty receiving from thirty to forty appeals for charitable assistance in some shape or form, and each appeal receives the most careful consideration. It goes without saying that a large number of such appeals come from dishonest people who systematically live on charity obtained under false pretences. But Queen Alexandra always aids any genuine case of distress to the best of her ability, as the following story shows, which came directly under the writer's notice. A young girl living in Cork, whose parents were in very poor circumstances, was attacked by lupus in her face, causing a terrible disfigurement. The doctor informed her that it could probably be cured by the light-treatment; but at this time—it was in the summer of 1902—there was no hospital in Cork where such treatment could be had, and only one or two hospitals in Dublin, and into neither of the latter had the girl any chance of getting admitted for a considerable period, owing to the large number of people waiting for admission. The girl at last wrote to the Queen, praying Her Majesty to aid her in getting into a London hospital. Now, when the Queen received this letter she was on board the royal yacht with the King, who was in the early stages of recovery after his serious illness, and it would be but natural to suppose that Her Majesty in such circumstances would not be able to attend to her correspondence as promptly as she usually does. As a matter of fact, the Queen attended to this poor girl's appeal at once, and less than a week after she had written the letter the girl received an order admitting her to a London hospital, and also a kind and sympathetic letter from the Queen. This is but one of the thousand acts of kindness which Queen Alexandra has so constantly performed; the public hear of very few of them, but they have endeared Her Majesty to thousands of her subjects.

When the Queen is out of London letters are forwarded to her twice a day from Buckingham Palace by the usual mail service, and once a day when Her Majesty is abroad. King's messengers are never employed to carry the Queen's letters. No letter written by the King or Queen need be stamped, whether the letters be on public or private business; nor need any letter written by members of the royal household on their Majesties' business be stamped; but members of the royal household must stamp their private letters.

All the royal palaces are, of course, connected with the telephone. The King subscribes to the telephone service in the ordinary manner, but in the use of it a very special privilege is granted to His Majesty. Whenever a call comes through the trunk exchange from the King it is given precedence over all other calls. There are, for example, but four wires between London and Brussels, which are bespoken by callers in advance, and each gets a line in his turn, for which he has to wait as a rule about two hours. But when a call from the King comes through His Majesty is given the first line that becomes disengaged, no matter how many other people may be waiting to use it. No trunk line may be used by any person for more than six minutes, and the usual duration of a conversation is three minutes, so that the King has never long to wait for a clear line when he requires to make a long distance call. There is, by the way, no legal limit to the duration of the conversation when His Majesty speaks through the telephone.

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# HUNTER OF CARRIGAGALLOCH.

## CHAPTER II.

WELL, I placed such brains as I possess at Mr Ross's disposal for the rest of the day.

The hope that we might recover the necklace was exceedingly desperate from the first, and still more so when we sat down to the excellent dinner which it was Mrs Cronin's pleasure to send up for so distinguished a man as the Dublin solicitor.

Muriel accompanied us to the old mansion-house, and her mind worked in unison with ours.

It was an awful scene of decay and dilapidation. The mouldering heads of stags and foxes in the mildewed hall seemed to gibe at us as soon as we entered. The finest head of them all lay on the

floor with broken antlers. Everywhere the paper was peeling from the walls. Except in the one room lately occupied by Dermot Hunter, there was no trace of furniture likely to contain such a treasure as the emeralds, and this room was as unproductive of hope as the rest. And yet I don't know that I ought to say so. Over the bed was a good small copy of Raphael's Madonna della Sedia, with a small silver shrine and lamp beneath it. The old woman in charge of the house had kept the lamp burning.

'*There's* an omen for you, Miss Steen!' exclaimed Mr Ross, and he crossed himself. 'God grant it!'

'Yes,' said Muriel. 'God grant it!'

But whatever augury of good it might be for Dermot Hunter as a man, it did not help us to the emeralds. We returned to the inn with the forlorn intention of going through the auction lists of the last three sales of furniture and tracking the more suggestive of them to their present houses. These lists were in Dermot Hunter's wardrobe, and were the only practical result of our labour.

We marked about a score of items as possible hiding-places of the necklace; but I agreed with Mr Ross that the odds were all against our finding the treasure, even if it were still in County Clare.

Muriel was the only sanguine one of the three of us. Nothing would content her but that we should at once examine Mrs Cronin's own collection of relics by candle-light, though nothing came of it. Most of the chairs were gone in the seat and were none too well supplied with their own stuffing, to say nothing about jewels.

Mr Ross returned to Dublin in the morning, but telegraphed for young M'Gauran, the Galway auctioneer, to partner me in scouring the country with those foolish lists. For the better part of three days I drove with Peter M'Gauran from farm to farm, searching wardrobes, sideboards, tables, and boxes bought at the different sales. If the emeralds were to be found, Mr Ross said, they would be in some secret drawer. Lawrence Hunter had been that kind of man, even before his head went wrong. Neal O'Grady, the Mahoon carpenter, confirmed this. He came forward with tales of several such pieces of work he had done for the old squire years ago. But we drew blank in each case, partly for the very good reason that O'Grady had already helped the purchasers of Lawrence Hunter's writing-table and the other things to see if they had got more for their money than they believed. A few musty papers of no value were all the fruits of our quest.

By then I considered that I had sacrificed quite enough time and energy to the interests of a young Irishman whom I had known only for a couple of weeks and held in nothing like esteem. It had its incongruous and absurd side. Here was I as anxious as any sensible brother would have been to turn Muriel's thoughts away from Dermot Hunter, yet working for him as if he were both friend and client!

A certain change in Muriel herself made me resolve to carry her back to London without more delay. She had become silent and sad in the last day or two, and was evidently worrying uselessly.

'We will pack up and be off to-morrow, sis,' I said to her after dinner that third day.

She said 'Yes!' in a quick whisper.

And then she rose and came to me and laid her head on mine.

'Dick,' she said, 'you've been so good about it that I must tell you. He was here yesterday—at Carrigagalloch. I didn't see him, but he wrote to me. He sails for America on Saturday by the *Mauretania*, and I—I wish I were going with him. The silly boy says I am to have the emeralds if they turn up, and he hopes some day to come back and'——

'And marry you as a millionaire, I suppose?' I suggested, with a laugh that hurt her. I felt her wince.

'No, only to tell me what I have done for him. You are not to jeer at him, Dick. I can't help loving him, but I dare say I shall grow out of it in time. Good-night. I will be ready to-morrow.'

She kissed me and went to her room, and left me thinking. The more I thought, the worse Dermot Hunter seemed to me. It was intolerable that while I was wasting time on his behalf he should be continuing the mischief he had begun in Muriel. That was my point of view; and, with all its exasperations thick upon me, I carefully descended those brass-tipped stairs for some fresh air.

There was a three-quarter moon outside, and a waiting car in the street. The door of Mrs Cronin's liquor-shop adjoining the inn was open, and Rory Spillane was cackling tipsily at the counter. Quite soon I heard more than enough from that tongue of his.

'There's no more stubborn man,' he said, 'than myself when I'm in the mood—no, there is not—and so I said to the squire, said I, not half-an-hour since, in his own house of Carrigagalloch. "Dermot Hunter," says I, "it's a mistake you're making to give your heart the like o' that to an English girl you'd never seen a month ago. It's a weakness," said I, "not to be expected of a Hunter of Carrigagalloch."'

Coarse laughter and a kick at the door cut off the rest; and for a few more seconds I stood still in the moonlight. The jackdaws were talking behind the hotel, and perhaps they inspired my next act.

The car in the street belonged to the hotel. It was the one we had driven in to Dalbody that afternoon, to tap at an oaken bookcase bought by James M'Carthy at one of the sales. I got into it and drove down the street, across the river-bridge, and so to the gate of Carrigagalloch. Here the chain was off the gate, and I went on to the house up that significant, gaunt avenue, now silver-and-black in the moonlight.

I regret to say that passion sometimes gets the upper hand of me, and it did so lamentably on

this occasion. I knocked at the door, meaning to tell Dermot Hunter my complete, unvarnished opinion of him, and I am afraid that is just what I did.

The old woman let me in, and, hearing my voice, he came to meet me from that room with the Madonna and lamp.

'This *is* kind of you, Mr Steen!' he said in the corridor. His tone was manly and self-sufficient as well as cordial, and the more obnoxious to me for that reason.

'I don't intend it to be,' I said. 'Just give me a word with you, Mr Hunter.'

I noticed the difference in him when we were in the room. He looked grave and grieved, but his mouth was as firm now as a Lord Chancellor's. I doubt if there was a handsomer man in all the three kingdoms during those two minutes in which I told him his correspondence with Muriel was an insult to both of us, and that there was to be no more of it.

He was stung by my words.

'Insult!' he exclaimed. 'That's a hard blow for me to bear.'

'None too hard in your case,' I replied.

'None too hard in my case—well, perhaps so,' he said. 'But you can't take her out of my mind, Mr Steen, and I'm content with that. I quit the country on Saturday. I shall never see her again, nor will I write to her.'

'Then good-night and good-bye to you on that understanding, Mr Hunter,' said I.

'Good-night and good-bye to you and her also, Mr Steen, and God bring the future,' said he.

Not another word passed between us as he followed me to the door, where for aught I know he watched me drive down his ragged avenue and out of sight. Truth to tell, I returned to the inn feeling dissatisfied with myself. Dermot Hunter had impressed me in spite of his past and my prejudices, and I had hit him when he was down. He was the better man of the two of us after that rather ignoble interview.

And so to bed and sleep, from which I was aroused by those clattering daws. The sun shone into my room, and for an hour or two I lay awake meditating and listening to their babble. Dermot Hunter was in my mind most of the time, and I felt downright ashamed of myself now for my treatment of him. Eight o'clock struck, and I got out of bed, considerably more than half-inclined to go off to Carrigagalloch after breakfast with apologies.

I felt that I could trust him absolutely about Muriel, and with the danger as good as over I wanted to get right with myself as well as him.

And now suddenly Chance again put its spoke in our wheel. Muriel's room was above mine, and when I was nearly dressed I heard a crash overhead. That in itself was nothing unusual. Furniture was constantly giving way in the careless old house. One of the legs of my own bed was an inch through the floor, and the sideboard in the parlour stood on a confirmed slope.

But in another minute or so Muriel tapped at my door.

'I want you, Dick!' she cried; and when I opened the door she caught me by the hand and whispered, 'Come upstairs.'

She explained nothing until I was in her room. Then she pointed to the dressing-table. The looking-glass and part of the Florentine box both lay upon the floor; but Napoleon the Great's present to Miss Euphemia Hunter a hundred years ago was found.

It was an exquisite thing of about fifty large, flat emeralds, with little gold eagles linking them.

I fingered it in silence, while in a low voice Muriel told how one of the hinges of the mirror had given way, and the whole concern, in overbalancing, had first smashed the Florentine box on the hearthstone, and then itself tumbled to pieces.

The box had a double bottom, and there the necklace had lain, bedded in pink cotton wool, and unsuspected, ever since Lawrence Hunter's death.

It was a dramatic find and the rapid prelude to a dramatic announcement.

'Dick,' said my sister when she had finished her story, 'I'm *going* to him. He is here. He needs me; and now, with this, he can make a career for himself at home. You are not to be angry with me, and you are to let me go by myself. I shall tell him I will marry him as soon as he wishes. He needs some one to take care of him; and, as you know, I love him. I shall go at once, before breakfast.'

. . . . . .

We went together, and remarkably of one mind.

There must be something magical about good women, or beautiful emeralds once handled by Napoleon Bonaparte, or busybody jackdaws in the nesting season.

One of these last alighted on Muriel's window-sill, with a sprig of flowering blackthorn, when she spoke up for Dermot Hunter; and then, seeing us, croaked away, leaving the white blossom behind him. Muriel pounced upon it. 'Look, Dick!' she said. 'There is a thorn-bush in the Hunter crest, and he shall see that I am willing to marry him, for good or ill.'

She took the blackthorn twig with her to Carrigagalloch, pinned to her blouse. She was delighted at my change of opinion about Dermot Hunter, and delighted still when I told her the why and wherefore of the change. These, so far as I comprehended them, had less to do with the emeralds than with instinct and conscience. Muriel was a better judge of men than myself, and I had atonement to make for that recent visit to Carrigagalloch. So it seemed to me, although perhaps the magic just mentioned had most to do with my volte-face.

Anyway, we reached him only in the nick of time. He had packed up the Sedia Madonna and its

silver shrine as the last of his portable possessions, and was for Queenstown in an hour or two.

But instead of that he took train with us and the emeralds to Dublin and Mr Ross. The little solicitor was as glad about the jewels as if they were his own. The understanding between Dermot and Muriel also pleased him greatly, although he made me smile by his assurances that it was no ordinary honour, even for such a girl as Muriel, to become the titular lady of Carrigagalloch.

. . . . . .

Such was the upshot of our spring visit to that rather nasty little town of Mahoon and its Cronin's Hotel.

They were married in the autumn, and all goes well with them. Dermot is reading for the Irish Bar; and they live mainly on the proceeds of the Napoleonic emeralds. If I am a sound judge of his talents, he has better chances of success in London than in Dublin; but both of them mean to stick to the Emerald Isle. By this time it has as tight a hold upon Muriel's affections as upon his own, and that is saying much.

THE END.

# THE ROMANCE OF ARCHÆOLOGY.

IT is a great mistake to suppose that the knowledge gleaned by the use of pick and spade in excavation, or by the examination of ancient works of art, ruins, and remains, is necessarily more of a dry-as-dust affair than that imparted in other ways. There are both interest and romance akin to those of the searcher for hidden treasure in probing the secrets that have lain buried for ages. In such research the unexpected often happens, as will be seen in our narrative, and knowledge of the stages reached by ancient civilisations in architecture, art, and literature may be traced in inscriptions, ruins, statues, arms, domestic utensils, or ornaments. We gain a kind of knowledge about which the histories are mainly silent, or we confirm and settle some important historical points. The Elgin Marbles are an education in Greek art for all time, and have elevated the standard of national taste. It is possible to reconstruct the life which thrilled in Herculaneum and Pompeii from the remains conserved in the Naples Museum and elsewhere, as it is possible to realise ancient Egyptian manners and customs from the relics in the Gizeh Museum at Cairo. Not only our own British Museum and smaller ones, as well as those on the Continent and thousands of private collections, have been enriched by the studies and excavations guided by the archæologist. With some endowment of the historic imagination, and wisely directed reading and study, we see the dry bones live again, and become anew clothed with life.

The literature of the subject is an enormous and increasing one. To those who have not time to read the thousand and one volumes upon excavations in all parts of the world a book issued by John Murray may be recommended, in which is focussed a vast amount of information given in a pleasant and interesting way. It is called *A Century of Archæological Discoveries*, by Professor A. Michaelis, of Strasburg, translated by Mr B. Kahnweiler, with a preface by Professor Percy Gardner, of Oxford. Though he has done no excavation work himself, Michaelis traces the development of our knowledge of art during last century, and has noted every important discovery and investigation by those who have been active in the field. He believes that archæology is the conquering science of the century, and certainly never before have the labours of the spade yielded such a rich and manifold reward.

A table at the end of Michaelis's book furnishes clear landmarks in the study of the subject from the publication of *Antiquities of Athens* in 1787 until the present day. Napoleon in Italy and Egypt was the means of removing a vast number of priceless relics of the ancient world to adorn the Musée Napoleon in Paris at the beginning of last century. During the three first years of last century, too, Lord Elgin was working at Athens in the ingathering of his magnificent collection. Excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii went on intermittently. Layard was unveiling ancient Nineveh in 1845–47. The discovery in 1872 and onward on the site of ancient Nineveh of a tablet recording the Deluge, and the seven Creation tablets, was an epoch-making one. Schliemann began to interest himself in the Homeric sites in 1868, and by 1890 his great work was accomplished. Italy, Greece, Crete, Egypt, Asia Minor, Palestine, and the East generally have all been laid under contribution, and added to the world's stock of knowledge regarding the past.

We are reminded that it is now less possible, if not impossible, to remove famous works of art from their place of discovery. Professor Gardner says all that the Western nations are now allowed to gain by work in the East is knowledge. In this scientific age of discovery, the places and circumstances of finding are recorded with great exactness. Since 1875 the share of Britain in the work of discovery has diminished, while that of France and Germany has increased. The opinion is expressed that the circumstances of the time may have justified the removal to London of the remains of Phigaleia and Halicarnassus, and that Lord Elgin by removing the sculpture of the Parthenon may have rescued 'what was really the property of the civilised world from certain injury and probable destruction.' Between 1800 and 1875 a wealth of objects of art flowed from the East to the British Museum, and to museums on

the Continent. Now the finds of the excavations at Olympia, the Acropolis at Athens, Delphi, and Delos must remain in Greece.

An example of the value and usefulness of a good copy from the antique is that of the Portland Vase which is still made by the Wedgwoods at Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, at prices ranging from eight to forty guineas. Original copies of the vase as turned out in Josiah Wedgwood's time, to the number of thirteen, have been located. Twenty-four good copies were disposed of to the first subscribers for fifty pounds each. One of these changed hands in 1902 for three hundred and ninety-nine pounds. There are copies of the original at Rome, Dresden, Liverpool, and Edinburgh. Lord Tweedmouth possesses two copies, Sir George Darwin one, and there are two in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Barberini Vase from which these were modelled was discovered after 1623 in a tomb three miles from Rome, on the road to Frascati. Sir W. Hamilton purchased the vase from the Barberini family, and afterwards disposed of it to the Duchess of Portland. The Duke of Portland placed the vase in the hands of Josiah Wedgwood on hearing that the great potter wished to copy it. There exist at Etruria some six hundred of his 'trials' before success was reached—a tribute to his ability and perseverance. Henry Webber was chosen to model the relief which surrounds the vase; the shades of colour were more difficult to achieve.

From 1770 and onwards some extraordinary finds were made in the neighbourhood of Rome by a company of Scotsmen. Gavin Hamilton, a native of Lanark, painter and explorer of the Campagna, had as partners in his excavations James Byres, architect, and Thomas Jenkins, banker. The place of Byres was afterwards taken by Robert Fagin, English Consul at Rome. Some of the marbles found could only be removed by bribing the Pope's officials, while others were clandestinely smuggled to Britain. In 1772 Hamilton sent off without a license a head of Antinous in the character of Bacchus. The rich finds made at Pantanello were mostly purchased by Lord Shelburne for his gallery at Lansdowne House. This search, up to the knees in stinking mud full of toads and serpents, was in the first instance a disappointment, as some one had been before them. Hamilton wrote to Townley regarding his luck in a fresh spot: 'It is difficult to account for the contents of this place, which consisted of a vast number of trees, cut down and thrown into this hole, probably from despite, as being some sacred grove, intermixed with statues.' Here more than fifty-seven pieces of sculpture were found in a greater or less degree of preservation. Near the ninth milestone on the Appian Way was found (1771) the Marcus Aurelius now at Shelburne House. The Meleager, the gem of this collection, and one of the finest statues in England, was another great discovery. Then we hear of a draped Venus, an Amazon, a sitting faun, and other valuable finds. The ruins of Gabii, called the Oxford of prehistoric times, yielded eleven statues of mythological subjects, twenty-four statues or busts of historical personages (including Alexander the Great, Germanicus, and Claudius), seven pedestals with eulogistic inscriptions, mosaic pavements, coins, pottery, glassware, and bronzes. When the Borghese Museum was removed to Paris by the first Napoleon, an indemnity of fifteen million francs was promised to Prince Borghese. At the fall of the French Empire the greater part of this sum was still unpaid.

Lanciani, in his *New Tales of Old Rome*, relates how the memorial church raised by Constantine over the grave of the Apostle Paul was too small and inadequate for the accommodation of pilgrims who flocked to it from all parts of the world. Its pavement is said to have been patched with nearly one thousand inscriptions stolen from Christian and heathen cemeteries. After Paul's execution at Aquæ Salviæ on the Via Laurentia, June 29, 67 or 68 A.D., his body is said to have been laid at the back of the apse of the present church of San Paulo in Rome, on the east side of the Via Ostiensis, where the sandstone cliffs rise above the valley of the Tiber. The remains rested until the persecution under Valerian, and after their temporary removal were brought back to the rock-cut tomb of Lucina. Constantine had the grave encased in a strong-room, or *cella*, made of solid sheets of bronze. This metal casing may have been used because of the damp situation and overflow of the Tiber. The marble casing of the grave was seen for the first time in 1838, after the fire of 1823 which destroyed the church. A marble floor was discovered on which, in large letters of the time of Constantine, was engraved the inscription, 'PAVLO APOSTOLO MART(*yri*).' By lowering himself on his hands and knees, Lanciani saw the inscription in 1891. The slabs over the grave seemed most negligently placed, and the last three letters of 'Martyri' were missing. Lanciani believes the grave has come down to us, though the Saracens in 846 damaged the marble casing, as left by Constantine in a metal case. As to the nature of the grave itself we are never likely to have our curiosity gratified. No visitor to the church of San Paulo, restored with such magnificence, can fail to be impressed. The Protestant cemetery with the dust of Keats and so many British celebrities is not far distant.

The story of the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum is well known, but a few points will bear repetition. Lord Elgin in 1799 was British Ambassador to Constantinople, and his friend, Thomas Harrison the architect, aroused by the study of *Antiquities of Athens* and *Antiquities of Ionia*, asked him to take plaster casts of certain sculptures. By 1801, after considerable difficulty, access was gained to the Acropolis. The next proceeding was that some three hundred or four hundred workmen were occupied for a year carrying off the decorative sculpture of the Parthenon. On Elgin's recall in 1803, his agent attended to the despatch of two

hundred cases; but disaster overtook the cargoes, and also Lord Elgin, who was taken prisoner by the French on his way home, and unlawfully kept in prison for three years. On his release in 1806 he had to seek his precious cargoes in many Mediterranean ports to which they had been carried. The brig *Mentor* had been wrecked off Cape Malea, and it took divers three years to recover all the sunken treasures. Some, with the agent Lusieri, were captured by the French and taken to Piræus. Not till 1812 was Lusieri able to despatch eighty cases. When these marbles were exhibited publicly, amongst the few who grasped their significance were Wilkie and Haydon the artists; Richard Payne Knight condemned them. Canova's vindication silenced opposition. At length, in 1816, they became the property of the nation for thirty-five thousand pounds, a sum which scarcely reimbursed Lord Elgin for half the loss he had sustained in bringing them to England. Haydon writes in his autobiography: 'I shall never forget the horses' heads—the feet in the metopes! I felt as if a divine truth had blazed inwardly upon my mind, and I knew that they would at last rouse the art of Europe from its slumbers in the darkness. I consider truly that it is the greatest blessing that ever happened to this country, their being brought here.' The Elgin Marbles then took their permanent place in the British Museum, and their fame soon spread. 'Never,' said De Quincey, 'have I seen anything of its kind so alive as the horse's head. It ceases to be sculpture; the mouth neighs, the marble lives, one thinks one sees it move.' Taste became completely revolutionised, and the history of art found for ever the correct standard of the main proportions by the agency of a collection which came near to being lost to this country.

The expeditions to Russia, to Delos, to Olympia, to Delphi, are described by Michaelis, and the labours of Lepsius in Egypt and of Layard in Assyria are chronicled; and of the operations of Charles Fellows in Lycia (1842) we are given this account by Admiral Spratt: 'Whilst we were there, these sculptures were daily dug out of the earth and brought once more to view. The search for them was intensely exciting, and in the enthusiasm of the moment our admiration of their art was perhaps a little beyond their merits. As each block of marble was uncovered, and the earth carefully brushed away from its surface, the form of some fair Amazon or stricken warrior, or an Eastern king or a besieged castle, became revealed, and gave rise to many a pleasant discussion as to the sculptor's art therein displayed or the story in the history of the ancient Xanthians represented. Often, after the work of the day was over and the night had clouded in, when we had gathered round the log-fire in the comfortable Turkish cottage which formed the headquarters of the party, we were accustomed to sally forth, torch in hand, Charles Fellows as cicerone, to cast a midnight look of admiration on some spirited battle-scene or headless Venus, which had been the great prize of the morning's work.' The practical result of the expedition was eighty-six cases of statuary, sent with great difficulty to the coast *en route* for London on a warship. Fellows later on removed a tomb and several friezes, among which was one giving a vivid representation of cock-fights in a poultry-yard.

The romance of the unveiling of ancient Troy is worth an article to itself. Heinrich Schliemann in 1836, at the age of fourteen, was an apprentice shopkeeper; at the age of twenty-seven he was a merchant in St Petersburg. It was in 1868 that he made his first journey to the Homeric sites, and for the remainder of his life he kept true to his ideal. He began work at Troy in 1871, at Mycenæ in 1874; he again explored Troy in 1878, Orchomenos in 1880, Tiryns in 1884, and Troy again in 1890. He spent yearly five thousand pounds on his excavations, and the result, says Michaelis, 'was nothing less than the recovery of a lost world, underlying what till then was known, one may say, as the world of Homer, although not in so literal and narrow a sense as Schliemann understood it. For this undeniable and inestimable gain science must always remain most grateful, and the Homeric world will ever be associated with his name and that of the noble Greek woman, his wife, who shared all his labours and cares, as well as his success and his fame.'

It seems hardly fair only to bring in the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum at the close, but these are fairly well known. A book has been written by Miss Ethel Ross Barker, *Buried Herculaneum* (A. & C. Black), in which the complete history of the excavations may be gleaned, helped by nine plans, with sixty-four beautiful illustrations, and a complete bibliography. It is a pleasure to refer to the book. It describes the buildings as they once were, stripped of their treasure, left in ruin, and reburied, and connects with the buildings as they originally stood the bronzes and marbles in the museum at Naples. During a century of work, fifty large statues have been found entire, and as many busts and innumerable other relics, in the town where the rich Romans at the end of the Republic loved to spend their leisure. It was beautiful with columned porticoes, stately buildings, public baths, a basilica, and temples. Overtaken by disaster in an earthquake of A.D. 63 and the great eruption of 79, so graphically described by Pliny the Younger, it has never been disclosed like Pompeii. Six eruptions converted the original mud-stream into a compact mass of rock known as tufa, varying in depth from sixty to one hundred feet. There was a fresh eruption in April 1905. The two straggling little towns of Portici and Resina have grown up over Herculaneum, which lies four miles south-east of Naples, on the main road to Pompeii. For one person who visits Herculaneum twenty visit Pompeii. Of great public buildings nothing is to be seen save the half-buried portion of the theatre.

Professor Waldstein, in his *Herculaneum, Past, Present, and Future*, suggests an international commission to collect funds to explore the buried city as thoroughly as Pompeii. The Italian Government has deferred to the wishes of Italian scholars that the work be done by Italy, in which case it may drag on throughout the present century.

Previous excavations at Herculaneum were carried on intermittently from 1709 to 1876, and the statues and busts found are by far the most important and interesting in the great museum at Naples. They supply types, either originals or copies, of works of art from the sixth century B.C. in an unbroken series down to almost the end of the first century of the Christian era. The art relics include some of the finest bronze statues in the world: the statues of Æschines, Agrippina, the Sleeping Faun, the Six Actresses, Mercury, the group of the Satyr and the Goat, the busts of Plato, Scipio Africanus, Augustus, Seneca, Demosthenes. The paintings on the walls included Perseus and Andromeda, Diana and Endymion, the Education of Bacchus, and the celebrated Aldobrandine Wedding. The bronzes were of particular interest; and never before have the houses of the ancients and their utensils been so clearly brought to light. A bronze horse has been compared in beauty with the horses of St Mark's in Venice.

In what is known as the house of the papyri, or Villa Suburbana, was found, besides bronzes and statuettes, a collection of one thousand eight hundred and six rolls of papyri resembling lumps of charcoal, which when ingeniously unrolled and examined were found to be of great interest, though of no great literary value. The library, which may have consisted of eight hundred volumes, mostly in Greek, had three copies of Epicurus on *Nature* in thirty-seven books. Some eighty thousand pounds have been spent on the labours of Italian workmen and scholars in their unrolling and decipherment. This was no easy matter. Twenty-three wooden tablets smeared with wax for inscribing with a stylus broke and crumbled at the first touch. Reed pens were also found, and a kitchen stove shaped like a fortress, with towers at the angles, and provided with spits and taps for supply of hot water. There were colanders; a flat, round cake like sponge-cake burnt to a cinder; and blackened fruits and nuts, soap, honey, vinegar, remains of shellfish, and ground colours for painting. The frescoes found are similar to those at Pompeii, though superior in execution.

The British Ancient Monuments Bill works in the direction of conserving our own historic monuments and ruins, while the opening of the twentieth century finds us in possession of much carefully sifted evidence regarding Roman remains in our own country, as well as the 'grassy barrows of the happier dead' and thousands of prehistoric remains.

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# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

## CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

THEY went forward on a path little better than a goat-track, the hills crowding down from every quarter to it, all about them a growing sound of running water. It was evidently a 'kenned corner' to Murdo and his man, for they strode on surely and quickly (always with a wary civility to their prisoner) round big boulders, through little, brawling streams, over tangles of snow-strewn brambles and dead heather, in a gradual descent until, at the crook of an elbow in the path, the mingled hiss and boom of a cascade fell on Errachdale's ear. In front of them rose a black-a-vised, abrupt rock veiled by the brown, moving streak of the Dunerrach burn falling over it, the hills slanting sharply from the top of the fall to right and left. Seen from a distance they threw against the sky the perfectly **V**-shaped cleft named by the country-folk the Nick o' Dunerrach. Against the rock, not ten yards from the full basin of the fall, a boulder crouched.

The Hill-Fox led the way, and put his broad shoulder to it, giving the big lump of rock a sharp push. It swung half-round astonishingly easily on a natural pivot, disclosing a cavity of about three feet high.

'Stable the mare, and tether her,' said Murdo.

The silent Neil did as he was bid, and returned.

Murdo pointed to the entrance, and Neil lowered his tall height and crept in.

'Follow,' said Murdo, pistol in hand; 'we're hame.'

The prisoner hesitated a moment, but there was nothing for it. He disappeared through the dark entrance, Murdo crawling after him, and as they groped their way along, the boulder closed again on the three men with a crunch. Darkness for half a dozen yards, then the hoarse call of the cascade sounding fainter and fainter as they crept in a half light along the narrow, rock-bordered gullet. A red slit of light appeared, broadening out into a natural doorway, and Errachdale, following Neil through it, found himself standing in a natural chamber in the rock. The air was heavy from the peat-reek of a large fire blazing in the far corner. A warm, pungent smell filled the cave, an aromatic, heavy *olla-podrida* of malt, tobacco, yeast, cooking, smoke, alcohol, and peat, peculiar, indescribable, but not unpleasant.

In one corner stood a rude kiln. A quantity of ground malt lay near it, and over another peat-fire a boiler swung. A primitive pipe ran from the

boiler to another vessel, and from it the 'wash' was run to an uncouth pot-still, thence to a tub holding a tin spiral tube—the 'worm'—where the vapour was condensed and run off in a clear, potent liquid, the 'barley bree.' For the cave was a 'sma' still,' a manufactory of 'crooked' whisky, and then one of the most cunning and secret ambushes of the 'Free Traders' in the North; for its situation satisfied the smugglers in two vital matters—it was out of the wind, and the risk of detection through the smell of the malt or the smoke was minimised. Further, the peat-reek was cleverly run to the burn and mixed with the spray of the linn.

Utensils lay scattered around in disorder. Fir-roots for lighting and couches of spruce-branches filled the corners. Fowling-pieces and hangers stood within easy reach, and a deer newly killed swung from a hook near the entrance. All the implements were home-made and rough. The place looked the acme of discomfort and confusion, and the inmates sordid knaves. In truth, the smuggler of romance was rarely met in real life. Like Fenimore Cooper's noble Red man, he generally turned out to be on close inspection a frowsy, commonplace rascal.

But although these haunts were disappointing, even mean, in their aspects, yet some of the old sma' stills were the humble heralds of modern flotations, and an orthodox distillery (the overdriven wild horses of convention cannot drag forth its name) to-day bechimneys the landscape and befouls the burn close to the site of the thief's old lair.

Errachdale looked around him. Two tattered ruffians were lolling at the fire, one of them dealing a greasy pack of cards. They rose heavily as the travellers entered, and peered at Errachdale through the peat-reek. Their unkempt black hair, their half-suspicious, cunning, stolen looks, their stooping lankness, instantly reminded him of a couple of hungry crows.

On a ledge in the rock a figure lay stretched, the body of a man who had been hit in the Dava affair.

Murdo pointed to it. Dead? the gesture asked, though the answer was certain.

'Dead this mornin',' rasped out one of the crows.

'Ay, ay!' said Murdo, and leaned over, looking at the dead face; and again, 'Ay, ay!' and turned towards the two men again. 'This gentleman'—indicating Errachdale—'has been travellin' and lost his way. You'll see that he comes to no harm,' Murdo said smoothly; but his eye added, as though the words had been shouted to them, 'or—so much the worse for you, my men!'

His hold on his gang owed nothing to loyalty, gratitude, sentiment, to any of the higher human emotions. They chose a leader of the pack grimly, as wolves do, to save their skins before a common menace; through self-interest, cunning, and in a measure the strange mixture of cowardice and self-control, the acknowledgment of the sense of government, the recognition of a force-centre, and the spell of sheer character that influences alike wolves and sheep and men.

Their leader motioned Errachdale to a seat by the fire, taking the other three men aside, and a buzz of whispered conversation arose. Angry mutterings and grumbles came from the two shock-heads, Murdo's voice now and then rising, Neil's laconic grunt punctuating the hum of the talk. At last Murdo turned on his heel.

'No more! Get your bonnets and start before it's dark,' he finally rapped out; and the two men disappeared sulkily into the rock-corridor at the cave's mouth.

'They're like to grumble at a nicht or twa's "runnin'" whisky in coorse weather like this, although siller's scarce!' he snorted contemptuously. 'Snorin' at the fire, or birlin' the cartes, or fuddlin' at the speerits is mair to their minds. Deil kens they hadna my last week or twa in the open. They micht girn at the weather wi' some justice then. . . . And now, sir, there's nane to hear oor sma' bit o' business but oorselves. Truth to tell, I sent the others off on purpose, for I trust nane o' they, bar Neil here, and him only because he's half-witted. If there was a bawbee or twa to be made they would gralloch me like a deer; but fine they ken that I'll no gi'e them the chance, and they daurna tak' it. They're lousy brocks frae Glenlivet, wi' hearts the size o' split-peas. It's a true sayin' that in the hand o' a coward a knife and a kail-runt are alike!'

Errachdale listened in cold impatience. Here he was, a prisoner not by force of arms indeed, but caught in a miserable trap, and his captor glibly haranguing on cowardice and the survival of the fittest. How long was he to be at these knaves' mercy? When would he reach home or see his wife and child? There seemed no way of escape possible. Through the crevice he saw the afternoon light waning. Murdo threw some fir-roots on the fire, and in their flickering light the cave was peopled with uneasy shadows. Errachdale sat silently watching them, mortified beyond measure at his plight. The whole brazen business maddened him.

'I suppose,' he said at length—'I suppose the King's Writ runs even north of the Highland line?'

'Whiles. Whiles it crawls. On this parteeclar occasion I think it maun crawl,' retorted the other composedly.

'But in the long-run?' asked his prisoner.

The Hill-Fox looked at him.

'I tak' your meanin'. We had better understand each ither. In the lang-run, as ye say, I'm in danger o' losin' something that I'm sair wantin' to keep.'

'And that is?'

Without removing his pipe from his mouth, Murdo went neatly through a gruesome pantomime of tying a knot under his left ear and pulling it tight.

'My neck,' he said, and puffed meditatively at his pipe. 'My ain neck. Mair than that needna, I

think, concern you, but ye see that in the lang-run the outcome o' this chance meetin' wi' you makes little odds. If I'm laid by the heels I'll never see anither Christmas on this side o' the heather! I've a wife and bairns,' he lied, with a manly emotion in his voice; 'and I'd as lief let them ha'e the streikin' o' me as the hangman in Inverness. However, I tell you fair, first, that I mean nae skaith to ye. Siller and no bluidshed is what I want. And, second, that ye'll be kept here till I get siller. I have a trusty lad in Neil here. His want o' wits mak's him honest. And we are within a messenger's cry o' the Tower. It may tak' him half a day to get there in this weather and see the leddy, and another half-day to come back here wi' the siller. Ye see?'

The prisoner lowered his brows angrily. Here was the prospect of vulgar extortion, of interminable negotiations, no doubt, and more than a risk of a knife from some of the gang.

'I hold His Majesty's commission, and I tell you plainly that I shall have no hand in defeating what I doubt not are the ends of justice.'

The other shrugged his shoulders.

'I'm thinkin' less o' the ends o' justice and mair o' the ends o' a tow cravat than I can richtly explain to ye. Come! A bargain's a bargain! I maun ha'e three days' fair start. If no, I dinna answer for your safety. But my bargain to you is, that ye'll be set free unharmed on the road to the Tower four days after I get in my hand—ten sovereigns!'

Ten sovereigns! Errachdale nearly smiled at the anti-climax. He had expected some shark's claim, some ransom scaled to his means, and here was a paltry demand, ludicrously overbalanced by the threat. The man was a very pinchbeck brigand, or he was telling the truth for once in his desperate straits for money, he thought, as he pretended to take time to consider the proposal. But Murdo, although unused to dealing in large sums, had deliberately put his demand modestly. With all his assumed cool speech and airs, the man's nerves were drawn through his fortnight of hide-and-seek with the law. His self-possession had become so much veneering. He knew that a larger sum might be forthcoming, but that might spell difficulty or delay, and delay might spell capture, and capture spelled hanging. His one thought now was to get enough money to see him west to Arisaig. He shot an eager, almost desperate glance at his prisoner's face.

'It is a bargain,' said Errachdale, after a show of hesitation.

'A fair bargain, and I'll stick to it. Just now I'll have to trouble ye for the belongings ye have,' said Murdo; and Errachdale without further ado handed him a couple of sovereigns, some loose silver, and his gold signet-ring.

Neil heard the clink of the money passing, and watched the two men with covert looks. There was an odd dilation in his eye, an answering gleam to the yellow of the coins. He stood still, with his silly smile, gulping in his throat, fumbling at his gauds with twitching, wandering fingers, sending his eyes scouting from the floor to the roof, and hastily withdrawing them again back to the coins.

'Ye're welcome to bite and sup now,' quoth Murdo, pocketing the sovereigns and the ring. He threw a 'Haste ye!' to Neil, and his lieutenant's eyes flew back to their docile lack-lustre.

'Ye'll forgi'e the liberty, but the deer was "lifted" off your ain ground,' quoth Murdo with a grin as they sat down.

It was long since the morning's breakfast at the Buck Inn, and Errachdale was sharp-set. In after-years he often thought that never was venison more toothsome than the steak poached from his own forest, washed down by a fiery draught of 'crooked' whisky, eaten at a peat-fire by the blinking light of fir-torches, the servitor in mean rags, and his host a confessed and hunted gallows-bird.

After the meal Murdo went out of the cave, and Errachdale heard the crunch of the rock at the outer door. The waterfall called suddenly as the entrance was opened, and sank again to a muffled drone as the rock closed and his captor re-entered.

'A black nicht, and the snaw on again,' he said. 'I've gi'en the mare a feed.—Neil, ye'll waken me at the keek o' day for your orders and the road to the Tower.'—He pointed to a couch of spruce-branches and bracken near the fire. 'Ye're as safe sleepin' there as in the castle o' Edinburgh, sir!'

Then he drew another rude shake-down across the doorway and lay down on it, putting the pistols under his head, Neil curling up in a corner with the inconsequence of a dog.

Errachdale's impotent anger during the long day had kept him brisk and awake, but now its edge had dulled somewhat under the Hill-Fox's rough hospitality and a certain amount of pity for the man's plight, whatever it was. An invincible languor stole over him. The fire danced up and down in fitful jerks. His head dropped, rousing him; but leaden fingers lay on his eyes. He watched the glow of the peats and the swollen shadows from the corners of the cave moving on the dead man's face. The three stretched figures, the lisping flames, the deer's antlers, swam slowly around him, then back again, stopped suddenly, then circled again, fast losing shape and form, and vanished. The rumble of the burn became a far-off murmur, and ceased. A confused, misty panorama of half-awake thoughts and memories zigzagged across his brain—camp-fires, British bayonets sparkling through the gray-green olives, the clash of arms in the Peninsula, the wild night in the Glen, his wife's face, and then snow—snow—snow.

The first streamer of light in the east stealing through a crevice of the cave saw the strange quartette: the figure clothed with the still dignity of death, and round him the other three, captors and prisoner, in the kind, equal sleep that comes open-armed to all worn-out men.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE earth has only two Poles. One is the North Pole and the other is the South Pole, and until recently neither of them had ever been reached by living man, despite numerous attempts to do so, voyages and journeys attended by displays of courage and the most exciting adventures. The North Pole at last was gained by an American explorer, and thus the new country of the West has for all time the honour and high distinction that comes from this achievement. So only the South Pole is left, and it is a considerable question of the moment as to whether that shall not be taken to the account and credit of the nation that has done not less in exploration nor bred men less capable for it than any other. The most serious attempt to gain the South Pole for Britain is now beginning to be made. Such a one has been made before, but this is the best, most thorough in every respect, and the most likely of success of all. At this present moment the *Terra Nova*—steam-yacht as it has come to be called by grace of the Royal Yacht Squadron, to the valuable privileges of which it, with its master, was by compliment elected—is down somewhere in the South Seas, in the neighbourhood of Australia or New Zealand, getting ready for the time fast approaching when she will slip away from all inhabited land and dive deep down into the Antarctic to that icy headquarters where other Antarctic ships have been before her, and whence her landing-parties will travel on foot by the straightest line they may towards the Pole itself, some seven or eight hundred miles distant. This is the expedition of which Captain Robert F. Scott is in command, as he was in command of the first expedition of the modern era some few years ago, his ship then being the specially and very wonderfully built *Discovery*, which is now in the service of the Hudson Bay Company. It happens that the present writer has some personal and intimate knowledge both of the new ship and her affairs, and of her gallant commander, and it may be well at this moment to convey an impression of what this expedition really is, for it is not like others that have gone before it. There is its commander. He is of a somewhat different type from that to which belongs the majority of the men who have led expeditions towards the Poles in recent times. He is the thoroughly practical, courageous explorer, as all must be; but he is one of finer sentiment than most others, one in whom are fast set the traditions of the old explorers on the one hand, and those of the naval service to which he belongs on the other. He is just the kind of man that we have among our ideals as that of the great explorer; and, clean shaven, with a fine formation of strong feature, mouth and chin that tell of determination, and blue eyes of a great penetration, we seem to see what he is at a glance without further inquiry. And, as are all the best of his kind, he is a silent, reserved man, who thinks much but gives little speech to his thoughts. After his first great expedition to the South, when 'farthest south' was reached, he came back home and went quietly back to the navy, where, until the time came when he determined upon this new expedition, he commanded battleships and cruisers. Silent, reserved, even stern as he is, he possesses the deep affection of all who are associated with him in this enterprise, and perhaps that is because of the great humaneness there is in him after all, as there should be with men who do these things. His book, *The Voyage of the 'Discovery,'* is in many respects the finest work of its kind that has ever been given to the world; and one of the reasons for that is that amidst all the plain records of sailing, sledging, penetrating, organising, discovery, adventure, and everything else, the human man, with all his hopes and sentiments, fears and ambitions, is peeping out all the time. He and his men and ship were in no very safe situation, it was not by any means a certainty that they would ever see home again, when in January 1904 the two


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relief-vessels sent out in feverish haste to them by the Admiralty came in sight. That night Captain Scott wrote in his diary: 'I can only record that, in spite of the good home-news, and in spite of the pleasure of seeing old friends again, I was happier last night than I am to-night.' For one thing, as we could see, he did not like the idea of being assisted out of his difficulties. He thought they could have got out of them without any external aid. Anyhow, he wished they had been left to the attempt.

* * *

However, all that is the expedition of the past, and this new one is a greater thing. It will cost from beginning to end not more than fifty thousand pounds, which is only about one-half of the expenditure that was made on the other one; but in every respect it will be far better fitted. This time the commander has the confidence and the courage to dispense altogether with relief-ships. The *Terra Nova* has cost him not much more than twelve thousand pounds, and she is the ideal ship for the purpose—an old whaler that has been through the kind of thing many a time that she has now to go through again. She was, indeed, one of his old relief-ships, and when first he saw her he marked her for his future service. When she came into the Thames from her whaling off the shores of Newfoundland, to be got ready for her trip to the Far South, she was not a pretty thing to look at, but ship-carpenters and soap and paint have made her as nice as any. She will have some fifty souls on board of her, including officers, men, and scientists. Captain Scott's second in command is Lieutenant E. R. G. Evans, who went out to him in the first relief-ship, the *Morning*, and he has others among his company who have served with him before; while most of his men have been chosen from the navy by special permission of the Admiralty, who have granted him many great privileges, such is the official regard for and appreciation of him. They are on full-pay, having been gazetted by the Admiralty to the imaginary H.M.S. *President*, and so they and the officers will wear naval uniform through it all, and naval discipline will be observed. The scientists are ten in number, and are all highly qualified specialists; and when it is said that previous expeditions have not carried more than two or three, the exceptional strength of this one may be in some measure realised. The plans of the expedition may be stated very briefly. The ultimate and superior object is, of course, to reach the Pole itself, and there is very good reason to believe that it will be achieved. Late this year the *Terra Nova* will leave New Zealand for the Antarctic regions, and will make her headquarters at a point which is most favoured for this purpose, and beyond which she can go no farther. This, as has already been said, is about seven or eight hundred miles from the Pole, and thence the remainder of the journey has to be traversed on foot, with sledges. Some time after the ship is anchored a selected party will begin this land-journey, and little by little it will be thinned down until only three or four men will be left for the 'final dash,' which will be made with the help of motor-sledges. If all goes well the Pole may be reached about a year next Christmas, and the news of the achievement would then reach us at home some time in the following April. This kind of work cannot be done in the Antarctic all the year round, but only in the special season corresponding to our winter; and if the first attempt should fail, the expedition will remain out there, and make another one in the following year. It is what is called a two-seasons expedition. British explorers have already penetrated to within about a hundred miles of the Pole; but that fact in itself does not make the work of new expeditions any easier, except in so far that they know beforehand what is possible and what may not be. Captain Scott will proceed in much the same direction as he did before; and it is believed, for what such belief is worth, that no insuperable difficulties will be encountered. Apart from this, some other work of exploration and investigation in the Antarctic regions will be undertaken; and, though it is difficult to explain to those who have no knowledge of these things, it cannot be doubted that the expedition will be of great scientific and commercial good. The popular idea of the polar regions, and particularly of the south polar regions, is that they are all snow and ice, and are quite uninhabitable, the waste of the world, fit only for complete neglect; but that idea is partly wrong. There are, for instance, large tracts of bare land, and it has been established that they contain great mineral wealth. The climate is severe, and the conditions such as men have not yet trained themselves to; but as Captain Scott himself, and others who know of these things, have asked, who is to say that in these days when this humanity seems capable of anything, human industry is impossible there? The time may yet come when the Scott expedition of 1910 will be regarded as the beginning of the new era of Antarctic exploitation. One who knows the commander very intimately says that his first thought is to take the British flag to places where no flag has ever been before; his second is to make his voyage of substantial scientific and commercial good to the civilised races in general; and his last, far removed, but still not so far for him to be insensible to matters of personal pride, is to gain a unique and lasting distinction for himself and those who are associated with him. I have written at length and with some earnestness on this topic because a combination of circumstances has tended to make it bulk rather less in seeming importance and interest than it should have done. This is not to say that a vast interest has not been taken in it; but it is not clearly understood that it is in practically every respect the most important exploring expedition, the one most pregnant with

big consequence, that has ever left the shores of Britain. And the wish of the people at home will be that God and good luck may attend it.

* * *

The Germans are upon us! But it is a peaceful, a harmless invasion, one that for the little that it is worth may be of some trifling assistance to us. During the holiday season that is now opening before us it is more than a little likely that we shall have these German cousins of ours—as we call them during the intervals when the public mind is less agitated than usual by considerations of Dreadnoughts—visiting us in considerable numbers, spending some play-time among us in a way and to an extent that they have never done before. We shall see many of them at Brighton and at Margate. For sure there will be parties of them to be discovered in skiffs up the sunny and shady reaches of the river Thames, although one does not easily imagine the thick son of the Fatherland being so blithe and active, and clad in white ducks, as is customary and proper with those who do this summer boating on the stream where it may best be done; nor does in our fancy the *frau* and the *fräulein*, women of all the most superior virtues as they are, seem to recline so daintily and prettily in the stern as does our English girl, or hold the rudder-strings with such a grace. But that may be peevish jealousy of the fancy. These Germans in goodly companies will walk along the front at Blackpool, and get experience of all the sights at that wonderful show-place of the seaside; and they will come down upon Llandudno, which is being called the Naples of the north, and will do their climbing up and round the Great Orme's Head. You shall see them walk along Princes Street in Edinburgh—strange contrast between the German and the Scotsman!—and they will swarm through the Trossachs and sit beside Loch Lomond. Be sure, also, they will stride their way down Sackville Street in Dublin, and come to a determination upon the scenic and other merits of the Giants' Causeway in the north of Ireland and the Lakes of Killarney in the south of it. All this will the Germans do in this late summer and early autumn season, and all the time there will be many of them in all the streets and all the public buildings of our great London—champion show-place of the world as still it is—wandering about with guide-books in their hands, gulping down great draughts of English history, learning the facts of our art and science, and, with that indefatigable eye to business which the Germans always hold wide open, making some close examination of our manufacturing and commercial ways. Yes, in the midst of their holidays these Germans will be thinking of their business and their work. They will not be like other visitors among us. Slow in manner, solemn of feature, quiet, contemplative, uncommunicative, searching, as they are, we shall know them without question whenever they are seen. Let us thank them and be kind to them, and it is the easier to do for the fact that the Kaiser of the tremendous personality, in his recent visit to this country on an occasion of deep melancholy, did no little to move our public feeling more forward towards favour to Germany than it has been for a long time.

* * *

The simple fact is that our German cousin is by way of becoming a tourist. We must note this specially now. It is a circumstance that dates particularly from this year. The idea of becoming a tourist like the Englishman has been growing upon him for a little while past, and we have in different seasons noticed Germans at many foreign places where they had hardly ever been seen before. But it was not until the beginning of this year that anything in the nature of a concerted movement to foreign parts seemed to be made. In January, February, and March the Germans thronged the French Riviera as they had never done before. It was said there were five times as many of them at Nice as there had been in previous seasons; and when the English or the French sat down to dinner together they would generally remark in opening conversation—the weather not being of sufficient variety to be an interesting topic out there at that time—that it was quite remarkable what a number of Germans there were about, and some time later an observation might be carefully made that perhaps it was not an unmixed blessing. It is in this way. The Germans, as we know, are a very earnest, serious, hard-working, and thrifty people. Hitherto it has been work and work with them, and nothing but their work—save some thoughts of war. But as the result of their extensive and continued labours, there have come prosperity and riches; and, not being by nature misers entirely, they have looked around them and considered how they might gain some material satisfaction from their money, how they might make their lives a little the more worth the living than they had been. So far they had taken few holidays, and they had for the most part been taken quietly and most inexpensively at home. Now, their thoughts for some time past having been led towards battleships, colonies, and Britain and British ways, their eyes have gazed beyond the Fatherland, and they have come to the decision that they will take some holidays abroad, even as the British do. Yes, they will be as the British. It is just as the result of these considerations and thoughts and determinations that the Riviera was thronged with the Germans last winter as it was never thronged before, and that our English and Scottish resorts will have their abundant company in this present holiday season. One fears that, to begin with at all events, the German will not be a very popular tourist among other tourists, or among the people of the lands he visits. He was not so on the Riviera. He has all the faults of newness, rawness, and inexperience. He has not developed that

ease of manner and that peculiar courtesy which is so suave and yet so firm in its maintenance of personal dignity, privilege, and right, as come only from much travelling in many places and among many people. Of course he is hardly to be blamed for this. The British tourist was nearly as bad when he first began the game some twenty or thirty years ago, and without a doubt the German will improve in time when he sees better how things should be done, and especially when he realises more how it is to his comfort and advantage to do them in that way. But it must be confessed that the raw material of the German tourist is not of the most promising kind. It is often said that the British and the Americans, when they go abroad, are very self-assertive in their manner, too much so for the satisfaction and complete comfort of other people. Yet the Germans abroad are the most self-assertive of all people. They are Germans, they seem to tell you, and they do not care; if you do not like them you need have nothing to do with them—it is immaterial. They pay their money, and they will do as they please. That seems to be the unspoken—and yet not always unspoken either—spirit of their travelling. Some of their manners and customs make offence against rules of good taste that have become well established with other people. Thus, on the Riviera in the winter in the restaurants of even the best hotels at dinner-time, when all others were in evening-dress, when the ladies wore elaborate gowns, and all about there was an atmosphere of elegance and charm, you would find certain of these Germans enter in rough and not always very clean clothes, and perchance in dusty brown boots; rich Germans, too, they would be, and not ignorant of the usages of good travelling society. They took credit to themselves on these occasions for their fine independence and for their lofty contempt of some of the daintinesses of civilisation—they, the Germans, the rich, strong Germans, who were advancing so rapidly and building a navy that would master everything. That was the impression that they seemed to convey, and to wish to do so. Perhaps they will see in time, not being devoid of acumen, as we know, that such manners are, in the interests of their own comfort and convenience, a little unwise, and that even Britishers who have similar lofty ideas of simplicity find that it is nicest and best to sacrifice them on these occasions. And another thing that is rather against the Germans, at the beginning of their new experience as tourists abroad, is that they are most unduly parsimonious. These are the days of cheap and economical travelling, and those of the general public who do much of it in the holiday season contrive to do it on an expense that is exceeding small. All praise to them for the circumstance, and that they still do not disregard what they feel to be the necessities of the situation, little as they may like them. But the German cares for nobody. He tells you in every move and every action that he thinks he is the thriftiest of men and the most careful, and that he insists always in getting a hundred pfennigs' worth of value for every mark that he expends. Perhaps he goes back home again with a greater, finer feeling of self-complacency, a stronger satisfaction, than do some of the tourists of other nations. He has probably not had to send home for more money during his absence. More likely he will take a little back with him to be placed to the holiday account of a future season. All this is splendid in its way, and calls for some admiration of our German cousin; but it will not make for his popularity when he is going about abroad. For all these reasons we have a fancy that in his early trips about the English shores, and among the Scottish mountains, and to the Irish lakes, he will not be so popular as some others. These remarks, of course, are by way of generalisation; the writer, on his own part, has met many of the most delightful and best-mannered Germans when travelling abroad. But chiefly they were old hands at going about, and had learnt by experience, as others have done. In time all these new German travellers will learn likewise, and by then they will be everywhere.

* * *

Last year was rich in centenaries, and this year again there have been a few of some special interest and consequence which have been duly honoured by sections of the people who have been particularly concerned with them. Foremost amongst them has been that of Robert Schumann, the great composer, who was born in the June of 1810; but though the centenary of his birth has attracted the lovers and students of music to some special examination of the circumstances of his life and the precise character of his genius and his compositions, one is a little inclined to doubt whether full justice has been done to him, or ever will be. For Schumann was not like other composers, and his work, with all its subtle beauty—yes, its beauties are essentially subtle—is greatly different from any other. We have lately heard it described as being popular, but that is assuredly wrong. Neither in one sense nor the other are the compositions of Schumann popular. Sometimes, frequently, they are on the programmes of concerts in the great halls here in London, along with works of all the other masters, when a varied entertainment is arranged; but somehow Schumann rarely seems to fit in quite happily at such times. Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Tschaikowsky, Chopin—all these are popular, and transcendently great as well as popular; but somehow to the multitude there has appeared to be something in Schumann that has kept them back from him. He is sometimes not easily intelligible; there have been a height and a depth about him to which ordinary musical people could not reach; his magnificence has been admitted, but he has in a manner sometimes been taken for granted. The fact is that Schumann was an artist of a doubly intensified

temperament, and to know anything of the Schumann compositions we must know Schumann the man. He was a born-genius, a prodigy, but more than once he came near to missing the accomplishment of his proper work. When he was only six years old he could play the piano well; a year later he was composing; and when he was ten, people in foreign parts (he was born at Zwickau, in Saxony) had begun to hear of him and his wonderful extemporising. Then for a long time his thoughts and actions turned towards the writing of poetry; but as he grew up, in obedience to the injunctions of his mother, who dreamed of a great lawyer's career for him, he made some show of studying the law. However, before the time came for him to undergo his examination it had become clearly apparent that he would not succeed, and so the law was given up, and he went instead to Leipzig to study the playing of the piano. It is possible, even very likely, that he would have become one of the most accomplished pianists of the time; but he developed the idea, perhaps with good reason, that the third finger of his right hand was too weak for proper execution, and he devised a mechanical appliance for the strengthening of it, which failed so completely that the hand was crippled, and he had to give up altogether his project for becoming a performer. Then he devoted his attention to composition, and incidentally accomplished much excellent work in the way of musical journalism. It is the period when he was more the poet than anything else, however, which is of most significance in any attempt to understand him. To an extent every musician is a poet, but Schumann was more of one than any other. The spirit of romanticism burned hot in him from the earliest times. He was in his teens when he wrote in his diary: 'What I really am I do not know myself quite clearly. Fantasy I believe I possess. A deep thinker I certainly am not, for I can never follow logically the thread which I may have grasped with perfect accuracy at first. Whether or not I am a poet, that the next world must decide.' His father had made excellent translations of Byron and Sir Walter Scott, which the younger Schumann revelled in, and later he made long excursions into classical literature which were not without profit or influence upon his temperament and his ideas. So it came about in time that his poetry filled his music, and gave a rare depth and artistic value to his work; but it is none the less work that needs the refined intelligence for its proper appreciation. The beauty and the art are there in all their splendour; but there is not always the tuneful melody which makes the quick appeal to the people. He virtually created a new style of music, and his work remains the best of the style, for he is the king of the romanticists. Once he wrote a letter to his wife in which he said: 'Romance so lifts my soul that I feel raised to the skies, as though a raindrop were my footstool, and I could look down upon all littleness and all petty woes in life, and let them slide by at will.' And there we have the Schumann. He was the poet-musician, the man of raptures, vast emotions, of a seething and intricate fancy. Professor Hadow made a good expression of his virtue when he said: 'The tunes in a sonata of Mozart are satisfied to be beautiful melodies, and nothing more; no question arises as to their meaning or character. The tunes of Schumann, like the colours of Rossetti, are always trembling on the verge of symbolism.' I have said that, despite much enthusiasm for his work that has been expressed of late in association with this centenary, Schumann is not really so popular as he is made out to be. When another hundred years have gone he will be less popular still; but yet he will be better known and held in higher estimation, and his place among the very greatest may even be higher than it is now. In the meantime, merely arbitrary things as are these so-called centenaries, they serve a most excellent purpose in concentrating attention and study for a while on special subjects; and the notice that has thus been given to Schumann may have an influence, if little, upon the taste and tendencies of the moment.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER LIV.—HOW MAVIE RECEIVED A CHARGE FROM THE DEAD.

'TELL me all you can, Hepsy dear,' said Mavie quietly, for her grief had found its vent on the journey, and her northern nature made for repression. And Hepsy told her, in that tender-toned voice of hers which carried comfort and consolation in every soft inflection.

'She just went like a candle that 's burned to the socket, dearie, and she looked like a lovely angel of God—peaceful and sweet, with a little smile on her lips. No pain at the end, and for herself quite happy to go, but thinking always of you all that remained. She gave me this, that I was to put into your own hands;' and she handed Mavie a letter, sealed, but without superscription, and stole noiselessly out of the room.

And Mavie knelt by her bed and kissed the letter, and then reverently broke the seals and read:

'My Darling,—Your letter brought us great comfort. We rejoice to know that you are free and on your way home. I would have loved to see your dear face once more before I go, but I think it is not to be. And perhaps it is best. Nay, if it

is so, it is best. You will think of me always as you have known me, with no veil between, and that is what I would wish. And, dear, I may not be so far from you as we sometimes think. God in His great mercy may still let me watch over you. That would be my heaven, and I go in hope.

'You do quite right to see our dear John Sax through his illness. He has done well, and would, I doubt not, have given his life for you without hesitation. He is a true man, and comes of true men, and the Lauristons never forget. Give him my dear love and warmest thanks, and tell him I have always felt most perfect trust in him.

'And now, Mavie dear—and this is the point of my writing—I commit to you a most solemn charge: your father. You will have to take my place now and be to him what I have poorly striven to be. There is some great trouble in his life, Mavie—in business matters, I think. But in his love for me, he has done his utmost to shield me from all knowledge of it. Some inkling of it has come to me quite unconsciously on his part, and I know that he is very sorely tried at times. I cannot tell you what it is, for I do not know. If he could have told me he would, for we have always had open minds to one another save only in this matter. I advise you not to inquire, nor to show in any way whatever that anything of the kind is in your mind. If a man like your father hides anything from his dearest ones it is because he believes it right so to do, and it is best left so. But you can do much, dear, in making home what I have tried to make it, with but indifferent success at times, I fear. For there have been times when my bodily weakness has been too great for my best will.

'You will be all in all to him now, Mavie, for Charles, dear lad, must of necessity be much from home. Cleave to him, hearten him, cheer him in every way you can think of; and in time, and in God's good mercy, the cloud, whatever it is, may lift. The times, I know, have been very difficult. They may be more so. Whatever comes, let him feel that you and I have always rendered him fullest and most devoted love and trust.

'God keep you, my darling. My thoughts of you and for you are altogether sweet and hopeful. God bless you! God keep you!—Your loving MOTHER.

'I can foresee that this may come to be a burden to you, dear; but, believe me, you will have your reward.'

She read the letter twice, and then knelt on, with her brow pressed into the bedclothes. When she rose her face was very grave and quiet. She locked up her letter in a very private drawer in her bureau, and rang the bell.

'I am very tired, Hepsy dear. Put me to bed just as you used to do when I was your baby.'

But she lay long awake thinking of her mother and her father, and of the good folks in Sercq, and of John Sax and Charles, and of the old times when they were all children and played Red Indians on Brent-side; and she felt as though all the past was like a leaf turned over in the great book, and that now life was beginning for her in grave and sober earnest.

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### CHAPTER LV.—HOW THE GREAT ACCOUNT DRAGGED ON.

NOT without reason was Sir Charles's hair whitening at the temples and his face like the chiselled face on a tomb. His anguish of spirit at his wife's death held in it no little of self-reproach. He was not so narrow-minded as to see therein a direct punishment for his own grievous transgression. He did not for one moment believe that God punished the innocent for the guilty. Yet in his loss he saw clearly one more dire consequence of the path he had chosen.

One of the necessities of his choice had been that he must tread the shadowed path alone. From that had, of necessity, followed the rifting of the sweet harmony of their lifelong confidence and perfect openness of mind; and that, though he had striven his utmost to conceal it, had, he doubted not, told sorely upon her and worn her spirit down. And now she was gone, and the sweet music was mute, and his life was in the dust. In her going he saw, not the hand of God, but the hand of Charles Lauriston, and took to himself the burden and the reproach. And yet his thoughts were not all bitterness. They had loved one another very truly. Perhaps now, in the fuller knowledge and clearer vision of her higher estate, she understood, and pitied and forgave him.

And there was a measure of comfort in the thought that, come what might to himself in this desperate fight, she at all events was safe from ill. There had been times, many times, when the weight of it all bore so grievously upon him that, but for the thought of her and the children, he would have been sorely tempted to throw up the sponge and have done with it, come what might.

And old John Sax knew those times, and felt a certain constriction of the throat when the signs of them became evident, and with the sagacity of desperation he would get out private ledgers and chuckle over them till his sombre chief's attention was won, and then he would point out the strides they were making towards financial redemption. And if the ground still to be covered was immense, still the fact that their progress was steady and continuous was enough to strengthen their hearts.

More than once Sir Charles said to him, with the confidential hand reached down to his shoulder, 'John, if ever we recover ourselves and become honest men again it will be chiefly your doing.'

'We are honest men,' old John would stoutly maintain. 'Less honest men would have provided for themselves and left the rest in the lurch long since;' which, if a perverted, was perhaps not a wholly unnatural way of looking at the matter.

Trafalgar gave them a lift. Austerlitz and the collapse of Austria were knock-down blows. By the deaths of Pitt and Fox the nation was the poorer, and Sir Charles lost two good friends. Still, though at times things went against them, their private balance-sheets showed on the whole substantial progress; but it was won by a concentration of purpose and an intensity of application which, with the concomitant and ever-recurring horrors of the desperate methods they had at times to resort to, left its marks on both.

Mavie's long detention in France and her mother's longing for her return had been a sore trial to Sir Charles. On the other hand, the locking of the doors had made it quite impossible for Aunt Charlotte to draw upon her funds, and, with money scarce and great and critical operations in hand, it was a relief not to be called upon to furnish them.

And so, with gains and losses—in lives and money and happiness—the great account dragged on and the settlement-day was not yet.

*(To be continued.)*

# KING EDWARD ON THE RIVIERA.

By An Old Resident.

KING EDWARD was throughout life very fond of the Continental health-resorts, enjoying the change of climate and life; and whatever place he frequented, he brought prosperity there. Homburg—whose doom was considered sealed when the gambling was stopped there in December 1872, and when its beautiful Kursaal built by Blanc, who migrated to Monaco, was bereft of roulette-tables and visitors—he transformed into a fashionable English spring, and for years in succession he took the waters there, and brought in his train thousands of his compatriots.

When, later, the cure at Marienbad was prescribed for him, he made Marienbad fashionable and crowded with visitors, without destroying the popularity of Homburg. In the south of France it was the same. At Biarritz, whither French and Spaniards resort for sea-bathing in September, King Edward converted the dull winter season into the most fashionable and crowded season of the year, and extra hotels had to be built to accommodate the accretion of visitors.

On the Riviera, the sunny coast which he frequented for forty years, the change wrought, to a great extent by his presence there, is phenomenal. When he first visited Nice, Monte Carlo was a hill in the principality of Monaco covered with olive-plantations on its sides, and was yet unnamed; Beaulieu was a little fishing-village; and there was no road connecting them with Nice. Nice itself is enlarged and improved out of recognition, and Cimiez as a popular resort was practically created by Queen Victoria. Mentone and Cannes have also developed in a wonderful way, and Villefranche (as a place of residence) and Cap Martin have sprung into existence through the invasion of English visitors, led by Queen Victoria and her son. It is a curious fact that although King Edward, when Prince of Wales, was an annual visitor to the Riviera, he never revisited it as king. The reason for his change of habit probably was that in his new station he would have found it difficult to lead the life of a private gentleman which he had been accustomed to as Prince of Wales. Even in his last years on the Riviera, owing to the immense increase of visitors he began to suffer annoyance from the mobbing which he afterwards complained of at Marienbad and Biarritz. In the seventies and early eighties the English who visited the Riviera stayed at Hyères, Cannes, Nice, or Mentone. No self-respecting Briton would stay at Monte Carlo, as for some obscure reason the Casino was supposed to corrupt the unrivalled beauty of the spot. The Prince was not affected by this prejudice. Monte Carlo consisted for some years of one large hotel, the Hôtel de Paris, one small hotel, a few shops, the villa of Villemessant, the founder of the *Figaro*, and the villa of Sir Frederic Johnstone. Sir Frederic was an old Oxford and lifelong friend of King Edward, and an old member of the Jockey Club, owner of Common and other famous horses. The Prince came over occasionally to Monte Carlo to stay with him and Lady Wilton, his wife, and the English soon followed his example in their thousands. Every inch of land is at the present time built over at Monte Carlo, and it is as popular with the English and as much resorted to as Margate, and now even the air is considered as pure!

The Prince used to make his headquarters at Cannes, which was a somewhat dull place when he first stayed there. It was covered with villas occupied by English people of fashion, who entertained among themselves, but there was little amusement for the travelling public. It was here, when staying with Captain Percival in his villa, that the Duke of Albany died suddenly—a great shock to the Prince. The Prince put new life into Cannes, especially into the yachting world there; he brought over the *Britannia* for the regattas and cleared the board of the prizes, and established Cannes as a great yachting centre. He delighted in sailing in the beautiful waters overlooking the

Esterals, the Alpes Maritimes, and the picturesque coast. He usually stayed at an hotel on the waterside, close to the harbour and the club. The Duke of Cambridge, who always stayed at the Hôtel Prince de Galles on the hill above, was his constant companion, and they usually had a day's shooting at the Isle of St Marguerite with Mr Vyner, who leased the land and bred pheasants and preserved. Sir Charles Hall, the late Recorder, who was an old Oxford friend, and who had acted as the Prince's Attorney-General, and Mr Christopher Sykes, were usually of the party. The Dowager Duchess of Montrose, the widow of Mr Stirling Crawford of racing fame, then owned the villa now occupied by Lord Rendel, and frequently gave dinner-parties to meet the Prince. Lord and Lady Wolverton, the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, the Grand Duke Michael, Lord Brougham, and Lord Savile were others who entertained him. He went about the place in the way he appreciated without being noticed except by his friends.

When he went over to Monte Carlo, until quite latterly, he was equally unmolested; he walked about the gardens, sat on the seats, watched the passers-by, without being remarked. He often dined at the Hôtel de Paris with old friends like the present Dowager Duchess of Devonshire, the Dowager Duchess of Montrose, Colonel Keith Fraser, Mr Alfred Montgomery, and Mr H. Calcraft, and attended the concerts and strolled through the Rooms. Latterly it was impossible for him to visit the Casino on account of the crowd of British people at his heels; and on one occasion in the eighties a unique entertainment was provided him by the administration, which opened one morning at eleven o'clock a trente-et-quarante table for himself and his friends to give him amusement without mobbing. The Prince, however, found the affair dull, having more liking for company than the game, and he retired before a deal was over!

On the occasion of the earthquake in February 1887 there was a perfect panic and stampede of the English. Not an Englishman was left on the Riviera a fortnight after it had taken place, and those only remained so long because they were unable to get seats in the trains. People rushed to the trains on the morning of the earthquake in their sleeping-garments, covered with coats, and those left behind slept out. The Prince was in the last score of those who remained, unaffected by the general alarm, and laughing heartily at the comic incidents resulting from the *tremblement de terre*.

The Prince was very popular on the Riviera. His unaffected and invariable bonhomie endeared him to every one; and it will make many a visitor regret when passing the statue of Lord Brougham at Cannes—who by residence there warded off fatal illness until he was ninety—that King Edward did not give himself the opportunity of preserving health open to his subjects.

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# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

### CHAPTER III.—AT THE TOWER.

THE Hill-Fox was the first to awaken. He rose silently, the struggling light showing the lines of his face worn, peaked as a bird's. He threw some peats and fir-cones on the fire's embers, then listened keenly for a moment or two to the drone of the fall outside. 'The Errach's in spate! Snow!' he said to himself with satisfaction, for the snow meant safer chances to him in the longed-for dash for the West Coast. Then he went stealthily to the corpse, took Errachdale's ring from his pocket, and carefully placed it in turn on two or three of the dead man's fingers. It fitted the third finger of the left hand exactly. He whipped out his knife, cut the finger off at the joint neatly enough, and put it, still wearing the ring, into his pocket. Tiptoeing back again, he roused the sleeping Neil, beckoning him to follow, and the two crept along the rock-corridor to the outer world. He swung back the boulder. It was as he hoped. A rush of cold air danced in with an armful of snowflakes, and the Errach Burn was roaring in a torrent of amber and white over the linn. The two men went round the rock to the shelter where the mare was tethered. It was a raw morning on the edge of day, snowing, not heavily, but with an ominous persistence, the trees around them gray shadows, the air sibilant with the whispers of the falling snowflakes.

'Ye'll soon win back here,' Murdo said. 'Tak' the mare. She's well bred, an' ye'll bring her back safely. An' now, mark me! The leddy at Errachdale. Ye understand?' Neil nodded. 'Gi'e your message to her. Ten sovereigns an' her man wins hame in four days. Then show her this.' He produced the cold finger wearing the ring. Neil took it, looked at it without a blink, and put it in his pocket. 'That's his ring, an' it's a sign that she'll jump at like a trout, or I'm mista'en. Ye'll say that he is sair wounded, but that ten sovereigns will bring him hame to her safe in four days. The business is as easy as drinkin' a gill. I wad gang blithely masel', but I'm a kenned man here, an' there's a hunder pound on my heid. Now haste ye! Put some oatcakes in your pocket while I saddle the horse.'

He turned away. A half-smile stole round the other's mouth, but his eyes and jaw suddenly became those of a pike. There was a stealthy movement unseen by Murdo in the half-light, then a second's pause, and Neil plunged his knife in an

upward stroke with all his might clean to the hilt in the other's back. The Hill-Fox fell where he stood, in a huddled heap, giving a single dreadful cry. Crouching behind a tree some yards away, with the bloody knife in his hand, the other watched him warily. The wounded man rose slowly on one elbow, then the other, and fell again. He lay for a moment writhing, beating the snow with his hands, then staggered to his feet, reeled and fell again, groping in wandering clutches for his pistol. He put the weapon between his teeth and moved forward slowly, slowly, on his hands and knees, foot by foot, towards the other, his upper lip drawn from his yellow fangs in a bestial snarl over the pistol-barrel, his eyes, loaded with death, seeking his murderer. Crawling gamely for a yard or two, he dropped, swinging round on his back, his legs threshing the crimson snow for a horrid minute before he lay still, his jaws in the agony of death still clenching the pistol. The creature peering from behind the tree watched for a movement from him. None came. He took a hesitating step or two closer. Even in death he was afraid of him. The limp arm lying in the snow pointed at him; he touched it, then shook it feverishly, dropping it with a gasp, and retreated again, to run in on a wavelet of courage and stab the already dead Hill-Fox twice. He crouched for a minute, panting, peering round, listening. There was no sound but the galloping Errach. He had not been seen except by the bright eyes of an otter driven by the flood from his holt and on the prowl to kill his breakfast.

To rifle the pockets took him but a moment. He found the money, and pounced on the sovereigns with a child's cry, wrenched away the pistol, and lifted the body. It was as limp as a fowl's, and he carried it easily, face downwards, round the rock to the swollen burn. The Errach was full to the lip, a swift brown surge running with a continuous clamour as of chariots over stony streets. The man heaved his burden, with the arm-action of 'putting the stone,' well into the current. Twenty yards down-stream a dead arm waved and disappeared. Ragged luck, but as good as the rope!

So the Hill-Fox cheated the gallows after all; and the lass in the Glen waited, waited under the dull anodyne of routine, the shadow never leaving her gray eyes save when some happy, careless lilt of 'Poor Cluny' brimmed them with memory and glimpses of hope elusive as the notes themselves. So in some poor fragments of a tune—Beethoven, an eightsome reel, an old song—with the mystery of its sudden touch on the heart-strings, lie a thousand bitter-sweets; the magic of a voice, home, a remembered place; a haunting phrase; meetings, good-byes, links of memory intangible, yet of steel; laughter; tears; summer on the windy heath; the voice of the rain in the Glen. It is well. For the past, even with its half-accomplishments and might-have-beens, is at least a conjurable and vivid World. To-morrow may be a Blind Alley, and who shall see It?

Daylight was struggling through the snow as Neil went round the rock where the mare stood munching placidly. He rapidly saddled and bridled her, and then led her up the steep, winding path above the Errach. The drifts were high and dangerous, the mare often floundering in them; but he pushed on hurriedly, urging the beast forward. He could only see dimly for about a dozen yards in front; but he went on, panting, running where a level twenty paces allowed it, sprawling through waist-deep snowdrifts, crawling down steep, sudden declivities, until he reached a welcome sheltered gullet, and flung himself down, exhausted, the mare standing with heaving sides, for the pace over the rough, dangerous ground had been bursting. He lay until he regained his wind, rising to wipe the blood off his knife and his rags of clothing. Then he took out the sovereigns, looking at them with a smile, turning them over and over, the gulp in his throat again, his breath quickened. His knock on the head had left him with a certain cunning. He was an excellent messenger and a fair cook, but his addled wits carried no desire for money beyond that of a magpie. Silver or bright pewter tickled his vanity; he displayed these openly, but some dim memory invested gold for him with a higher charm. Without sense of its uses, the old desire to possess it was left, along with a misty instinct to hide it and gloat over it; the sight of a yellow coin jogging the damaged mechanism of his brain, stirring up latent ferocities. He remembered the ring, and touched the gold band round the cold finger. It meant ten sovereigns for the Hill-Fox. At least it would have, but the Hill-Fox was—was down Spey long ere this. Ten more sovereigns! Ten more sovereigns for him! He stood up and looked at the sky, a gleam in his dull, shifty eye. He must push on to the Tower, for there was a broad bar of lemon in the east, and in far distances cocks were beginning to crow. He led the mare out of the gullet, and in half-an-hour was riding in shelter and at a good pace through the Nether Wood. In an hour he passed the Cross Roads and was well on the sheeted road up Speyside.

Behind, looking twice the size in the haze of snow around them, Ben Rinnes and Ben Aigen stood, scarred by Time, kingly, robed in ermine, crowned with winter clouds, about them the mysterious majesty that invests the hills, born of the sense of permanence, isolation, calm steadfastness in solitude. 'The strength of the hills is His.' Rivers change in their silver courses; the sea has a thousand fickle facets; the pageant of the fields dissolves; the city wears a mask; but the quiet mountains, changeless, enduring, have watched through the lost centuries mutable river and sea, storm and peace; man's little life, his sowing and reaping, his cities vanishing like breath on a glass.

The Bens looked on the valley below, where the

Spey, peaty-brown in her full spate, hurried towards the welcoming thunder of the North Sea. Here and there the pine-forests, in the glamour of the witching snow, threw their white arms to the sky, the gulp of the burns tuned to the weather making rude music; on the bleak uplands forlorn whaups piping and piping in sad insistence, the very note of solitary places, and in the heart of the white valley the black speck of the tatterdemalion rode stolidly on, an affront to the picture, like some mean insect crawling slowly on a marble floor.

Seen close at hand he looked a sorry, incongruous jest. The mare was no rough garron of the country-side, but noticeably well bred; the equipment and housing of first-class English workmanship. Her bedizened burden rode with the clumsy anxiety of the farmyard, a hastily pruned ash-branch doing unnecessary duty for a whip. With his elbows jogging, his poor gauds jingling bravely, he rode on at a brisk trot, his magpie's wits jumping towards the loadstone of the ten sovereigns for him at his journey's end. At every hill he walked the mare, and would pull out the two coins to handle them furtively, fearful of being watched, riding on again with a secret smile, talking quietly to himself. The day sped, and by four o'clock, when the sun had long given up hope of shining, he saw his goal in the near distance.

Imagine the letter **S** a mile long, blazoned in dull black by the swift-moving Spey on the snow in the hollow of the hills, its nearer half bordered on either side by the haughs' broad shields, the curve of the long **S** clasped by the girdle of a wooden bridge, the water swirling round the warding hands of the *chevaux de frise* of tree-trunks jutting into the stream at its foot. Then imagine the dainty lace-work of birch-woods softening the masculine arm of the river, above the birches on the right bank a hill-forest of adventuring pines, harbouring in its white bosom a tiny hamlet, its reek veering and flawing for a moment in blue spirals before losing itself in the light air; yet higher, on the crest of the hill, the narrow eyes of a tall house, Errachdale Tower, looking northwards through the gauze of snowflakes at the blurred woods and the tumbled hills across the Spey.

It was now about the falling of the dusk, and points of red lights from the windows of the clachan twinkled among the trees. Neil rode on until he was near the bridge, then led the mare into a dense clump of firs, tethering her securely to a tree there; crossed the bridge; and, avoiding the cluster of houses and keeping clear of any semblance of a path, struck swiftly upwards through the woods towards the Tower.

*(To be continued.)*

## POSTAGE-STAMPS.

WITH reference to the article in the February number, some further information on this subject will no doubt be of interest.

The perforation of postage-stamps is a very important feature. In or about the year 1854 the Commissioners of Inland Revenue showed a most anxious desire for the perforation to be undertaken without a moment's loss of time. They consulted a well-known firm of engineers on the subject, and gave them the order for four machines; and so pressing did they consider the business that they would not even wait for an estimate of the cost, the preparation of which would have occupied some days. 'Get on with the order with all possible despatch, and we will pay you for the work at the price at which you fix uncontracted jobs by your usual system of charging,' is what, in effect, they said.

These four machines were charged for accordingly, the sum, including cost of drawings and patterns, reaching two thousand four hundred pounds, which amount one of the firm himself received in hard cash, coin of the realm, in payment. The firm in question was David Napier and Son, who were then in business in Vine Street, Lambeth. They were specialists in machinery, having constructed several notable novelties, among them the automatic coin-weighing machines in use at the Bank of England.

The contrivance for perforating was the invention of a foreigner, who sold his patent to the Government. It was, however, by no means perfect, as it was meant to deal with paper which did not shrink. To meet the shrinkage, 'racks' of varying lengths from tooth to tooth had to be introduced, a provision the ingenuity of which must be ascribed to David Napier & Son.

The Government possessed the patent for some time ere they thought it necessary to use it. What the reason was for urging on the speed of manufacture of the machines with extraordinary celerity did not become known at the time; but it is fair to assume that the issue of forged stamps had something, if not all, to do with it. In the matter of stamps other than postage, the revenue, it was said, was at one time defrauded of a hundred thousand pounds annually. This being so, it requires no acuteness of perception to suspect with reason that postage-stamps were being copied. No very great difficulty surely presented itself in carrying out so nefarious a design. The stamps were printed by the copperplate system, and a clever engraver could at any time be found.

At present the adhesive stamps of all values are printed by the raised surface or letterpress system. Messrs De La Rue & Company were the first to

supply the Government with these, afterwards receiving large orders from other countries for the like issues.

The country which, after the elapse of some years, was the first to follow the example of Britain in perforating postage-stamps was France. The French Government gave the order to Napier & Son for the necessary machines, and the firm proceeded with the work. But they had reckoned without the British Government, who, on being informed of what was in progress, called on the engineers to explain why it had been taken for granted that they, the holders of the patent, were indifferent to the invention being adopted by an outsider without permission from those who could alone give it. The Government in the end assured the manufacturers that they had no intention of blocking the order of the French Government; but at the same time they wished it to be distinctly understood that they had not abandoned the patent. They gave the necessary permission. Persons there were who stoutly maintained that the British Government could not defend their contention, flaws being visible to the searching eye of the experts. Other Governments followed in the wake of France, the first to do so being the Prussian Government.

The notion in the mind of the public probably is that an entire sheet of stamps is perforated at one operation. What the practice is at the present moment we are not prepared to explain; but the method pursued for many years after the machines were installed was to treat five sheets laid one on the other in the machine at once, and perforate five single rows of stamps at a time. Thus sixty stamps would be perforated at each rise and fall of the punches which cut out the holes. At each rise and fall, the rack which was attached to the frame which held the paper was actuated forward until the required number of rows were punched. It will be gathered that owing to the varying shrinkage of the paper the sheets of stamps had to be sorted out into lots with a uniform shrinkage before they could be placed on the machines.

Between sixty and seventy years ago only two values of postage-stamps were issued—the penny stamp printed in red and the twopenny in blue. It was a common practice then to take letters to the post-office and pay the postage with money, the assistant taking the letter into his keeping after making a slanting line across the address with a red pencil. The writer has himself seen letters so dealt with at that time.

A noteworthy incident in the history of perforated stamps was the unsuccessful proposal by the late Robert Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to put a tax on matches. So confident was the Government of carrying the scheme that they actually obtained a set of punches for perforating the emblems of their novel impost. A member of Parliament protested against the extravagance of the executive, declaring that a complete perforating apparatus could have been bought in Birmingham for fifty pounds, about one-eighth of the price of a machine—so little did the speaker know about the unavoidable heavy expense attending mechanical work when carried out with a nicety amounting almost to mathematical precision.

It may not be out of place to remark that in the year 1860 the late Mr W. H. Smith, who became a Cabinet Minister, told the writer that his firm paid the Government one hundred pounds weekly for postage-stamps. His was one of a few firms who adopted a die-cup on which was engraved the name of the firm. This cup was fixed in the Government press, and on its being subjected to the process of inking simultaneously with the stamp-die, the name of the firm appeared around the embossed postage-stamp as an advertisement.

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# SOME TAYSIDE SUMMER VISITORS.

TO walk along a riverside is always pleasant; but it is doubly pleasing during the summer months, especially if the traveller happens to be a bird-lover.

Tayside is one of the many charming spots to be found in 'Caledonia stern and wild,' which is not only a meet nurse for the poetic but also the ornithological child.

The bird-population of Britain is roughly estimated at nearly four hundred species, of which number about one-eighth are summer visitors to our shores. These feathered travellers pass their winters in far southern climes, and when early spring arrives in the north temperate zone are dominated by the marvellous impulse to migrate northwards in order to produce their young in their own birthplace.

Though to-day much is known about migration, the underlying impulse still remains a complete mystery. Thanks to the most painstaking labours of some of our celebrated naturalists (and above all to Mr Eagle Clarke of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh), the movements of migrating birds are no longer shrouded in mystery; their routes and dates of departure and arrival are all in course of being tabulated, and every summer one may count upon welcoming one's old friends to their breeding-haunts of former years.

> 'Summer is coming, summer is coming!
> I know it, I know it, I know it.
> Light again, leaf again, life again, love again;'
> Yes, my wild little poet (TENNYSON).

That one swallow does not make a summer may be true, but summer-time without the swallows would be impossible to conceive of. They are wonderful travellers, those frail little birds; and year

after year they tenant the same nests on our shores. They are perpetually on the wing hawking for insects, and seem almost to have mastered the secret of perpetual motion.

> Round the eaves of houses,
> Swallows, as they flit,
> Give, like yearly tenants,
> Notices to quit.

So wrote Tom Hood, and, alas! it is only too true. By October these gentle little visitors have taken their departure. The writer remembers watching a large departure of swallows from Grindelwald, in the Canton de Berne. The birds assembled in vast arrays towards the end of September, and for some days crowded on to the telephone and telegraph wires; then, when their army grew large enough, they silently started on their long voyage, leaving behind them one belated mammalian traveller.

The sand-martin is the earliest of the swallows to arrive and the first to leave. Its eggs are laid in holes in the sandbanks along the riverside, which these birds excavate with their delicate little beaks. Indeed, the banks have a riddled appearance owing to the enormous number of holes which are dug so close to one another. At the end of these little galleries are found the nests, each composed of dry grass, with a few feathers, and containing four or six pure-white eggs at a time, there being generally two broods in a season. To watch the sand-martins hawking up and down the river is a charming sight. They fly to and fro rather like bats, and during the breeding-time the parent birds feed their young most assiduously. It is always such a sad day when these summer visitors depart! One imagines them winging their way to their winter quarters in China, India, and south-eastern Africa, where, alas! one cannot follow them, and now one must wait another seven or eight months until one can see them again. How true were the lines that Christina Rossetti wrote:

> The days are clear,
> Day after day,
> When April's here
> That leads to May;
> And June
> Must follow soon.
> Stay, June, stay!
> If only we could stop the moon,
> And June.

Swifts are not allied to swallows, being structurally connected with the humming-birds; but this fact was not known to the older naturalists, and Gilbert White of Selborne constantly alluded to these graceful birds as together forming one family. From Tayside this bird departs by about the middle of August. There is the puzzling question as to whether these birds while with us spend the entire night on the wing. One sees them mounting higher and higher, with unabated energy and vitality; and, wait as one may, one does not see their descent. Yet there must surely be some answer to this puzzle, which so far has met with no satisfactory solution.

The sandpiper's arrival is one of the joys of summer, and its musical whistle is first heard about April. This little bird generally has some favourite haunt, and when 'put up' from the shingle flies swiftly over the water, keeping close to the surface, whistling its melodious pipe. These notes somewhat resemble the ringed plover's in tone, as does also the quality of the flight. By the end of September this mighty traveller departs from Tayside to its winter quarters, which extend to Africa.

Beside the river one may perchance hear the notes of the sedge-warbler, who is the singer of the night. The wanderer may sit and listen to this little bird's song ere he turns his steps towards home and bed.

Leaving the riverside, one may next ramble along a narrow lane which winds upwards towards the hill. Here whitethroats and willow-warblers are to be seen and heard. A small garden lies close to the little lane and shelters the wood-wren; here also one may pause awhile and listen to the twittering of the birds and the buzz of the insects.

> I know a lovely garden
> Where dwell the sweetest flowers,
> And there from morn to even
> I pass away the hours.

Alas, how quickly do the hours of summer-time fly! If the bird-watcher is also somewhat of a dreamer he may rest here for many an hour hidden behind the briar-bushes, which grow sufficiently high to shut out the view of the few passers-by, whilst the fly-catcher perches on the railings. From the corn-fields close by is heard the corncrake's rattle; and each time one flushes this bird one is struck anew by its weak, languid flight, yet it migrates twice a year to and from its winter quarters in far southern climes.

At the end of the lane there comes 'a little winding road which leads to the hill and back again,' and the first bird usually to be seen here is the wheatear. This traveller comes to our shores during March, migrating in autumn to regions south of the equator. It has a peculiarly jerky flight, and may be found high up above the level of the Tay valley. It is a delightful bird to watch, for it is sprightly and lively in its movements. Here, too, the redstart may flit past, alighting on a furze-bush; and while one pauses to watch this little bird through the binoculars one hears the cuckoo calling from the far-off woods:

> Summer is icumen in,
> Loud sing cuckoo.

The wayfarer who is fond of bird-watching must never be in a hurry, and there is no better or happier way of spending a summer afternoon than lying on one's plaid hidden away by some bush or tree; for with the aid of one's field-glasses—and these are a priceless treasure to any naturalist—one may see

any amount of birds and become initiated into their daily life and labours.

The clouds which float over Tayside can be of a marvellously blue colour, which reminds one of the azure skies of the Riviera; and while one gazes high o'erhead one catches sight of the rapidly vibrating wings of the kestrel, as it hangs poised in the air prior to making a swoop. The prey of this falcon consists chiefly of mice, rats, and such small deer, so that it is an *ally* and not an *enemy* to the farmer. The 'wind-hover' is another name by which this bird is known. The kestrels we may notice during the winter months are birds which have come to us in autumn, while most of our summer residents move farther south. This is the way with a great many of our so-called resident species, there being a partial as well as a local migration or substitution of individuals, instead of a total migration clearing all individuals of the species out of the country.

A delightfully musical cry strikes one's ear, and in the distance may be seen three curlews speeding towards a far-off stretch of moorland. Perhaps this bird's pipe is more full of lonely music than that of any other.

Oh curlew, cry no more in the air,
Or only to the waters in the west,
Because your crying brings to my mind
Long heavy hair that was shaken out over my breast.
There is enough evil in the crying of the wind.

So wrote W. B. Yeats in his charming little volume of lyrics. During the winter months the curlew, along with the oyster-catcher and redshank, repairs to the coast-line, and may be seen during the short winter days feeding on the mud-flats.

As the summer day draws to a close one by one the birds cease singing, with the exception of the sedge-warbler, who has been called 'the nightingale of the north.' The twilight vanishes slowly, and it is almost midnight before 'there is darkness over the land,' so soon to be followed by a glorious sunrise. Let the wayfarer pause for a moment. *Ave atque vale.*

Summer too is quickly passing, and who does not re-echo the poet's thoughts:

Alas, that spring should vanish with the rose!
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The nightingales that sang on yonder bough—
Ah, whither are they gone, and how?

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### AN ELECTRICAL STETHOSCOPE.

WIDESPREAD interest in medical circles has recently been aroused in a new appliance which should prove of far-reaching value in the diagnosing of peculiar maladies. This is an electrical stethoscope, whereby not only can the distinctive sounds of internal human organs be heard upon the spot, but at a remote distance over the ordinary telephone-wires. The success of the invention lies in the discovery of a telephone relay which produces exactly the same effect upon the telephonic as upon the telegraphic wire circuit—collects the attenuated waves and magnifies them to a marked extent. The quest for such an apparatus in telephony has been continued zealously for several years, but the inherent difficulties were such as to baffle success, and it came to be regarded as a sheer impossibility. The intensification of the sounds of speech is a vastly different question from the magnification of the dot and dash in telegraphy; the articulation in the magnification may be completely distorted, and an incomprehensible jumble of sounds produced, from which nothing tangible can be construed. In this instance, however, the inventor has achieved distinct success, and a whisper at the receiving end can be intensified into a shout without any interference in articulation whatever. The result is that the length of a telephone-line can be appreciably increased—that is to say, a line which in direct working will only transmit speech twenty miles, by the introduction of this relay either at the end of the twenty-mile run or at the receiving end can be extended to fifty miles. Profiting by this achievement, the inventor has devised an electrical stethoscope. There is a short tube, carrying at its outer end a specially contrived cup covered with an ebonite diaphragm. The opposite end of this tube terminates in a brass diaphragm. When the outer end of the tube is laid against the body in the region of the heart, for instance, the vibration of the ebonite diaphragm sets up a certain disturbance of the air within the tube, which is duly communicated to the brass diaphragm at the opposite end. The latter diaphragm is also vibrated, and the sounds thus set up, by being passed through the telephone relay, are magnified something like sixty times. Tests with the instrument in the hospital have enabled the heart-beats of patients to be so intensely strengthened that, although the physician listened with a complete headpiece, the sounds were distinctly heard by those standing round, and even by the patient himself. When the instrument was connected up to the telephone it was possible to hear the sounds as distinctly ten miles away as if the listener were equipped with the ordinary stethoscope and standing beside the patient. The supreme test was when a trio of physicians in the Isle of Wight listened to the heart-beats, over the telephone, of a person in London, about a hundred miles distant. The beats were strikingly audible. The characteristic sounds of other organs of the body can also be similarly listened to, and diagnosis is

appreciably facilitated. The inventor has also devised a system of tuning the apparatus whereby it is possible to listen only to one peculiar sound to the exclusion of all others. For instance, in listening to the heart, the sound of respiration, which in the instrument is converted into quite a roar, is eliminated. The perfection of this selectiveness should render the apparatus additionally valuable to the medical world.

### A NEW COOKING-RANGE.

The good housewife or domestic who carries out her cooking operations with the coal-fire range in preference to the gas-stove is only too cognisant of the defects of the former. This is especially marked in baking, where the oven-door has to be opened at every examination of the contents, letting in a blast of cold outer air which may seriously interfere with the success of the task in hand. In view of this fact, the new range will create attention and its advantages be instantly grasped. In general appearance it does not differ from the conventional stove, but the outer oven-door is fitted with an inner door of glass. Consequently it is possible to examine the progress of baking through this inner transparent door, so that there is no introduction of cold air. This feature, which is the most important, is but one improvement in the stove. At the top, extending the full width of the range, is a cupboard-like compartment fitted with a thermometer, in which the dishes and plates may be kept warm. Then there is a boiler which can be removed when desired. The flues, instead of being of brick, are of cast-iron, thus offering a less favourable surface for the adhesion of soot, and are easily cleaned; while the grate itself, which can be raised or lowered according to the amount of fire desired, is fitted with a folding-down front. This is an especially useful modification, as it renders access to the grate for cleaning so simple and easy as compared with the difficult manipulations necessary where the front bars are irremovably fixed. There have been several improvements effected in the kitchen-range during the past few years; but this is the nearest approach to the perfect that has yet been achieved, and will be greatly appreciated by the good housewife.

### MEAT-CURING BY ELECTRICITY.

One of the latest applications of electricity is that in connection with the curing of meat. The idea was first mooted some four years ago in America; and there being no insuperable reason why it should not be possible to carry out such work by this means, a company was formed to exploit the process. Since that time it has been in constant practice, the results being commendably satisfactory. The meat is stacked in large wooden vats, measuring some fourteen feet in length by four feet wide and the same in height. Each layer of meat is separated from its fellow by a wooden rack, and a vat will hold about two tons of meat. At either end of the vat is placed a porous pot or cup similar in principle and scope to that used in a Leclanché cell, and these contain rods of graphite which are joined to the terminals of a dynamo. Alternating current is used as being preferable to the continuous current. The vats and the porous pots are filled with the ordinary pickling solution —that is, a composition of salt, sugar, and saltpetre. The time required to carry out the operation varies according to the nature of the meat under treatment. In the case of bacon from three to four days suffices; but with ham, owing to the thickness of the lean, from twenty-five to thirty-five days' continual submission to the current is requisite. Pipes are coiled in each vat, and the circulation of brine therein serves to keep the pickle at a steady, cool temperature. When withdrawn from the vat the meat is washed and then smoked in the ordinary manner. The process is claimed to be highly efficient, inexpensive, and economical both in time and pickling solution, the latter serving a vat for some twelve months. Moreover, the meat is claimed to be preserved by this means remarkably well.

### A RAILWAY FOR UGANDA.

An important step towards the commercial development of the country of Uganda has been made by the decision to construct a railway connecting the shores of the Victoria Nyanza with the first navigable stretch of the Victoria Nile. The exploitation of the country has suffered severely from lack of transportation facilities, as the so-called Uganda Railway only runs up to the doors of the protectorate, as it were. Two alternative routes have been thoroughly surveyed. One advocated very strongly was that connecting the Victoria and Albert Nyanzas *vid* the Toro Highlands. The economic importance of such a link cannot be estimated, as it would pass through the finest cotton-growing district in the country; but it was realised that the technical difficulties confronting this proposal would render it extremely expensive. Consequently it has been decided to adopt a combined rail-and-water line of communication, the river being used as far as practicable, and the non-navigable portions circumvented by short stretches of rail. This method is much cheaper, and will enable communication with Egypt to be effected in far shorter time. When the various connecting sections are joined up it will be possible to travel comfortably by train and boat from Mombasa through the heart of Africa to the Victoria Nile, thence northwards through the Soudan and Egypt to Cairo. It seems probable that one of the most important feeders which Cecil Rhodes prophesied would prove such a valuable source of traffic to the Cape to Cairo line will be completed long before the through transcontinental road itself.

### A HUGE STEAM-NAVVY.

What is stated to be the largest steam-navvy ever designed is at present working in the excavation of clay for brickmaking in an English brick-field. This

appliance is quite different from any machine hitherto designed for such work, and is not only extremely powerful, but has a large radius of action. The one designed for the brick-field is working in a pit sixty feet in depth, and makes a clean cut of the bank from bottom to top with every stroke; and, what is more important, instead of the face of the bank having a concave shape, as is the result with ordinary methods, the machine so works as to maintain a steady and uniform outward angle. The navvy has its main member, nearly ninety feet in length, set at an angle of forty-five degrees, and the arm which carries the bucket is about fifty feet in length. The bucket itself can bite a solid three hundredweight of clay and rock at every swing. The navvy is made to revolve, so that it can command the work on every side throughout the circle, and will make a cut sixty feet or more in depth by thirty feet wide or so at the bottom and one hundred feet wide at the top. Consequently it is a most serviceable plant for work in railway cuttings, canals, harbours, and docks. The design and mechanism of this mechanical giant is in every way a departure from the existing practice; and, as it weighs a matter of seventy tons or so, some idea of its massive proportions may be gained. At the brickworks where it is in operation its output is far in excess of the requirements, so no opportunity has been obtained to ascertain what it can actually do; but it is digging out sufficient clay to enable a million and a half bricks to be made per week, which easily constitutes a world's record.

### THE HYGIENIC VALUE OF SOFT WATER.

Though our engineers spare no effort to render our water-supply absolutely pure bacteriologically, yet in the great majority of cases the water as it is drawn from the tap is far from safe for either drinking or general domestic purposes. The chances are that the water is hard, due to the presence of chalk and other inorganic substances in suspension, which exercise a distinctly injurious effect upon the body both internally and externally, and constitute a serious menace to the health and safety of the home. From the former standpoint, hard water should certainly be boiled before it is used for drinking or washing and toilet purposes, so as to get rid of the greater proportion of the deleterious substances contained in it. Hard water exercises a distinctly unfavourable effect upon the skin, and in many cases will provoke serious illness by interfering with the proper action of the pores, inducing gout, rheumatism, and many other disorders to which human flesh is heir; while, when taken internally, it often precipitates a severe derangement of the digestive organs. From the general domestic point of view it is highly dangerous, as, for instance, in the hot-water supply system, where the pipes and boilers become choked with a heavy deposit of scale, which, unless periodically removed, is apt to promote disaster swift and sudden, or else cause a complete break-down of circulation. It is for this reason that many private houses have recently made use of the facilities provided by an ingenious invention for ensuring a constant supply of water so softened as to be practically like distilled water. It is very simple and inexpensive. There is a small vessel into which the water from the main passes. This is connected to a receptacle containing a special powder which has the property of removing the harmful lime and magnesia salts, iron oxide, or other impurities. The water as it flows from the main comes into contact with this purifying medium, and then falls into another tank of the household variety. Here the impurities are precipitated to the bottom in a sludge, which is periodically drawn off; while the tank, being connected to the house-distributing system, ensures delivery of softened water to every part—the bathroom boiler, taps, and sink. The difference in the taste of soft and hard water is very marked. From the toilet point of view washing with soft water is very like a wash with rain-water, which is so freely advocated for those who wish to preserve their complexion and softness of the skin generally, while the pores are left open to admit of the natural functions of the human engine in throwing off excretion through these diminutive channels. Those who are prone to gout and rheumatic disorders should on no account drink water that is at all hard, as the absorption of an excessive amount of lime and other materials in solution feeds the malady. The hot-water system of the house, when fed with softened water, also performs its work much more satisfactorily, as there is no deposit of scale to obstruct pipes and interfere with the necessary radiation of heat from the fire, thus effecting an appreciable saving in the coal-bill as well. The apparatus is very simple, free from intricate mechanism, automatic in its action, and the container only requires recharging with the softening powder at intervals. It is now quite simple to secure an illimitable supply of softened water, and the apparatus is designed to meet the requirements of dwellings of any size.

### AN INGENIOUS FOLDING AND COLLAPSIBLE SEAT.

Distinct ingenuity has been displayed in the design of a new folding and collapsible seat which has recently been placed on the market, and which is quite different from the usual seat of this type. Its features are extreme rigidity when set up, while when closed it is completely concealed from sight. Its weight is about ten pounds, and yet when it is packed the thickness is only one and a quarter inches, so that two dozen seats can be stacked in the space that is ordinarily occupied by one chair. It is excellently adapted for motor-cars, restaurants, assembly-rooms, and indeed just meets those conditions where a permanent fixed seat is not required, but where in cases of necessity it is extremely useful to place an additional chair. If it is used as an extra seat in a motor-car, a shallow well can be cut into the floor, and when the seat is packed up it

will rest entirely within this space and be concealed from sight by a mat. The mechanism is extremely simple, working on a lever system, while all parts are made interchangeable, so that should any part be broken it can be easily and cheaply replaced. The design ensures that the greater the weight brought to bear upon it the more firmly does it lock itself in position. It is opened simply by taking hold of the chair by the back and letting it drop into position, while collapse is brought about by pulling a lever and letting it fall gently so that the legs telescope into one another. The inventor has devised a folding and collapsible table upon the same principle, and the system is one of the simplest and most efficient that has ever been evolved.

### A NEW ALFALFA.

Mr Zaritz, in the last report of the Ontario Agricultural College, recommends that alfalfa or lucerne should be very carefully tested on many farms throughout Ontario, because of its large yield, as being a nutritious food for stock, for its perennial character, and its beneficial influence on the soil. A bulletin on the subject was issued by this society in 1908. The New York *Outlook* for June, in an important article, records the success of Mr Niels Ebbesen Hansen, plant-explorer for the United States Government, who after twelve years' search has discovered a variety which will grow as far north as any one may care to farm it, even to the latitude of Alaska. Hitherto the kind of alfalfa grown in the United States did not stand northern winters. The new alfalfa brought from Siberia, crossed with the luxuriant kinds in the south-west, is expected to yield an ideal forage and act as a soil-restorer, and will stand a northern climate. By its growth and development hundreds of millions of dollars may be expected to be added to the wealth of the farming interest in the United States and Canada.

### THE EARTH-TELEPHONE FOR MINES.

A daily paper remarks that half the terrors of mining accidents will probably be done away with by the use of the wireless telephone of Mr A. J. Sharman, whose early experiments were described two years ago. Telephonic communication can be established in an instant by the wireless or 'earth-wave' apparatus. An entombed miner buried some hundreds of feet in the bowels of the earth can carry on a conversation with a rescue-party above with perfect ease with Mr Sharman's instruments. By this means, after a mining accident, those entombed could at once inform a rescue-party of their exact position, the extent of the damage, the locality of a fire, and the best means of reaching them. A camera-like apparatus on a light tripod stand, connected by two wires to iron pegs which are plunged into the earth, is placed above-ground. A similar instrument is fixed up in the darkness of the mine underground. With this conversation can be held above-ground with those underground. In an experiment made, the spoken words were clearer and crisper than with any ordinary telephone, and a conversation was carried on, without the slightest trouble, for some minutes. By the use of a key attached to the instrument, Morse messages were also exchanged by wireless telegraphy. The principle of Mr Sharman's instrument is to utilise the earth for transmitting electric waves just as sound-waves are transmitted through the air. The telephone is made to actuate an 'impulse-coil,' which sends electric impulses through the earth, which reach the iron pegs of the receiving instrument. A similar telephone there picks up the electric waves and converts them into sounds. Experimental tests have shown that the system is even more effective in water.

### GROUSE DISEASE.

Pending the final report of the Grouse Disease Inquiry, a reprint of an article in the *Times* on grouse disease by Mr Arthur E. Shipley gives a convenient summary of our present knowledge in popular language. What is made very evident is that grouse suffer not from one but from many different diseases. They are described as not only birds, but in a small way Zoological Gardens. As a result of the Inquiry there have been recorded eight different species of insect or mite living either amongst the feathers or on the skin of the bird or in other ways associated with it; no fewer than fifteen animal parasites have been found living in the alimentary canal, the lungs, or other organs. Some of these may be of little account, but the importance of the fullest study and inquiry is evident, for with fuller knowledge comes the power to checkmate and eliminate the dangerous parasites, and this is the direction in which the Inquiry has been working.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### 'IN TIMES OF PEACE PREPARE TO MAINTAIN PEACE.'

ENGLAND, my England, keep your bulwarks strong,
For war is short and sharp, though peace be long.
Look to your armaments, make no surcease,
For wars are won in piping times of peace.
Yes, 'tis in hours of peace that wars are won,
When forged the sabre is, and cast the gun;
Not in the storm and stress of battling hosts,
Not in the hour when men are turned to ghosts,
Not when the conquered hero yields his sword,
And yester's vanquished is to-morrow's lord.
For sure it is as aught beneath the sun
That things are finished when they're well begun.

G. S. LAYARD.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# WILD OATS.

By SUSAN BALLARD, Author of *The Open Door, His Inheritance,* &c.

## CHAPTER I.

TWO girls were born in the same year whose threads were destined to cross each other in the web of Fate. They were born at opposite sides of this great round world, they never saw each other's faces, yet each was a powerful factor in the life of the other—Helen and O Tatsu San.

The very sound of their names tells how different were their characters, their surroundings, their upbringing; yet they were alike in that they each possessed a warm, loving, woman's heart.

Helen Garth's girlhood was passed in a pleasant Surrey village. It was the happy, healthy life so common to the English maiden, full of steady headwork, and also full of breezy, boyish amusements. Her pony, her dogs, her hockey, her skating, her Sunday school, her books—these and a hundred other pleasures filled her days. Life was replete with love and good things, and they all went to feed a generous, frank nature, and to build up a noble woman.

While Helen Garth, in the breezy atmosphere of English country-life, was shooting up into a healthy, laughing young woman, a willowy, silent, faintly smiling little creature in Japan was also passing into womanhood. Helen's home was full of fine pieces of furniture; pictures covered the walls; books lay about in profusion; flowers were to be seen on all sides. In O Tatsu San's home were white-matted floors, a single picture on the sitting-room wall, and a single flower-vase; there was a sense of space from the complete absence of furniture. In front of the sunny Japanese house a garden ran down to the seashore. Standing on the veranda, O Tatsu San could look across the sunlit, sparkling waves to the other side of the bay, where a range of low mountains hid the base of Mount Fuji. In the morning the snow-capped mountain seemed to hang suspended above the clouds, and in the evening it stood out black and sharp-cut against the glowing western sky.

Little O Tatsu San loved the peerless mountain; morning and evening she stood on the veranda and gazed at it, dreaming many dreams of the great, busy world outside Japan. Her life had not the many interests and pleasures that fell to the lot of Helen Garth; it was uneventful and placid. She had passed through her school-time, forming a few pleasant girl friendships, and then she had been sent to live with an old grandmother who preferred the family house by the seashore to the streets of Tokyo. O Tatsu San's life had no events in it, but it was all the more full of dreams. She loved to pore over books and magazines, and read of the great world of which she was an inhabitant, but of which she had seen nothing. Would she ever see the world, she wondered—the world that lay beyond the sea, the world that introduced such strange things to her country? Sometimes, on the little strolls which were all the exercise she ever thought of taking, she would see a motor flash past, full of eager, laughing, talking sightseers, and she would gaze after them, longing to go out into a world that was full of such things and such people.

Life flowed quietly on until Cyril Winston crossed the threshold of the quiet house by the seashore. Cyril Winston was the only son of a widowed mother. His means were ample; and when, as a boy, he declared his intention to devote himself to art, it was generally conceded that he could afford to gratify his tastes. His mother was a woman of great judgment, and her love for her son had by no means made her overvalue his power as an artist; she doubted whether he would become an artist of the first class, and she was all the more determined that he should be an educated gentleman. 'Become an artist if you will,' she said, 'and


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be as great an artist as you can; but first of all be an educated gentleman. You must go to the university; there is plenty of time for your art studies.'

Cyril spent all his vacations at his mother's house, which was in the same part of Surrey as Helen Garth's home. There was a close intimacy between the two families; and Cyril, having no brothers or sisters, spent much of his time at the house of Colonel Garth, where Helen and her brothers formed a noisy, happy party.

Helen and Cyril were constant companions; they rode together, they played tennis together, they read the same books, and to Helen alone Cyril confided all his ambitions as an artist. Helen was at times a little doubtful of these ambitions. To be a great soldier or philanthropist was more the kind of ambition she admired; still, she was quite willing to admit that a great artist held great power over people's minds, and of course neither she nor Cyril ever doubted but that he would do something remarkable.

Cyril was twenty-two when he finished his time at Oxford. His degree was not brilliant, and he knew by the silence with which his mother and Helen treated it how disappointed they were.

'Hang it all!' he said at last to Helen, 'did you expect a man who is going to be an artist to grind at college as if he were going to be a schoolmaster? No, I went to Oxford to please the mater; but of course I did not give up my painting altogether. I always had a picture or two on hand.'

'But surely, Cyril,' pleaded Helen, 'it would have been better to leave the painting till you regularly began as an art-student!'

His mother's and Helen's disappointment rankled in Cyril's mind. He felt that women were so unreasonable, so exacting; women are fond of admiration, but a man simply craves the admiration of his womenkind, and feels himself unjustly dealt with if he does not receive it.

Cyril had always spoken as if he were longing for the day when he would begin life as a regular art-student, so that it was a considerable surprise to Helen when he announced to her that he was going to make a tour round the world before settling down.

'You see, Helen,' he explained, 'when I once begin the art-training I shall have to stick to it—no running off then; so I may as well see a little before I begin. I would like to see Japan. Who knows, I may be able to produce a new style, a kind of combination of the Japanese and European methods. Anyhow, a painter is all the better for having seen a good deal; it gives him more breadth. The mater thinks it a capital plan. You must look after her while I am away, Helen; and of course I shall write to you, and you must write to me and let me know what is going on at home.'

### CHAPTER II.

IT was spring-time when Cyril Winston arrived in Japan. The cherry-trees which line so many of the streets were hanging out their pink bunches of blossom, and beneath their spreading branches there was a perpetual passing to and fro of a laughing, leisured crowd of pleasure-seekers.

Cyril felt as if he had stepped into the land of art, and he became wildly anxious to lead a Japanese kind of life in a really Japanese house.

The hotel was able to furnish him with a young man who was willing to act as guide and servant to him. Yamada was not one of the professional guides, but a young fellow who had been in America, and after losing his health there, had come back to Japan in hope of getting strong again. He just suited Cyril, as he could talk English fluently, and was willing to turn his hand to anything that did not require much bodily exertion.

When Cyril explained to him his wish to hire a house on the seacoast where he could paint views of Mount Fuji, and where he could live in a Japanese way, Yamada was confident that he could supply the want. After a day's absence from Tokyo, he returned to report that he had found the very thing that Cyril desired—a house in which there lived an old Japanese dame and her granddaughter and servant, where there were several unused rooms which they were willing to let, and from which there was a splendid view of Mount Fuji across the bay. The old Japanese lady was quite willing to let him have the rooms, as she was not well off, and the rent would be an acceptable addition to her income.

It was in this way that Cyril Winston became an inhabitant of the little house by the seashore, along with O Tatsu San and her grandmother.

When Cyril took possession of his Japanese rooms it seemed to him as if he had ceased to be a twentieth-century Englishman, that he had entered into a totally different kind of existence. The dainty little house, with its complete absence of furniture, absence of knick-knacks, absence of everything that had seemed to him to be necessary to daily life; the noiseless movements of the women on the matted floor; the admiring attention which met him at every turn—all these things had the effect of a dream on him. O Tatsu San's grandmother was a lady of the old school; her bows were many and her politeness elaborate. As for O Tatsu San, during the first few days she was invisible, being much too shy to appear before the stranger; but her interest in him was unbounded. It seemed to her as if a bit of the real big world had suddenly dropped into her life. His leather trunks, covered with labels, were so suggestive of all kinds of exciting places that she would sit beside them and spell out the names to herself, and wonder what he had done in all these different parts of the world.

When Cyril set up an easel in the garden to paint Mount Fuji, as seen across the bay, she felt that if she were to die for it she must see what he was doing; and so she stole behind him and watched his work, and when once the spell was broken between them she was only happy when by his side. Had he talked much he would have frightened her away; but he was absorbed in his work, and she merely sat by and watched. When the first sketch of Mount Fuji, as seen with a near foreground of pine-trees and bamboos, was finished, Cyril elected to do another at a little distance from the house, where he could get a bold cliff rising from the sea as his foreground. O Tatsu San was only too ready to help to carry his things, and their friendship grew apace. They had but few words of mutual language in which to carry on a conversation, but it is wonderful how intimate people can become with only the language of the eyes. To have this sweet, gentle little girl beside him, watching his face to anticipate his every wish, gave Cyril just that companionship he craved; her admiration was so genuine and so soothing to the feelings that had been rubbed by his mother and Helen.

The old grandmother was delighted that O Tatsu San could be of any use. The dear, wrinkled-faced old dame looked upon her granddaughter as an absolute child; she never realised that she was dealing with a young woman. 'Carry his brushes carefully,' she would say as O Tatsu San set out; 'be sure you don't drop them. How kind it is of him to let you look on! Be sure you are not in his way.'

Cyril began to feel O Tatsu San's presence to be necessary to his well-being, and he was horrified one morning to come upon her with her face buried in her sleeve, weeping silently. He attempted to put his arm round her and caress her, but she shrank away. He went to Yamada, whose English he was dependent on for all his information. 'What is the matter with her, Yamada?' he asked. 'Something must be done; the poor little thing looks awfully unhappy.'

'Her father wants her to marry,' was Yamada's reply. 'She is nearly twenty, so she must marry; but she has never seen the man, and she does not want to marry him. She wants to be with you. If you like her you had better marry her.'

Cyril walked out of the house speechless with astonishment. 'She wants to be with you. You had better marry her.' He had thought of her as a mere child, and she was going to be married; but of course he was not going to let that sweet little girl be carried off weeping, to marry against her will some man she had never seen. The thing was preposterous, cruel. 'She wants to be with you. You had better marry her.' Well, and why not? He certainly was not bound to consider British ideas. He was in Japan, leading as far as possible a Japanese life, and he would follow Japanese customs. 'When you are in Rome do as the Romans do;' and as for the future, it must take care of itself. Certainly life in Japan would be very dull without the presence of O Tatsu San, such a dear, sweet little creature, never in the way and never cross. Truth to tell, masculine-like, Cyril was immensely enjoying the sensation of being unquestioningly admired. He had never before received unquestioning feminine worship. His mother was much too strong a character to give that to her son, and he knew that his faults were quite clear to her eyes. Helen and he were great friends, but she also was a clear-eyed, somewhat critical young woman, and he was frequently conscious of having fallen below her standard. But in the eyes of O Tatsu San he was perfect, and he knew it.

A Japanese wife would be a novelty at home, he thought; but was he really binding himself for life? That would be a serious step, but this need not be a lifelong promise. He had always understood that marriages in Japan were not necessarily life-contracts, but quite different from marriages at home. He certainly could not let a sweet little girl be carried off and forced into a marriage against her will. At the same time he did not intend to commit himself too much, and so he resolved not to tell his mother of anything he might do. The thought of Helen Garth would obtrude itself, but Helen Garth's high ideals were not suited to his present frame of mind. 'Helen always expects too much, and this little girl is really restful compared to her.'

The next day O Tatsu San slipped into her accustomed place by his side. Cyril took no notice of her at first; and then, when a pause came in his work, he put his arm round her and drew her towards him. At first she resisted for a moment, and then, blushing crimson, she yielded to his caresses.

'Yamada,' said Cyril that evening, 'I will marry O Tatsu San. You go up to Tokyo to-morrow and talk to her father about it. You can tell him that I have plenty of money, and will keep the old lady too. He need have no further expense here. Mind you tell him that I will be very kind to O Tatsu San, but I don't want any fuss about the marriage, you understand.'

Yamada's face beamed all over. 'Yes, yes, that will be very happy for O Tatsu San. I will bring her father back with me, and we will have a marriage feast with proper marriage ceremony.'

Cyril was alarmed.

'What do you mean by marriage ceremony?' he asked.

'Oh, we will teach you,' said Yamada. 'You must drink sake-cups in proper way.'

'Drink sake-cups!' said Cyril in a relieved tone. 'Yes, I'll drink any number of sake-cups you like.'

*(To be continued.)*

# FROM THE DEEP SEA.

By Edwin Lester Arnold.

FACING a London dock-station is a building none would look at twice if they did not know its purpose. Plain-built within and without, it is only in the crypt below that the romance of this, one of the great town's strangest but least-known public edifices, begins. Hither drift from all parts of the world the belongings of those who have gone down to the sea in ships and from one sufficient cause or another never returned. Piled in rows along the floor, stacked as neatly as may be in the honeycomb recesses against the wall, all this quaint and suggestive baggage waits day by day for those inquirers or next-of-kin who may or may not come to claim it. It is poor stuff for the most part, not worth taking away save by those who perchance find amongst the lumber something recognisable, something that carries its own silent news with it. *That* may be worth fetching home; but for the rest, an auctioneer's clerk in Wapping would scarcely care to catalogue such stuff for a Saturday's night-sale. Gunny bags and boxes, heathen idols and old portmanteaus gray with sea-rime, empty parrot-cages and accordions, models of ships, old sea-boots, and guernseys stiff with salt — surely the most varied flotsam and jetsam thrown up on any beach since the world began!

Yet many of the white labels hanging from these stored packages, and recording with official brevity all that is known, that ever will be known, of the owner are eloquent in their very terseness. Some are prosaic enough. One does not light on a story every day or everywhere; but nevertheless the humble romances are plain to read, and a little sympathetic imagination brings them into strong relief against the mass of commonplace. There is no mistaking that sea-chest, for instance, still smelling of 'tween decks, and carrying with it the unaccountable aromas of the deep. Officially it belonged to Henry Higgins, A.B., of the *Morning Star* whaler, who was reported as missing in Torres Strait. And Henry Higgins foresaid had obviously beguiled some leisure by carving his initials, with two others that look like M.F., within the outline of a heart on the box-lid; a strange place to put them, but no doubt Henry's soul was full of ardour and nothing else conveniently at hand. One passes an appreciative finger over the unfinished outlines, and sighs for poor Madge, or Maud, or Margaret—which was it? Will she grieve long for Higgins? Will she wonder and wait? Will she ever know how he came to be 'missing in Torres Strait,' or has she—as perhaps is best—already consoled herself with Henry's rival?

Here again is a sack of seaman's clothing standing on the floor and looking like a great medicine-bottle corked by the protruding head of a heathen idol—the forecastle has strange ideas of packing. What was the owner going to do with that ugly image? Was it for his sweetheart, or some parlour mantelpiece in Wapping? All we know is that he died by lightning, furling sail in mid-Pacific, and if the exact latitude and longitude are any consolation to his heirs, why, there they are upon his mortuary ticket.

Lightning is fiery stuff in the tropics, and will not be played with. The writer remembers one storm that came on suddenly at the back of a south-wester, the gale itself seeming to die away into silence in the tremendous roar of the thunder overhead. The lightning was dazzling, and soon after it began a young seaman was sent to loosen and cast into the sea the end of the wire conductor which came down from the mainmast and was coiled in the lee shrouds. He was a handsome young fellow of eighteen, and whipping out his bright seaman's knife, ran down the streaming deck and jumped up the ratlines active as a cat. Holding on with his left hand, he had just cut loose the lashings and thrown the wire overboard when again the blue flame blazed above the masthead. When it died out the boy was still standing there, and those who watched saw him stand immovable for a full minute, smiling placidly, while the ship rolled slowly in the trough of the sea. Then they saw him lean slightly outwards, lean more and more backwards without the movement of a muscle, the knife still in his hand, the smile on his wet face, till he turned right over, as rigid as a bar of steel, and, head down, heels up, dropped dead into the foam below. Truly the Pacific lightning is not to be played with!

A little farther on in this strange lumber-room is a dingy basket of foreign make, with a flute and brass opium-pipe crossed in heraldic fashion upon the lid, and it scarcely needs a glance at the label to tell us that it belonged to a Chinaman. Ah Sing was killed, and possibly eaten, by New Guinea natives. That is why there is no more music in his reed, and why the ruby bead of sleepy narcotic in his pipe tempts him no more to happy visionary worlds where pay is high and the 'capt'in man' no longer scolds or bullies. Ah Sing has gone prospecting for himself! Farther on lies an engineer's outfit or a miner's pick and spade; and beyond again, catching the eye at once by something of extra neatness, a leather trunk which sea-water has turned as green as old brass. We lift the lid with reverence, and there, ever so neatly folded, is a bride's dress ready to put on, but never worn. The yellow tissue-paper still wraps the silver tinsel and buttons as it did on that day when it first came home to some April-hearted girl! The orange-

blossoms lie waiting with it, and a Bible with a strand of brown hair marks the Marriage Service, and underneath are other faded things, but not a word about *her*, not a line, not a letter, not a syllable to tell us who she was, where she was going, or how she came to leave these gentle things to chance and strangers. If they smell of myrtle and lavender, there is the uglier odour of tragedy in some fire-scorched, salt-soaked baggage farther off; and so the curious story runs, day by day and bit by bit, to the sympathetic explorer.

How large is the amount of property coming to this resting-place of ownerless baggage will be guessed when the heavy toll of ships taken by the sea each year is remembered. Some recent figures tell us that in one season over fifty vessels were known to have been abandoned, their crews leaving everything they had on board in the hurry of flight. During the same period twenty-seven vessels were more or less completely burnt, seventy foundered, and seventy-seven were lost by collision. Those that sailed out of harbour for various destinations and were never heard of again numbered forty-four, while three hundred and thirty-five others were wrecked. It is the derelict which is the best patron of the storehouse down at Wapping.

Every harbour has its collection of these latter waifs and strays of the ocean. There is such a gathering in the Gravesend reach of the Thames, a group of craft of all shapes and builds lying moored stem and stern, under the low, green river-bank, blistering in summer sun and mouldering under winter rain until they fall to pieces, or the ship-knacker, taking compassion, buys a hulk for the sake of its teak and copper nails, and, breaking her in the yards higher up the river, thus ends a story of which the deep sea in most cases jealously guards the secret.

What, for instance, could be more weird or perplexing than the mystery of a derelict brought in from the neighbourhood of Gibraltar some time ago? She was seen one morning at dawn beating idly about by a cruising gunboat; and although sails were set and everything was in good order above and below, it was obvious to a seaman's eye that all was not well on board. So strange were her movements that the little, gray cruiser bore down upon the stranger, and in the shadow of her flapping canvas hailed the bridge. But there was no response and no one appeared. A boat was launched, and a lieutenant and half-a-dozen men boarded the ship. When they got on deck they found it absolutely deserted. There was not a living soul in the cabins, and the forecastle, where the crew should have been, was a blank. In the davits all the vessel's boats were hanging untouched, thereby showing that none of her company had gone away by this means. There was not the slightest sign of a struggle on deck such as would have been left by a mutiny. In the cook's galley preparations had been made for the next meal, and everything remained as it stood. The lights were burning low in the port and starboard lanterns. The captain's log-book was made up to within a few hours previously, and recorded nothing remarkable; yet the ship was a blank, a silent, lifeless hulk beating to and fro on a calm sea, with not a man or a woman remaining of the fifty or more that must have peopled her to tell what had happened. And nothing further was ever known! She was towed home, and the inevitable inquiries made, but nothing came of them, and that was the end of the matter. Many theories were started at the time to account for the unaccountable, one of the strangest being that at dead of night the vessel had sailed into the midst of a horde of gigantic cuttle-fish, and these monsters had clambered on board in the dark and overpowered and removed every living being from her; a weird, nightmare idea worthy of Jules Verne at his best!

Such are some of the means by which the seaman's great lumber-room is replenished. Of course all in it is not wonderful; the romance is only here and there amongst the prosaic of every day. But it exists, and makes a strange, disconnected story of hope and mischance, of tragedy and comedy acted before the background of that sea whose mystery since the world began has always added emphasis to human drama.

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# LAURISTONS.

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

## CHAPTER LVI.—HOW THE WAYS OPENED FOR JACK.

JACK had looked forward with nothing but depression to the reoccupancy of his stool in the bank, but supposed he would become reconciled to it in time, as he had been before his brief knight-errantry. But he need not have troubled himself. He had carried this matter through successfully at cost to himself; the Lauristons never forgot; and Sir Charles foresaw wider work for him.

The day after he got home he was summoned to the private room.

'I have been talking to your grandfather about you, my boy,' said Sir Charles; 'and this is what is in our minds. You have proved yourself capable and resourceful; trustworthy I have always known you to be. Being a Sax, you could be nothing else. From all appearances—at all events unless or until something untoward happens to Bonaparte—the mainspring of events will be on the Continent. I

propose that you shall become our travelling correspondent there. It will be a position of the very highest importance. You will have to mix with men and women in all ranks of society, and on the reliability of your news and forecasts our operations will be largely based. What do you say?'

'I will do everything that in me lies, sir,' Jack replied.

'I am sure of it, my boy. As preparation for the work I shall want you to study the higher finance and the bearing of events on the markets here under your grandfather for a time. No man in London is more capable or has a wider grasp. Also, pick up all the German you can; you will find it useful, in fact essential. Your French, I know, is all right. When your grandfather says you are ready for the great road you will start.'

So here was an outlook fit to turn a less sober brain, and from the business point of view Jack was well content. As to other matters, the future was his, in its possibilities, though not his to map and plan. He must leave it—as, after all, the most cautious and forethoughtful among us must—in higher hands, and content himself with full and valiant play with the present.

He and his grandfather dined with Sir Charles and Mavie and Charles in Grosvenor Place the following night, and everybody was very cordial and congratulatory, and Mavie and Jack lived some of their adventures over again to a keenly interested audience. And if Jack went home a little uplifted by the fact that Miss Lauriston's bearing to him was as frank and cordial as it had been when she wore a blue guernsey and wide trousers it need not surprise us; for he had been looking forward with vague discomfort to the time that should be as those middle days, when the old comradeship was only a joyous memory and the newer friendship was beyond his largest hopes.

She was indeed, that night, graver than he had ever known her; but that, he said to himself, was only natural and right and proper in the shadow of her great loss. And she looked so tremendously grown-up in her black evening-gown that he was quite startled at his first sight of her, and had to look many times again, when she was speaking to the others, before he could fully reconcile this slim, stately figure with that other slim figure in blue with which he had grown so familiar.

On the whole, he decided, he liked her better *en camarade* than *en grande demoiselle;* but by degrees, as the Mavie within showed herself unchanged, he thought he had never in all his life seen anything so exquisite as Mavie in black, and in that he was probably not far wrong.

Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait of her was painted some six months later than this, and a more beautiful type of maidenhood just merging into womanhood it is hardly possible to conceive of. It was that picture that led me to the life that lay behind it, and so to this very inadequate telling of her story.

## CHAPTER LVII.—HOW TIME'S FINGERS TOUCHED THEM ALL.

IN thus setting young John Sax's feet to ways which could not have been more to his liking if he had planned them himself, Sir Charles was planting even better than he knew. For here was a nature strong and restrained, animated by a dogged perseverance that nothing could daunt, tap-rooted to good by birth and training, and with the mightiest of all motives to strong and speedy growth.

Jack recognised his floodtide, and flung himself on it with his face set steadily to the front, where behind the veils of the future lay his fortune and all his highest hopes. He was no genius, but he had learned that which genius fails to learn at times, and thereby comes to grief; he had learned to learn, and that life is full of things worth learning, and that the only royal road to knowledge is work.

If there was nothing brilliant about him, there was nothing superficial. If he did not know a thing that it behoved him to know, he simply slogged at it till it was his; but, once his, it was his for all time, and ready for use when called upon. Under his grandfather's willing tutelage he studied the problems and complexities of finance, and dug into the reasons of things and the play and counterplay of cause and effect on the delicate nerves of the money-market. To him, with utmost willingness, were opened the stores of knowledge garnered through a long and single-aimed life as they could have been to no other; and Jack pondered them slowly and steadily, and made them his.

In the same way he slogged at German, going to school again of a night to an old professor of many languages, a Pole who had declined to become either Prussian, Russian, or Austrian on the perpetration of the Great Crime, though his tongue would have passed him as any one of them. He discovered in his new pupil an appetite for learning rare to his experience, and rejoiced in him accordingly. 'Mein Gott, my young friend, if you will I will teach you every language in Europe,' he said one day. But Jack modestly replied that he thought German would suffice, though if he could pick up a smattering of Russian he would not mind.

It was a full year after Lady Charles's death before the wider hospitalities of Grosvenor Place were resumed, and to Sir Charles the simpler life had been a mighty relief. A quiet dinner, with Mavie at the foot of the table and two or three friends at the sides, was very much more to his liking than the grand banquets which his position at other times entailed.

To these friendly gatherings Jack was not infrequently invited with his grandfather. They were the bright threads in the gray of his laborious life, and were looked forward to with eagerness and back upon with delight. For Mavie, growing visibly into a very beautiful woman, and changing in many ways month by month, in this one thing showed

no sign of change—she never forgot what she owed to John Sax and what they had gone through together. The remembrance of that good-comradeship bore against conventional barriers and set him at his ease, even when the novel changes of a month made him feel momentarily shy in her presence.

Charles came up occasionally, each time more martial than the last, and ever eager for active service, until he was summoned to join his regiment, and in due course was on his way to Spain with Sir Arthur Wellesley.

On the Continent, Bonaparte had been carrying all before him and enforcing his own belief in his invincibility on all his unfortunate neighbours save one. Austerlitz, Auerstadt, and Jena had crumpled up Austria, Russia, and Prussia. From Berlin he had issued his fatuous decrees ostracising Britain and provoking her laughter. Then at last, at Eylau, he suffered check at the hands of Russia, and the hopes of the down-trodden revived, and—of more immediate interest to us at the moment—John Sax set out on that quest after special news which was to give him little rest for many years to come.

Bonaparte had at last shown himself capable of being beaten at his own great game, and what had been might be. The Russians were said to be massing behind the Aller for another attempt, and Jack's instructions were, briefly, to get as near as he could to the scene of action, and, if anything striking happened, to bring home the news at the earliest possible moment—a business likely, you perceive, to be full of excitement and not lacking in dangers, and calling for qualities of address and resource and perseverance out of the common. He had a free hand, ample means, and a high heart; and so equipped a man may go far.

Sir Charles, as they shook hands, gave him only one piece of advice: 'Don't take any unnecessary risks, John. We don't want to lose you. Your best I know you will do.'

'I will do my best, sir.' And he was off.

In those next eight strenuous years he visited nearly every part of Europe except Spain, where Sir Arthur Wellesley, now Viscount Wellington, was, with Charles's assistance, rolling back the invader and fitting himself for the great final struggle elsewhere. But Spain was only a side-issue to Bonaparte, and Jack's business was to keep on the track of the maker of history.

Sir Charles had the news of Friedland three full days before the rest of the world, and turned it to good account; and Jack dined at Grosvenor Place, and gave him and Mavie a modestly full account of his travels and the sights he had seen, and enjoyed himself greatly.

Mavie he thought more wonderful than ever, and it was she this time who needed time to accustom herself to the change in him, and found herself gazing at him and saying, 'Is this really our John Sax?' For even those few months had told on him. In the first place, he was much leaner and browner than ever she had known him; and there was a new air of quiet reserve and assurance about him which came of mixing with men of position and finding himself cast upon his own resources in tight and difficult places; but these were only outward indications, surface changes, and all to the good, she acknowledged to herself. Below, he was just the same old Jack of earlier days—modest, frank, and in the face of him a man to be trusted.

Then he was away again, and this time for a long spell. With great care and elaborate precaution, and at considerable expense, he organised a system of communication with London from several central points, and kept Sir Charles fully posted as to everything that went on. When his news was of major importance he conveyed it always in person. He became known in Berlin and Vienna among the men who fanned the embers of patriotism beneath the heel of the conqueror. His knowledge of the actual facts of events, and the sound judgment he brought to bear upon them, gave him consequence among them. His novel honesty—for it was an age by no means free from corruption—and his quite phenomenal straightforwardness began to be recognised and to carry weight. Even Talleyrand—with whom he had come to be on excellent terms, for he was frequently in Paris, and more than once at Valençay—talked very freely with him, and doubtless got more than he gave, though the assistance he was able to render in the mere matter of free circulation was invaluable.

Time, packed tight with hazardous enterprise, passed with Jack with incredible swiftness, except when he was speeding home with news, and his wishes went before him and made the way seem long. With Mavie it went more slowly and equably, but not unmarked by happenings which, from the similarity of their initial symptoms, the regularity of their course, and their inevitable conclusion, began to grow monotonous.

'But what can I do, Hepsy?' she would ask of the faithful one, troubled in spite of herself at the disappointment she must inflict. 'I don't want any of these men round me; and as to marrying one of them'—— There the delightful little play of hands and shoulders, eloquent of France, told more than words. 'And I'm not going to shut myself up just because they're foolish!'

'I should think not, dearie. Men are foolish things mostly, and the man's not yet born that's good enough for you.'

'Oh Hepsy dear, what a time I'll have to wait! And what ages there will be between us when we do meet!'

'Well, well! maybe Mr Right, or my Lord Right, or the Duke of Right will turn up yet from somewhere, dearie; but I don't see him among these mincing bucks, and you're quite right to give them their congees.'

Suitors, in fact, buzzed about her like wasps round a honey-pot. She encouraged none, but could not help being charming to all. And even those who boldly put their fortunes to the test—in

the anxious hope of adding to or rehabilitating them—felt themselves better men for having tried, and had no word against her when they were gently dismissed; and that, I think, says much for her and perhaps something for them. And the noble army of Mavie's rejections passed on its way to more attainable heights, and to beauties more accessible, and to valiant deaths on sea and land.

There were good men among them. Hepsy's sweeping characterisation was inspired by her clinging love for her young mistress; but Mr Right had apparently not yet offered himself, and Hepsy wondered at times if she could possibly have met some one abroad and left her heart in his keeping. 'And, save us!' she said to Mr MacClootie one time, 'it couldna possibly be yon niffy-naffy, sliddery tod Etienne, now.'

'Havers!' said Jerry with contempt. 'Is she lackin' brains, woman?'

Which comforted Hepsy somewhat, in spite of its brusqueness, for Mavie and Jerry were comrades as of yore, and every morning, in the Park, Jerry's eyes rested with such whole-hearted pride on the graceful figure on the mettlesome bay in front that he could not have told you when he got home the points of any other rider. General ideas, indeed, he gathered, and all depreciatory. 'Luk at 'em! luk at 'em!' he would growl. 'Flour-bags an' sacks o' 'taties! An' she 's a queen, an' I taught her!'

But the rides she enjoyed above all others were those she took with her father still earlier in the morning, when, unattended, they would gallop out into the country past the strings of incoming market-wagons, away along the Edgware Road or out to Ealing for a look at the Red House, where at times they stayed, but only from Saturday to Monday, the bank tying Sir Charles to London at other times, and Mavie not caring to be away from him. They grew very close to one another these two, in surely one of the sweetest companionships life can offer. Naturally and racially of a reserved disposition, and never anything of a talker for mere talking's sake, Sir Charles had, since his father's death, become more silent than ever; and the world accepted this as right and proper, and credited him with a profundity of wisdom and knowledge which no amount of talking would have inspired.

When in course of time Sir Charles felt it incumbent upon him to open the doors of Grosvenor Place again to the world outside, Mavie developed the most surprising qualities as hostess, and bore herself with such simple grace and dignity as won her golden opinions even from dowagers of experience.

'Yes, she carries herself well, without a doubt,' said one such, watching her hostess critically through her eyeglasses, 'and with such an air! She might be a princess. Where did she learn that, now, I wonder?'

'In Paris,' said the other.

'But, my dear, Paris is not what it was. All the nobility had their heads cut off.'

'Not all. They say Bonaparte's Court is even more brilliant than his predecessor's, and many of the nobility have gone back. But Miss Lauriston is naturally very charming, don't you think? And living with her aunt the marquise, she would of course mix with the very best society. Some of the costumes over there are rather startling, I am told'——

'Who is that very brown, foreign-looking young man who has just come in?'

'That is Mr Sax, I believe. He has something to do with the bank, but spends all his time on the Continent.'

'He carries himself with an air also, from mixing so much with foreigners, I presume. Why, the Prince has sent for him actually, and is talking to him quite as if he were an equal! Surely you are mistaken, my dear.'

'I don't think so, but we can ask.—Colonel Keppel, who is that young man speaking with the Prince?'

'That, my dear madam, is Jack Sax. He fagged for me at Westminster, and is, or was, a rare hand at polishing boots.'

'Dear me! Polishing boots!' said the great old lady, who had no sons of her own. 'He seems to have improved his position since then. Quite to his credit, I am sure.'

'Yes; I was sorry to lose him. Lord Belgrave, who followed him, was an awful duffer at boots. I had to jump on him every day, and even then my boots were never up to Jack Sax's standard. Young Altamont did Jack's boots, I remember, and a jolly easy time he had of it.'

'Altamont?' queried the great old lady, very much puzzled.

'Yes, the Earl of Montalta, you know.'

'And he blacked that young man's boots?'

'Yes, madam, and was thankful that there were so few of them.'

'What strange things boys do at school! You seem to have spent most of your time blacking one another's boots.'

'Oh, old Carey made us do a lesson between times, now and again, just to give us the chance of a whacking, you know.'

'The brown young man seems on very good terms with Miss Lauriston also,' said the old lady to her friend.

'They used to play together as children, I believe.'

'And there is no talk of her getting married? She will have a handsome portion, I presume, and with her good looks she ought to be able to pick and choose. How old is she?'

'One-and-twenty, I believe; and as to getting married, they say she has a will of her own, and will decide that matter for herself.'

'Dear, dear! Twenty-one! Why, I was married at fifteen.'

To Sir Charles the coming and going of Mavie's many suitors was a source of amusement not wholly free from a touch of anxiety. If she married he would miss her dreadfully, for she was carrying out

her mother's last wishes to the full, and filling her place to the very best of her powers. Still, if she found her heart's desire he would never think of opposing her. And as to settlements—well, he would have to do the best he could. He feared at times that she might be denying herself on his account, and endeavoured to sound her on the matter as they rode together one morning.

But she flashed round on him in a way that set his mind at rest. 'Do you want to get rid of me, daddie?'

'My dear, you know better.'

'Very well, then! When I want to get married I will let you know, sir. Until I do we won't think any more about it.'

And, looking back upon the whole matter, to me the dominant figures through all those long eight years which followed Mavie's return from France are those of Charles Lauriston and old John Sax toiling incessantly in ways that were at times loathsome to them, and dreadful in the ever-present possibilities of disaster and irretrievable disgrace, toiling on—with the rope round their necks, yet with never a murmur or a reproach—to make good the default for which they were in no way responsible. Breakers of the law they were, and ripe fruit for the gallows if by one single slip their house of cards should collapse, to be held in contempt and reprobation by all honest men of this world without a doubt; and yet—and yet——

*(To be continued.)*

# THE BURNING OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

By Hugh Childers.

IT is a most curious coincidence in the recent history of England that the old system of Parliament and the old meeting-place of Parliament should have perished almost at the same moment. William IV.'s actual *coup d'état* (the dismissal of Melbourne) and his potential *coup d'état* (the written promise to create new peers to overcome the Tory majority against the Reform Bill) were less than three years apart, and in that short interval the ancient buildings perished by fire. Whatever other connection there may have been between the fire of October 16, 1834, and the dramatic *coup d'état* of November following, it is on record that Speaker Manners Sutton attributed his visits to the king—supposed to have been part of the 'intrigue' of November—only to questions relating to the fire.

We speak nowadays of the 'Houses of Parliament,' but the name 'Palace Yard' recalls the more monarchical designation 'Palace of Westminster.' This palace comprehended Westminster Hall, St Stephen's Chapel, its cloisters and crypt, the Painted Chamber, the Star Chamber, the Antioch Chamber, the Cage Chamber, the Chamber of the Holy Ghost, the Great Exchequer Chamber, Jewry, &c. St Stephen's Chapel was founded by Stephen, king of England, for a dean and canons; and the chapel, rebuilt in the reign of Edward II., was a fine example of Decorated architecture. Here was the meeting-place of the House of Commons. Nor was such a circumstance so incongruous as it sounds. The ecclesiastical authority was in earlier times predominant in England, and it was in keeping with such ideas that a body the most active, free, and independent that the world has ever seen should in its earlier days have had its meeting-place in a quasi-conventual chapel.

The old buildings had survived the system they typified. Adequate for housing the representatives of the old small boroughs and the knights of the shire, the picturesque chamber was disproportioned to the burgesses from the commercial cities of England. Glance for a moment at the picture—somewhere, I think, in the basement of the National Portrait Gallery—of the younger Pitt electrifying the members of an unreformed Parliament in knee-breeches and velvet coats, all huddled together, the handsome, silent, brainless representatives of many-acred noblemen. How unsuitable to the growing, insistent, angry needs of Manchester and Leeds and Birmingham! The old wine had been poured out, but the old bottles were still being used. The Reform Act had passed in 1832, and a General Election had followed in which the newly enfranchised electors 'remembered their creators in the days of their youth,' and gratefully gave their votes to the party to which they owed their possession. Gratitude to Lord Grey was the key-note of politics; but two years later Lord Grey left the Ministry of which he was the chief, and the weak but graceful Melbourne succeeded him, Lord Althorp continuing as Leader of the House of Commons. Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham also passed out of the Whig Ministry, which now had to ally itself closely with the Radicals and Irish Repealers. Thus in the autumn of 1834 we find a Radical Parliament, a Ministry stripped of its moderate men and tending to Radicalism.

In the middle of October men's minds begin once more to turn to London and to politics, and we can imagine most of the Ministers returning to their London homes. With what feelings of dismay must they have heard on the evening of the 16th that the Palace of Westminster was ablaze! At about half-past six the flames suddenly burst forth near the entrance of the Houses, and burnt with unexampled fury; by seven o'clock the whole interior of the building, as seen through its numerous windows, seemed one mass of fire. The wind was blowing south in a line from Abingdon Street to Charing Cross. Immense crowds were attracted

to the spot, and great exertions were promptly made to save as much as was possible of parliamentary documents and records. It soon appeared that the old House of Lords was doomed, and consequently the firemen began to concentrate their efforts upon saving the House of Commons and Westminster Hall. Unfortunately the wind now veered round to the west, thus throwing the flames immediately upon the House of Commons, the angle of which, at its junction with the House of Lords, caught fire. Desperate attempts were now made by the firemen, the soldiers who had been called out also lending their aid, to extinguish the flames, but to no purpose; for the massive roof, having ignited, fell in with a deafening crash, accompanied, as may be imagined, by an immense volume of flame and smoke, and emitting myriad sparks and flakes of fire in every direction. So brilliant in the darkness was the blaze and so deafening the noise that an explosion of gunpowder was hastily surmised by the spectators.

Westminster Hall, the pride of English history, was now in imminent peril, menaced by flames all round its southern extremity. Engines were introduced into the Hall and the whole interior deluged with water. With extraordinary courage—for their work was being done at great personal risk—the firemen and soldiers outside the building redoubled their exertions, so that eventually the Hall was saved.

The Speaker's house, however, was much burnt, and a great deal of valuable furniture and plate, his personal property, destroyed, as I shall mention later. Many interesting documents appertaining to the two Houses disappeared in the flames, as did the tapestry of the Spanish Armada and some fragments of ancient painting in the Painted Chamber and St Stephen's Chapel. 'A curiosity saved from the fire,' wrote a contemporary chronicler, 'is an oak table marked with the blood of Perceval.' Such is our artistic loyalty to the picturesque in history!

King William and Queen Adelaide visited the ruins on the following day, and with what strange emotion must they and many others have looked upon the scene of destruction! The fierce struggle of the people for political recognition, the rejection of THE BILL by the Lords, the threatened creation of a wholesale batch of reforming peers, the final submission, seems typified in the annihilation of the scene of the deadly encounters.

And what was the cause of the fire? In order to answer this question the Privy Council assembled a week later, among them Melbourne (the Prime Minister), Lord Chancellor Brougham, and Palmerston (the Foreign Secretary). They listened to many witnesses, including those testifying to a really remarkable canard, and published their report on the 8th of November—prompt work, accounted for no doubt by the fuller time then available for addressing one's self to the matter in hand. The report can be shortly summarised.

A room in the palace being about to be fitted up for the use of the Court of Review, then recently established, a quantity of wooden tallies or foils, stored in the tally-room of the Exchequer and believed to be now obsolete and useless, was ordered by the Treasury to be destroyed, and the Deputy Chamberlain of the Exchequer thereupon gave directions for this to be done. The men employed to do it—such is the folly of humanity and the absence of proper supervision even in high places—flung them by armfuls into the stoves used for heating the House of Lords, piling the dry tallies three-fourths up the height of the furnaces. What might have been anticipated naturally occurred, and the historical pile of buildings was almost immediately in conflagration—a fine result of pig-headed negligence, indicating, as the Privy Council observed in their report, a total absence of evil design. But that there should not be wanting a perplexing element in the matter, it came to the ears of the Council before completing their examination of the evidence that a Mr Cooper, a respectable London business man, was maintaining in conversation with his friends that he had heard of the fire at Dudley at ten o'clock in the evening on which it had broken out—which, if the fire was accidental, was an obvious impossibility, for London and Dudley are over a hundred miles apart, and were not then connected by train or telegraph. His story, when he was giving his evidence, was that, having travelled down from London on business, he was having tea in the commercial-room of an inn, when he heard from another guest that 'the House of Lords is burnt down, occasioned by the carpenters being careless with the shavings.' He further swore that on returning to London he passed through Oxford on the night of the 17th, where he received authentic news of the disaster from the waiter at the Roebuck Hotel, and that he told the waiter that he had heard it the previous night at Dudley. The man was incredulous, and Cooper could not account for the rumour having been current. The Council called before them every one present at the Dudley Hotel they could get hold of—waiters and guests, besides the waiter at the 'Roebuck' at Oxford and the guard of the coach. Under this microscopic examination the story fell to pieces. Mr Cooper was acquitted of intentional falsehood, and the whole thing was probably a hallucination ascribable to excitement caused by overwork and hard travelling; though in these times the story might suggest another solution to the psychologists. The Oxford waiter denied that there had been anything in Cooper's reception of the real news of the fire to excite surprise or suggest previous knowledge. Curious as the episode is, it had the healthy effect of making the Council lynx-eyed to detect any symptom of incendiarism, and the suggestion of foul play was effectually disposed of.

And now were to follow political developments of the highest importance. On the 10th November —the report having been made on the 8th—Lord

Spencer died, and his eldest son, Lord Althorp, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons, ceased in consequence to be a member of that assembly. Students of *Coningsby* will remember the description of the episode at Beaumanoir, when the Duke, entering the breakfast-room with agitated brow, announced to his guests this startling piece of news, and was only able to convince the incredulous Rigby of its truth by the intelligence that he was Lord Spencer's executor. Beaumanoir, of course, was a colourable disguise of Belvoir.

Four days later Lord Melbourne waited on King William IV. at Brighton, and recommended Lord John Russell as Leader of the House of Commons; but the king—in intelligent anticipation of a *Punch* cartoon: 'I think you are not strong enough for the place, John'—disapproved the proposed arrangement, and skilfully availing himself of the indiscreet actions of Lord Brougham as a pretext for disparaging the Ministry, announced his intention of applying to the Tory leaders to form an administration. Here was a thunderclap indeed! The Duke of Wellington, who was first consulted, advised the king to summon Sir Robert Peel, then in Italy; and an emissary, Mr James Hudson, who many years later played a notable part in the unification of Italy, was despatched to Rome for the purpose. Meanwhile the Duke and Lord Lyndhurst carried on the Government of the country provisionally, leaving the Whigs and Radicals to bluster against the exercise of the Royal prerogative, and Brougham in particular to circulate the calumny, 'The queen has done it all.'

Hudson, as was said in a famous passage in a famous speech, 'burst into the chambers of the Vatican' to deliver his summons, and Peel returned to England to construct his first administration. What anxieties and dreary forebodings must have chased one another through that sincere and logical mind as, with all celerity, he crossed the Alps!

'At last he came; the great man in a great position, summoned from Rome to govern England.' Thus Disraeli describes the episode, passing on to the meeting of hungry aspirants to office: 'Murmuring knots of gray-headed privy councillors, who had held fat offices under Perceval and Liverpool, and who looked back to the Reform Act as a hideous dream;' and the young Tory, 'light as air and proud as a young peacock,' who thought an Under-Secretaryship now within his grasp because he was 'the son of a noble lord who had also in a public capacity plundered and blundered in the good old time.'

William IV.'s action could only be reconciled with modern constitutionalism by Peel accepting retrospective responsibility for it, which of course he did, and attempted to get popular sanction by dissolving the Parliament so enthusiastically elected. The appeal to a soberer Philip was only partially successful. The new Parliament had a more Conservative leavening, but the Whigs were still in a majority; and Russell, irritated by loss of office and votes, resolved to try conclusions at once with his great rival.

The election of a Speaker, the first business of a new Parliament, furnished a tempting opportunity. Yet a chivalrous politician might well have hesitated at such a juncture in opposing the re-election of Manners Sutton. He had presided over their debates for eighteen years and in seven successive Parliaments. No one was better acquainted with the rules and usages of the House, and this was a peculiar advantage at a moment when it had sustained so great a loss in the destruction of its records. Moreover, in 1832 Manners Sutton had definitely retired from the Chair, and been accorded the thanks of the House and a pension; but at the cordial insistence of the Whigs themselves had returned to give the first reformed (and presumably a headstrong) House of Commons the benefit of his ripe experience. And as if to put a coping-stone on the cruelty of the action, the motion for his rejection was made when he had sustained a heavy pecuniary loss in the destruction by the fire of his private plate and furniture in the Speaker's house. But a great 'public principle,' Russell maintained, was at stake; though what principle, in view of the previous Whig action, could be violated by the re-election of Manners Sutton the Tory leaders vainly strove to elicit. The result was a foregone conclusion, though Abercromby, the Whig nominee, got a bare majority of ten only. Happily the Tories were at once able to assuage the asperity of the stroke by according Manners Sutton a peerage, and he took the title of Viscount Canterbury, thus commemorating the fact that his father had been Primate.

Several years, however, elapsed before it was finally decided that he could not recover from the Crown compensation for the damage done him by the fire, not, indeed, until Abercromby had proved an ineffective Speaker and had been replaced by Shaw Lefevre. Then, in 1842, Lord Canterbury took proceedings against the Crown. He pleaded that by virtue of his office he occupied a portion of the Royal Palace appropriated in 1794 to the use of the Speaker, though George IV. had for a time subsequently resided there. He then recounted how, owing to the clearance of the tallies for the Court of Review, the fire had originated, and destroyed his furniture, books, prints, plate, and other effects. But he failed to get any redress, for the immunity of the Crown was naturally insisted on to its furthest extent. A master is, indeed, liable, said Lyndhurst, the brilliant and accomplished Chancellor, to make good the damage caused by his servants; but that is when he would be liable if he had committed the damage himself. Now, as the sovereign cannot, owing to his prerogatives, be guilty of negligence, so he or she cannot be responsible for the negligence of any one else. Strange that the blow should have been dealt at Lord Canterbury by the Chancellor of his own party!

# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Forgotten Rock, The Luck o' the Spey*, &c.

CHAPTER III.—*continued.*

ERRACHDALE had slept soundly at the Nick o' Dunerrach, wakening an hour after Neil had started. The echo of a cry, the blurred edge of a dream, lingered with him. He looked around the gray shadows of the cave. He was alone with the still figure. A streamer of light pointed a skinny finger at the dead man. Its arm swung down, and he looked curiously at the hand with the missing finger, speculating for a moment on the man's end. He called. No answer other than his voice's reverberant ring! He felt vaguely uneasy. There was no sign of his captors; but the fire had been recently fed, and on one of the couches he saw his pistol. Truly his were confiding jailers, he thought, as he examined the priming and peered round the cave, to find nothing. Then he went to the boulder, raised it, and stepped warily out, on guard against he knew not what. The only attack was by the snow's soft arrows. The morning was quiet and empty.

The ease of the affair puzzled him. He had given no parole, and there he was, free. Hurriedly shaping his plans, he sought his horse. The mare was not there. Round about him there were half-obliterated tracks, and a dull blotch on the white ground. It was blood, thinned and discoloured by the snow, but the dark innuendo was unmistakable. He had seen plenty of it. It was blood. He hesitated in unfertile conjecture, and then swiftly hit on a plan. The Errach, he knew, joined the Spey somewhere. Once at the river, he could easily find his way to the Tower.

He stepped into the woods, and, guided by the vociferous burn, headed north in a parallel to its course. There was no path. The snow fettered him, but there was safety out of the open. He went doggedly on for weary hours. Once, coming cautiously to the edge of the trees, and recognising the spot where the two rascals had unmasked themselves, he remembered that his lost sword was somewhere near, and on the thought swung himself down the declivity, and, to his joy, saw its bright, beckoning blade. A good omen! His hand on the hilt braced him like wine; its ring to the scabbard was a heartsome voice. He went back to his tramp through the woods, and the waning afternoon sun saw him at last at the edge of the Spey and watching a raft hurrying down on the full brown stream.

It was one of the old lumber flotilla from Badenoch to Garmouth, manned by two 'floaters' and laden with tall firs to be shipped to the King's dockyard at Woolwich. Here was a chance. He hailed them with a shout of 'The way to the Tower' as they came near. The man in front, a watchful eye on the river, called, 'We pass it,' and then pointing to a spit of rock jutting into the stream, 'Quick! Loup!' Errachdale caught the swift, laconic instructions; gained the rock, waiting until the raft swung alongside; jumped on board; and after half-an-hour on the steady current landed near the bridge, and was eagerly breasting the hill stretching up to the Tower, reaching the courtyard at the back just as Neil emerged from the wood. The two men never saw each other, Neil slipping among the trees to the front as Errachdale opened a door in the courtyard. A narrow slit of light marked a side-door at the top of a flight of stone steps. He pushed it open. A faint hum of voices somewhere and an occasional cackle of laughter from the servitors arose; but there was no one visible. He entered, and found himself on the narrow, winding stair of a turret.

The snow had ceased. The dusk deepened into an indigo night; the evening falling cold, windless, with a bite of frost, but dry and heartsome, and a bright moon was swinging a sickle in the lift. Candles were being lit in the house, but no one came near him. One by one the eyes of the Tower reddened and closed again suddenly as their oaken lids darkened them. A servitor carrying a lanthorn appeared for a moment outside, and the clang of a door broke the silence.

A Scots house this, built in the olden time, first raised as a fortalice and added to as the years passed, the tall keep-tower showed strength in its thick freestone walls (every honest stone bearing its mason's 'mark'), hinted at aloofness in its lines, and its long, narrow windows with their interlacing wrought-iron bars. Here and there the gray front was pierced by narrowing loopholes. A rounded turret hung like a swallow's nest at the north-western corner, corbelled, gargoyled, flanked by machicolated parapets, above them the familiar corbie-steps of the gable; and over all the ivy's slow, invading hand had woven and hung its soft tapestry from parapet to basement. The huge oaken door swung on crooks embedded in the solid masonry, diagonally strewn with iron studs, uncompromising, almost inhospitable-looking. Right above it, cleared of ivy, was carved the escutcheon of the house—a rock rising out of the sea, surmounted by a burning cresset; a single star at the honour point, with the motto, '*Soyez Fidèle*,' and below, on a stone built into the wall—a relic of the early days of the house—was cut the legend:

✠ MARK WEEL: TRAVELER DOUN: YE YEIRES: NANE GET WYSDOME: WIOUT TEARES ✠ 1532 ✠

A house of old times, memories of the lichened years on its gray head, in its weather-scarred face. It had seen a pall of smoke in the long ago spread

over Castle Lossie, and the Wolf of Badenoch riding homewards with his wild horde to the mountains, glutted with the poor vengeance. King Jamie, too, on his visits to his kinsman the Parson of Duffus, heard the treble mort sound here. Says the Chronicler: 'And ye land of Errackdaill marcheth nort to ye pleausant water of Spey, and siccar of hys services and loyaltie ye Kings Maiestie did hunt here for twa haill days, for there be greate hartes and fowles like to ye Forrest of Tarnaway, but ye hills be sair to traivell.' Memories of brave morns with hawk and hound; holy pilgrims on their way to the Blessed Virgin's Well at Orton; kilted caterans and the clash of steel; the scarlet of dragoons, gay music, and the bark of culverins; ruddy cressets flaming from the terrepleins; of bright eyes as well as the arquebuse glinting through its crenelles; of kisses as well as molten lead thrown from its parapets; of blood, merry-making, Life and Death. Scotch in its memories and traditions, from the iron bannerette crowning its turret to the 'loupin'-on-stane' on the right of the grim door!

But although there was no sparkle in its beetling brows and dour rectangles, in the scrutiny of its reticent eyes, it was even as the folk of the north countrie—ice without, fire and dew within. Its austere mien belied its glowing heart.

The oaken door opened on a long, narrow entrance, thence into a wide hall of noble proportions, simply and richly furnished. Hunting trophies, heads (for as fine stags as in Scotland roamed the Speyside woods then), antlers, armour, targes, claymores, rapiers, small swords, pikes, and glaives studded the wainscot, its dark oak enriched by countless variations in French carving of the fleur-de-lis. Of oak, too, was the unceiled roof, beamed and massive. The floor was covered with skins of deer, sea-otter, marten, and badger, and a fine tapestry swung at the upper end, concealing the entrance. At the lower end, a wide, projecting fireplace, pillared and canopied, glowed with blazing logs. A spinet stood in one corner. A Louis Quatorze mirror hung above the fireplace, and from many silver sconces round the dark walls the mellow beams of candles flooded the spacious hall, coruscating in answering glints from mirror and armour. There, in the warm heart of the house, sat a man and a woman.

The man was unusually handsome, girlish in his slightness, with straight but mobile features, and a bright, dark eye, an eye for either intrigue or high adventure. A hint of coarseness lay in a neck too thick for his small head and his oval face. Sir Archie's hands were white and as delicate as the woman's, his smile seraphic; but tell-tale lines, too deep for his thirty years, ran from the corners of a thin and cruel mouth, and shadowed an arched and haughty eyebrow. He would have shot a kingfisher for one of its bright feathers. Cards at Brooks's Club in St James's Street, masquerades and bright eyes at the Pantheon, lounging and wagers at Tattersall's, and bills floated by discerning sons of the Chosen People had cleaned his pockets, and here he was at his neglected home in the North, out of people's sight, and (except for his creditors) out of people's minds, out of tune with his surroundings, bored by his rustic neighbours, weary of the solitude and the everlasting hills, and the grinning Middleman who arranges most human tangles busying himself in the introduction of mischief to his idle hands.

The woman was Errachdale's wife, pink and white, blue-eyed, her lips like red rowans, her beauty wilful, rare, and undeniable, and linked to a daintiness bordering on fragility; a Titania of contradictions and surprises. She had two of woman's chief charms: a sweet, low voice and a sunny smile; but the smile covered a heart that was now the Riviera, now North Labrador, and, when occasion called, she had more than her share of the feminine weapon, the instinctive sense of and love for acting. Vain, capricious, insatiable of admiration, fond of excitement, as she was, with gold hidden somewhere, but never tested in life's crucible, marriage with her might mean either the man's endowment with a home or a harem of one, the lending to him wings or chains.

Errachdale was a keen soldier, skilled in the art and practice of leading men, capable in affairs, proved in many crises, yet temperamentally handicapped in the guiding of the main crisis of his own life. Home on leave from hard campaigning, he had been captivated by the wild-rose freshness of the girl. A summer night in England, the rapture of a nightingale somewhere near, a stray hair curl on the girl's neck, and with his wholesale contempt for half-measures he had plunged rather than fallen in a spring-tide of love. His homage, his downright wooing, his career, attracted her. It was a 'good match.' The Lauries had a 'place' in Scotland. They were coat-armour men. Thus and thus the gabbling omniscient spinsters. So in a current of excitement, curiosity, and liking for the big soldier, she married him, the little adventurous blind god smiling speculatively, and Prudence looking the other way. After two short months together, she buckled his sword on him and watched him through her tears march away again with a draft to the Peninsula. But hers were the tears of a humanised April. In spite of the poet, in her case absence sometimes made the days grow longer. The child imagined she was in Love's tide when she had been paddling in it up to her porcelain ankles. Somewhere up in the tall house her three-year-old boy lay sleeping.

She sat at an escritoire, writing a letter. It was addressed to her husband, the latter part of it running:

'And now, oh master mine, where are you roaming?

'The gossips are full of the praises of my brave husband, and it is sweet to hear your qualities sounded, although I knew them all; but I want you beside me. I almost believe that you prefer

fighting to me; but now that you have been wounded, your only call to arms shall be one to mine. Come here, or send for me.

'Let me confess, I ought to be content and dutiful; but in truth, my heart, I am often monstrous lonely. Old Andrew comes in the morning with his accompt-books, and groans if I do not grumble at them, and grumbles if I do. Then I have visitors, of whom more anon—but none whom I like; worst of all, none worth a toilette, so that I am in danger sometimes of not looking pretty. ('Tis a dreadful thought! but you would not like that, and you *insisted* that I was pretty!)

'And—as I am confessing—I have been bemusing a Mr Make-Believe, a Sir Archie Lyon, here. He is good to look upon, and has a delicate discrimination in ruffles and shoe-buckles. Also, he performs on the viola da gamba, and calls me Titania. The coxcomb imagines that I am in love with him! But he amuses me no longer. I am to give him his dismissal to-day.

'I count the days until I see you.

'Vic—the darling—looks at me with your eyes. I feel as though I had suddenly grown up. Hasten home, and help me to throw away my dolls—or order me to, for I am sure a woman is happiest when she is obeying a man—that is, if she wants to.'

She stopped writing, and laid the unfinished letter on the chimneypiece with a sigh. She stood at the spinet for a moment, touched a note, and sang softly,

'Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.'

Sir Archie rose from the carved oak chair, and stood in front of the fire, throwing a shapely leg.

'Finished writing, Titania? Are you wooing the muse?' he asked.

'I never woo. I command,' she said.

'Myself, your obedient servant!' he said.

In a half-reverie, she did not answer.

'You are in one of your moods. Is it not so?' he asked.

She shrugged her white shoulders. 'I feel as if something is "going to happen," as the children say. 'Tis the snow, and the owls hooting in the dark, and the big, crowding hills all around; and I have been all day long by myself, mewed up here with no one but the tiresome old Scotch Elspeth to talk to. Yesterday was but little better. Some wheezy haw-bucks from Castle Lossie, their faces heliotrope from claret, talked about the stot (it is a kind of beast, it seems) from morn till dewy eve.'

'I know the breed. I prefer the "beast,"' he said.

'Then on their heels came Lady Grizel Macsomebody or other and her twa "bonny dochters," as she calls them'——

'Again I know the breed. Uncourtable spinsters, all teeth and gossip!'

'The same! They called. I must have been well dressed and looking—looking'——

'Your charming self,' he supplied, *nemine contradicente*.

'Judging by the acidulous stares that they presented me with. Then, to put me in my place in the North no doubt, Lady Grizel opined in conversation that the English were "no' vairy dependable." I said that I hoped that they had paid the money when the Scots sold King Charles the First to them. Whereupon, I vow, she gobbled into inarticulateness and made treble chins at me for the rest of the visit.'

'I can see her. She is my aunt.' Sir Archie rocked with laughter. 'And my adorable cousins.'

'Ah, one of them *would* talk of you! Fie, sir! "La, mawdam"'—she imitated a mincing Scots voice—'"La, mawdam"'——

'"Tis Penuel! I can hear her!'

'"Had I heard what the *goassiping little burrds* were saying about Sir Airchie?" I said that I rarely went into the servants' hall, where I supposed the *goassiping little bur-r-rds* flourished, and her face became as one "who drinketh verjuice unaware."'

'Splendid! It was a rout—a rout!' he exclaimed, looking down at her in admiration.

'I expected you earlier; but'—she pouted charmingly—'no doubt the belles of Castle Lossie'——

'Bah!' he grimaced. 'Brick faces and hands, cheek-bones like horses, salt-cellar shoulders, and their feet! Oh Alicia, their feet!'

She laughed merrily, thrust out a red Rouen shoe, studying it demurely for a second or two, and looked up at him with a pearly smile.

He glanced at the dainty toe.

'I am reminded. The Duke's Ball at Edinburgh next week! You will be there?' he said. 'I have not footed it there since I was a hazel-plant of a boy in the old Assembly Rooms, when I believed in everything kind that women said, and when every partner was a princess.' He bent and kissed her hand. 'Now the world holds but one.'

After all, she thought, she was to give him his congé that evening. His eyes were certainly fine, and there was a pleasant spice of danger in his air. Besides, he rarely paid compliments, usually contenting himself by looking them; wherefore she whispered, 'Her name, Archie?' and her little hand remained in his, soft as a bird.

'Alicia,' he said, and then with studied hesitation, 'Alicia—Laurie,' and watched her colour faintly. 'No, Alicia only! Laurie is a—a shadow. It is so bright here beside you.' His voice fell to a silken whisper. 'What news of him?'

'In London, I hear,' she said, avoiding his eyes; 'on affairs of State, I suppose. But let us change the subject to something more—more interesting.' She did not remove her hand. He smiled to himself a little complacent smile, and sighed gently, gazing pensively into the glowing heart of the fire. There was silence. He prolonged it artistically just enough to avoid the fatal suggestion of a pose, and then jumped to his feet with a light laugh and gesture.

'Music, Alicia!' he cried. He took up the viola da gamba, and caressed the strings into a long, sweet note.

'I have it! The pavane! 'Tis to be revived, they say, at the Duke's Ball,' he said. 'But the Scots ladies will dance it with the air of trussed fowls. Their leaps and shouts in their beloved reels distress one! And the screaming of the pipes! A survival of savagery! But the pavane with you will be a dream, a triumph!'

He played a few impromptu, careless raptures, and then struck into a stately measure. The girl, born with a perfect ear and a gossamer grace of movement, floated through the old Court dance like a moonbeam. As he played, his eyes followed her radiant vision, the poise of her head, the golden coronal, the white mist of her dress round and round the hall. The passion in each rich note of the old courtly air thrilled her, shining in her glowing eyes. Round and round the hall she floated, red shoes twinkling, her lips parted, curtsying, floating, the very spirit of youth and life. He wrought on the strings consummately, sunshine of Andalusia, the romance, the glamour of old Spain in each note. His love of the best music was perhaps the only window in his meagre soul. Some appeal in the chivalry and wholesomeness of the melody stirred him, fretted some long-stagnant pool of memory. His soul's window opened an inch or two. This was another man's wife. He lingered on a note in the fleeting luxury of a moment's unfruitful reproach, and then broke off abruptly.

'Oh Archie! 'tis only half-finished!' she cried, stepping close to him. 'And you look as if you were seeing ghosts.' She came still nearer, her blue eyes wide, and his soul's window darkened again.

Her face, flushed with the dance, the quick blood pulsing in her white neck, her bosom's rise and fall, her warm breath, the flower of her presence, thrilled him. She was quite close to him. Positively, he thought, she was enchanting. The reins of his emotions hung loose. He had been so bored in the cold North before he had seen her. In our elegant latter-day gibberish, he had been 'at a loose end,' but now, he vowed, the affair promised to be delightful. His taste was seldom wrong, he reflected as he preened his feathers with a connoisseur's joy. He laid the viola down and bent over her, holding her cool hands in his hot ones. The air was charged—electric.

'Adorable!' he whispered.

''St!' She darted suddenly away, a warning finger uplifted. ''St! Look! Look at Bran!'

The deerhound had raised his head and was growling, listening intently. Sir Archie gripped its collar just in time. The tapestry stirred at the end of the hall, swung aside, and Neil made a half-step forward, sheepish and blinking in the sudden blaze of light. They looked at the apparition in astonishment. There he stood, a thing of shreds and patches, without a word, the snow melting in a little pool at his feet, his baubles rattling ludicrously.

'A vagrant, half-witted,' thought Sir Archie, angry at the break in a tingling moment. 'The country is o'errun with those pests. In England they would clap them in the bridewell.—Take yourself off, fellow! Who admitted you?'

'Naebody. I just walked in. It is the leddy I want,' quoth Neil, unabashed.

'Gad! he has less circumlocution than I,' thought the other.

The creature came forward unbidden into the middle of the hall, and took off his glengarry—his faded wisps of hair hanging over his eyes. He stood still for a moment, his little eyes veering between the fair woman and the man.

'The leddy o' Errachdale,' he said. 'I have a message for her.'

'A message for me! From whom?' she asked.

He glanced at Sir Archie, again at her.

'From whom?' she asked again. 'From whom?'

'Frae the Laird o' Errachdale,' answered Neil.

Her face blanched. The other man was forgotten.

'Is he safe? Where is he?' Her voice trembled.

'What a little actress it is!' thought Sir Archie, completely misreading her.

'He's sair wounded. But he'll be sent here safe in four days gin I get ten sovereigns. An''—he fumbled in his pocket—'he bade me show ye this for a token for the siller.' He held out the gruesome thing with the bright little gold band on it. Sir Archie took it from him, and there was a moment's silence.

'It's a bonny ring,' said Neil stupidly, but in a hardy attempt at conversation. Alicia, behind Sir Archie, gave one swift, shuddering look at the severed finger, and recognised the ring. Ludovic was in danger, maimed, wounded, perhaps dead! She stood stock-still, hearing nothing, seeing nothing, her little world rocking to its centre. Ludovic! She must go to him. The superficial dross of her nature, the little pretences of her life, her hollow excitements, Sir Archie, were all swept away in a towering tidal wave of love and revelation. She knew herself, in the sudden stab the tidings gave her, in her swift primordial instinct to be beside Ludovic in danger, in the thought of a world without him; knew that she was a woman loving a man in a difficult world. Where was he? What had the man said? Ten sovereigns. She nearly laughed. Ten sovereigns! All the sovereigns in the world if she had them to be beside him!

'Where is he? Where is he?' she cried.

But Neil was not listening. The dog, hair bristling, fangs gleaming, had taken two slow steps forward. Neil marked the movement and the capable fangs, and backed cautiously towards the door; and Bran, with a dog's swift, uncanny diagnosis of a coward, sprang in a hurtling hairy flash at his throat. The man had just time to vanish behind the tapestry and reach the open door. It clanged behind him on the baffled dog, and he fled over the snow, fled with the terror of a child, his mission and the vision of the sovereigns wiped clean out of his shadowed mind in a devouring anxiety to keep his precious skin whole.

Alicia, overwrought, had turned to Sir Archie.

The room spun round. She threw out her hand, half-swooning. Neither of them saw the door at the turret staircase open. In blind misunderstanding, as she swayed towards him, Sir Archie caught her in his arms and loosed the riband binding her hair. It fell in a golden shower over her white shoulders, and he kissed her passionately, again and again, crushing the red rowans of her lips to his.

Errachdale, frozen, mute, saw him, and his world turned to ashes.

*(To be continued.)*

## A MEMORY OF ANATOLIA.

By F. G. Aflalo.

BLACK buffalo wallowing and snouting amid the reeds, nightingales warbling in the fading moonlight from nests low down in the undergrowth of a cherry-orchard, a little Albanian shepherd-boy getting shrill music out of a reed-instrument, and a jackal howling away in the timbered hills — these are strange framework and music for sea-fishing; but here, none the less, am I anchored in my little boat, in which I have passed a peaceful night. The great moon is going down on the south shore of the Gulf, and over yon eastern mountain is a warm glow which precedes the coming of the sun to light another day for troubled Turkey. Away there in the city, the minarets of which are hidden behind the hills, they are still 'making good' after recent revolution, still trying and hanging and exiling. Last week I was in the thick of it, and then there seemed no life like that of the fret of a nation in the throes of political unrest. Yet, buried away here in the restful interior of Asia Minor, having no other company than that of Greeks and Kurds, with whom I cannot as yet exchange a sentence, I would not for anything less than a Sultan's ransom go back to the turmoil of Stamboul. Let them settle their quarrels, and establish their constitution, and fend off the greed of their covetous neighbours as best they can! For me, the haunts of herons and the days with bass, the solitude of Anatolian meadows, the neighbourly intercourse with Armenian fishermen and Mohammedan haymakers, and the glory of a summer more perfect than any of my eight-and-thirty which went before.

Only this morning, waking before three, and with some difficulty rousing my Greek fisherman, who must be a lineal descendant of the Sleepers of Ephesus, I caught a splendid bass of seventeen pounds on the finest of tackle and a rod that bent like yonder reeds in a south wind. Gray old herons flapped croaking past the theatre of our struggle, and a few white pelicans looked lazily up at a style of fishing so different from their own. Quite half-an-hour that fish and I were in deciding the issue, and at last my Greek had to jump over the side, clothes and all, and slip the net under the sulking fish, which lay immovable in the weed after taking a turn of the fine line round a nail in the boat's keel.

Yet, though to catch fish was the primary object of that and other outings, I think that the memory of the fray is dwarfed by another retrospect. There were turbaned Turks riding jogging donkeys between the village of Deirmenderé and the nearest market. There was Deirmenderé itself, the little, tumble-down cluster of houses hanging on the green hillside and peeping over the scarlet blaze of cherries in the orchards fed by melting snows. There was the song of Armenian fishermen breaking the stillness of daybreak, and the plash of their oars as they swept up the Gulf with last night's harvest of mackerel for the Ismidt bazaar. There was the little kiosk built forty years ago by Abd-ul-Aziz, uncle of the present ruler of Turkey, falling into decay in its shroud of scented limes, the property of spiders which had spun in the palaces of kings. Above all, perhaps, there was the tragedy of Anatolia, the most splendid asset ever held by a bankrupt nation, a province more than twice the area of Great Britain, with untold resources, animal, vegetable, and mineral, yet with a population of less than fifty to the square mile! Hence those silent hills and deserted valleys in the heart of a sanjak comparatively populous. All around me was this impressive object-lesson in the Dead Sea fruit of maladministration, this mighty monument to a system which sapped the strength of a nation and left the bounty of Nature rotting for want of capital and labour. And, as I gazed at the lean stock and neglected fields and virgin mountains, I dreamed of brighter days for Turkey, with this fair Anatolia populated, from Smyrna to far Trebizond, with Moslem immigrants from the lands of the Tsar, and sending out its wealth to half the ports of Europe.

### IN THE FLEET WOODS.

Behind the trees the slender moon
Crept up into the sky,
Clear gold in the gray night it passed
The leafless branches by.

The heather, like a midnight sea,
Billowed across the plain,
To where the masts of the red pine
Rose darkling from the main.

The night-wind murmured in the boughs,
But never wandering breeze
Breathed on me where I cradled lay
A-dream beneath the trees.

C. A. Dawson Scott.

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# 203 MÈTRE HILL.

EVEN though the Russo-Japanese war is now a matter of ancient history, a visit to some of the battlefields round Port Arthur cannot but be interesting and instructive.

203 Mètre Hill, the fighting for the possession of which I propose to describe, was the scene of some of the most severe slaughter that took place during the Russo-Japanese war. It is hard to describe one's feelings as one stands on this hill and thinks of the scenes it has witnessed. Personally, I felt the same sensation as I had whilst visiting the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, and one instinctively talks with a hushed voice as one does when in the presence of the dead. The horrors and associations of the place are terrible; and not only were men slaughtered in hundreds by rifle-bullet and bayonet, but the hand-grenade, an old but recently revived method of destruction, was used. The effects of these hand-grenades, filled with mélinite, pyroxylin, dynamite, or some other powerful explosive, are beyond description, as they mutilate in such a way as to tear men's arms and legs off, and to leave them absolutely unrecognisable.

The scene on the hill itself during one of the attacks must have been too vivid to express in words. Imagine two trenches packed with men and about thirty yards apart. The occupants of each trench are shooting at one another, and are being shot at from elsewhere, and men are falling every second. Numbers of dead and dying block the already narrow and congested space, and the dead bodies are sometimes used to fill up gaps in the sand-bags. The horrible and indescribable smell of blood is in the air, and the mud at the bottom of the trench is sticky with blood that was coursing through the veins of human beings a short time before. The Japanese artillery are shelling the summit of the hill, and the rain of shrapnel-bullets adds yet another factor to the horrors of the Russian trenches and rifle-pits.

Suddenly a telephone-bell rings in the Japanese advanced trench—the advanced trenches were always connected by telephone to the Divisional Commander, and from there to the Commander-in-Chief and the General commanding the artillery—and at the same time the artillery fire ceases. The men in the trench are up in a minute, and are scrambling over the sand-bag wall in front of their trench. They rush in a confused mass at the enemy's trench, a short thirty yards up the hillside. The Russian fire redoubles in its fury, and numbers of the attackers fall mortally wounded or killed.

Eventually a small proportion of the men who left their trench have reached the Russian line. The bearded Siberians stand up to receive their enemy with the bayonet, and the conflict resolves itself into a series of hand-to-hand encounters all along the line. The rifle-fire has practically died away, and hand-grenades and bayonets are at work. The trench-line is a struggling maelström of figures, and the once bright bayonets are dyed a deep red.

Hand-grenades are thrown into crowded trenches and burst with fiendish results. Quarter is neither asked for nor given, and the sole idea of each soldier is to kill as many of his opponents as possible before being killed himself. Wounded men scream in their agony, but there is no one here to help them. Men are using the butts of their rifles to dash each other's brains out; men seize each other by the throat, and become infuriated animals as they fight with the weapons which nature has given them.

This is the sort of thing that used to occur every day until the hill was finally captured by the Japanese. Sometimes the Russians would be driven out of their trench; shortly afterwards, however, a counter-attack would be delivered, and the Japanese would be driven pell-mell down the hill and back to the cover of their own trench. To and fro they fought, day after day and time after time, and on each occasion the ground between the trenches would be freshly piled with dead and dying.

To help the wounded was out of the question; and happy was the wounded man whose sufferings were put a stop to by a merciful rifle-bullet, and who did not have to die by slow degrees.

No wonder, then, what one's feelings are when one looks at the scene of all this fighting. The ground is still dotted with the yellow splashes caused

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by the bursters of the shells, shell-craters abound everywhere, and shell-splinters are scattered over the hillside as if from a gigantic pepper-castor. Every boulder is splashed with bullets. The trenches themselves, for the most part, have been filled in, but human remains are still plentiful, and the slope is still dotted with remains of accoutrements and fragments of uniform.

One could write a long account of the horrors of modern war, but the fighting which took place at 203 Mètre Hill stands alone for its awful ferocity. The Japanese, although a young nation compared with ourselves, are excellent examples for us to follow; and if we have an army of the same bravery and morale as theirs we cannot go far wrong.

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# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER LVIII.—HOW JACK SET OUT FOR ELBA, BUT STOPPED ON THE WAY.

THE close of the year 1812, and Moscow, brought a measure of hope to the troubled world; 1813 and Leipzig confirmed the hope. Spring of 1814 found the Allies in Paris, Louis XVIII. on the throne of France, and Napoleon king of Elba.

On all these mighty doings Jack Sax kept a keen and watchful eye, and the house in London turned his early news into gold. Good news or bad news, as long as it was early news, was turned to account, and need there was of all that could be made of it. For peace had meant the opening of communications all round and an immediate clamour from abroad for funds long dormant in their hands, and every claim had to be met on the instant, no matter what the consequences to well-laid plans and far-reaching speculations.

Old John Sax's lips tightened now and again at the drain on their resources just at a time when money in the hands of bold and skilful men was breeding money. Still, their credit stood so high that operations were possible to them which to most would have been out of the question; and Sir Charles and he laboured at their posts with ceaseless vigilance, at highest pressure, and under the strain of nerve-breaking tension which nothing less than the mighty stake they were playing for could have enabled them to endure. But in the mere matter of speculation and high finance they were Titans, and by reason of those other occasional direful necessities of their position their nerves had become steeled to utmost endurance. So they held on their way unflinchingly and kept calm faces while the world around rocked in convulsions.

Jack was in Paris on the heels of the Allies, with orders to remain in France.

'Everything depends on how the Bourbons comport themselves,' was Sir Charles's parting advice. 'If they have learned—well! If not, the French are a fickle people, and there may be a reaction. Talleyrand's final word to me concerning Bonaparte was, "I would he had a narrower kingdom still." So, my boy, be on the lookout for signs of discontent, and keep me fully advised.'

The signs of discontent were very soon visible. The Bourbons had learned nothing. Flagrant favouritism, the making of solemn promises only for the purpose of breaking them, the appointment of incapables to positions of trust, and the flouting of the army as though thereby to strike a back-handed blow at its late head—these were the sparks in the tinder, and Jack watched their rapid spread with keenest anxiety.

Talleyrand was in Vienna at the Congress. Jack sounded M. de Montessonne, and found his anxiety fully shared and confirmed.

'It is true,' said the marquis sadly. 'They have learned nothing, and they lose ground daily. The Empire gave less dissatisfaction and greater hope. What the end will be'—— And a despondent shrug expressed forebodings.

Jack went over to London, and he and Sir Charles and John Sax sat in pregnant discussion of the outlook, and weighed its possible bearings on their fortunes.

'I'm half-inclined to send you right to Elba, John,' said Sir Charles thoughtfully, after prolonged study of a map that lay before him. 'There is the key of the whole matter. If you learn anything, bring or send me word to Paris. I shall be there a good deal at present, so make a point of passing through.'

'I'm quite ready, sir. But'——

'Some other idea strikes you?'

'I was thinking that there I should be in Bonaparte's own kingdom, practically in his hands. If he should be contemplating any move, will he not take every precaution against any news getting out?'

'Like enough! What would you suggest, then?'

'If he comes out he must land either in Tuscany here'—and he pointed to the map—'or in North Italy, as near to France as possible, say Genoa, or else in France itself. It seems to me, sir, that if I were, say, here'—laying his finger on Lyons—'I should be sure to hear of his coming. He must make for Paris, and he must come somewhere this way.'

'Perhaps you are right. But by the time he got to Lyons—if he should be so mad as to make the attempt—all the world would have heard of it.'

'It will not be the attempt so much as the success or failure of it that will matter in the end,' said old John Sax musingly. 'If he knows what is

going on in France he will probably try; but whether the people will accept him again is doubtful, I should say.'

'They are sick of the Bourbons already,' said Jack.

'They were sick of Bonaparte.'

'Not in the same way. He was heavy on them, but he fed their vanity. The Bourbons are quite as heavy in a different way, and give nothing in return. My view, Sir Charles, is that if he tries it I could, down there, get some idea of his chances, and you could work on that. If he has no following by the time he reaches Lyons he won't do much. If he has, he can only go slowly. I will establish relays and bring you the actual facts myself.'

'My only fear is that the first word of his landing will knock the bottom out of things. If we had that first word it might be worth a fortune to us.'

'I will go right on to Elba if you think it best, sir.'

'We will sleep on it, John—take a night upon it, anyway. He is not likely to break out before to-morrow. Now let us to dinner. Mavie is waiting to hear all your latest doings, and Charles will cap them all with Wellington and the Peninsula.'

Charles—Captain Lauriston—aide-de-camp and whole-souled worshipper of Lord Wellington—bronzed and lean, and hard as a nail, was resting for a while from his wounds and labours, and was well-nigh ready to cry *sufficit* to the waging of wars, though he would not acknowledge it. He had been three times wounded—at Talavera, in the lines of Torres Vedras, and finally at Toulouse—but had refused to come home till the war ended. He swore by Wellington, and his one regret in life was that Bonaparte had gone down before the great champions had met and settled who was the better man.

They sat into the small hours while Captain Charles and Jack detailed their latest experiences, and Mavie's last words, when she decided for the tenth time that she really must go to bed, as she could no longer keep her eyes open without holding them, were, 'Well, I am grateful it is all over, and that you two have come out alive. I wish no ill to Bonaparte, but for the world's sake I should rejoice to hear he was safely dead and buried.'

'I just wish he and Wellington had met once in fair fight,' said Charles. 'We'd have knocked him into a cocked hat, I'll wager.'

'He might have knocked you both into the next world,' said Mavie. 'So I'm just as glad the matter can never be settled in this world now.'

As the result of their further deliberations, ten days later found Jack in Provence, with headquarters at Sisteron, on the Durance. From this point he could, by dint of many activities, command the most likely approaches from the south and east, and every faculty he possessed was on the strain. For as he was leaving home his grandfather had given him some weighty words that rang perpetually in his ears: 'John, my boy, we want your very best this time;' and the old, lined face seemed to Jack grayer and more careworn than he had known it.

'I always do my best, grandfather.'

'I know, my lad. Do more than your best this time, if you can. We are playing for bigger stakes than you dream of.'

And Jack had gone, wondering, but more than ever determined to justify their confidence in him. He had with him a handful of well-proved and well-paid assistants, men he had picked out and proved during these last eight years, keen-eyed men who let nothing escape them, who had learned to follow his instructions to the letter without carping as to the why and wherefore, and hard riders all. These he posted along the coast at Toulon, at Hyères, at Grimaud, at Fréjus, at Antibes, and along the lower Alps (at Grenoble and Briançon and Embrun and Colmars), though with little expectation of any intrusion from that side, seeing that it was winter-time and the roads were almost impassable. Still, there was just the chance, and he had to guard against it. Bonaparte had made excellent play with the Alps in his time, and no man could count on his doings.

These riders were to patrol their districts unceasingly, and report to Jack at Sisteron anything that struck them as in any way out of the common. He and they almost lived in the saddle during those months of watching; and every now and again, at odd intervals, he would take a day's ride down to this man and that to satisfy himself that his cordon was on the alert, and he never found it lacking.

The result of Jack's well-laid plans was that he saw Bonaparte set foot on French soil once more just as the sun was setting; then he walked quietly into Antibes, gave his rider there explicit directions as to following the Emperor and bringing him news of the reception he met with, and within an hour was making for Paris at the top of his speed.

He went, by way of Draguignan and Riez, with the Alps looming gray and white in the moonlight on his right, to Sisteron, and did that first sixty miles in a little over four hours. From Sisteron he sent instructions to his various outposts, and then sped on for Grenoble and Lyons. His relays were established along the western road, as being less travelled, and with his grandfather's exordium ever in his ears he allowed himself no rest. He rarely rode a horse more than a couple of hours, but during that time expected and got out of it its very best.

So he came by Roanne and Moulins to Nevers, and thence, skirting the Loire, to Montargis, on the Loing, which falls into the Seine, and so, without a halt save such as were necessitated by his many changes of horses, and eating only as he rode, into the Île de France, and then by Melun and Bourg-la-Reine, along the Fontainebleau road to Paris, waited till the gates were opened, and dropped off his fifteenth horse, dead-beat and so stiff that his legs felt useless, at the door of the De Montessonne

house in the Rue de l'Université before any one was awake. He had covered four hundred and fifty miles in something under five-and-thirty hours.

'Is Sir Charles Lauriston here?' he asked of the blinking concierge.

'He is here; but, *ma foi!* he is in bed, like all other sensible people.'

'Go up and tell him I am here. He will admit me.' And the sleepy one grumbled himself away.

'Yes, you are to go up. First room to the right, second floor,' he growled when he had come shuffling downstairs again.

'I know it;' and, stiff as he was, Jack climbed the stairs at speed.

'Well, Jack, my boy? You're up early.'

'Or late, sir. I've not seen a bed for two nights.'

'Not? Then it's quite time you sat down. Take the big chair. Now, the news?'

'He landed at Antibes at five o'clock the day before yesterday.'

'Bonaparte! Is it possible?' and Sir Charles jumped out of bed and began to dress hastily. 'You're quite sure, Jack?'

'I saw him myself, sir—spoke with him, indeed;' and he related the circumstances.

'You have done magnificently, my boy. No one here has even a suspicion of it. I want one clear day, and then I must get across to London. But you say he landed the day before yesterday near Antibes, and you've come all that distance since then! Why, it must be close on five hundred miles! You must be nearly dead, my boy. I'll see to some breakfast for you, and a hot bath. Then turn in and sleep as hard as you know how to. Mavie is with me. She wanted another look at her old prison-house. We shall not leave without seeing you. Have you arranged to keep track of him?'

'My men will all be hanging about, and will bring on news. As soon as I've had a rest I'll get back—to Lyons, I think. That will be one of the keys to the situation.'

'Right! Stick as close to Bonaparte as you can, and send us news as you get it. You have plenty of men and plenty of money?'

'Plenty of both, sir.'

'This will make a mighty upsetting, and may prove a long business. But Bonaparte is the master-key. Stick to him, and send your men across from time to time. Anything may happen. Disappointment and discontent are rampant, there is no doubt about that. If the country rallies to Bonaparte we may have all the miseries of the last twelve years over again, and that is very terrible to think of. Now, I'll see to you;' and he hurried off to make provision for Jack's comfort.

Jack was dozing in the big arm-chair, which was wonderfully soft and comforting after the saddle, when there came a tap on the door, followed by a cautious opening, and a voice asked, 'May I come in, daddie?'

And when Jack started up, almost awake, Mavie was standing looking at him with very wide eyes and a lovely flood of colour in her face.

'Why, John Sax, what a sight you are, just one cake of mud! Where on earth have you sprung from?' she cried.

Jack could hardly speak for gazing at her; and truly she was good to look at, with the rosy bloom of the morning and a sound night's rest in her face, her hair coiled round her head in a hasty twist, and robed in a quilted, pink silk dressing-gown and little white satin shoes.

'From a saddle last, Miss—Mavie.'

'Miss! Oh, fie! you're only half-awake, Jack. But I understood you were in the South somewhere.'

'I was until the night before last.'

'And how on earth did you get here?'

'On fifteen horses. The last one is downstairs.'

'Oh Jack, how splendid! You've brought some news, then?'

'Yes. Sir Charles will tell you.' And she knew enough of him to ask no more.

'I heard father talking, and wondered if anything was wrong with him. I get a bit nervous at times. Perhaps it's with being in Paris again. Do you remember the last time, and how we got out?'

'I am not likely to forget that,' said Jack.

'Hello! hello!' cried Sir Charles cheerily as he came in with a tray. 'What are you doing here, mademoiselle?'

'I heard talking, and came to see what was wrong.'

'Eve's daughter!—You've had something to eat on the road, I hope, John? Here'——

'I ate by snatches as I rode,' said Jack.

'Here are a couple of eggs beaten up in old Marsala. I recommend that, and a slice of that chicken; then your bath will be ready; and when you've had a sleep you shall feed like a king.'

'Now, daddie, what's the news?'

'Hasn't he told you?'

'Not a word, sir. He said you would.'

At which her father laughed and nodded approvingly. 'There is not another woman in the world to whom I would entrust it.' And Mavie dropped him a delicious curtsy and looked expectant. 'Bonaparte is in France again, Mavie. Jack watched him land the day before yesterday, and spoke with him.'

'Yes, that is great news, and bad news,' said Mavie, very grave. 'Let us go home, father, before he gets here. I have had quite enough of M. Bonaparte.'

'We will start at midday if you can pack your trunks by then.'

'I would leave them behind sooner than fall into that man's hands again. He tried his very best to marry me off last time'——

'Oh, ho!' said her father. 'He didn't know you, evidently.'

'He thought he could dispose of me as he did of others. But he found out his mistake.'

'Now, run away to your packing, child. John Sax is going to tumble into a hot bath and then into bed, and he visibly needs both.'

'*Au revoir*, then, Jack!' and she slipped away.

Jack's early news, and Sir Charles's prompt utilisation of it both in Paris and London, turned out very profitably. Four days later, when the fact of Bonaparte's landing was made public, the French funds fell seven and a half points, and the English almost as much; and those two sorely burdened workers in the dark began to get glimpses of light ahead, and dared to indulge in hopeful dreams of freedom. All these years they had wrought in chains, doggedly doing what they believed to be the duty imposed on them by direful circumstance. The suffering had been great. They had borne it without a murmur, though their hearts groaned within them at times. And now, at last, thanks to Sir Charles's foresight and Jack's address and energy, the clouds began to open. One or two more strokes such as this and the day would be won and the shadow of the rope and the cross-beam would vanish.

(*To be continued.*)

# THE OMNIVOROUS LOCUST.

By JOHN D. LECKIE.

LTHOUGH locusts are not unknown in England, it is seldom that they visit our islands, and the writer is not aware that there has ever been any locust-invasion of the United Kingdom on any extensive scale. It is true, we have various kinds of grasshoppers, which belong to the same family, but happily not to that branch of it whose members advance in vast hordes, composed of countless millions, which obscure the sun by their presence and devour almost every green thing in their way.

The migratory locust is the one with which the present article deals. There are several species or varieties of this class, which are mostly to be found in dry, semi-tropical countries such as the south of Europe, Egypt, Syria, and Morocco; for their native home seems to be in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, though migratory locusts are to be found in regions as remote as South Africa and South America, in all of which countries they form a veritable scourge to the agriculturist. In Argentina, especially the northern half of the country, they are very destructive, for they will annihilate the farmer's entire crop in a few hours.

A locust-invasion is an event not easily forgotten. The first sign of the approaching incursion is usually a long, dark cloud low on the horizon. But the dark cloud is no forerunner of rain; instead of the precious liquid, which the farmer has probably long expected in vain, it portends the approach of his greatest enemy—the omnivorous locust. The writer has witnessed two locust-invasions in South America. In both cases the visitation occurred at the end of a long drought, and the damage inflicted by that calamity was completed by the ravages of the voracious insects.

As the dark cloud comes nearer it is seen to be composed of countless millions of locusts on whirring wings. Soon the cloud appears overhead, and is sufficiently thick to obscure the sun, which is only seen opaquely, as through a mist, although the sky is cloudless and the air clear. But although the locusts bring a shade with them, it is like the shade caused by the arrows of Xerxes' army—fraught with destruction.

Now we are in the midst of a dense swarm of flying, whirring locusts, which dash into our faces, enter our houses, and fill our rooms with their presence; the air is simply alive with them. All open wells must be instantly covered, or they will be polluted not only by the excrement of the insects, with which the ground is already covered, but by the bodies of the insects themselves, which fall in great numbers into the wells, and, being drowned, infect the water which is used for drinking or household purposes. Fowls and turkeys welcome the advancing hordes; they simply fatten on the locusts as they run around and gobble them up. But this is no blessing to the farmer; far from it, for the flesh of poultry becomes so tainted by this form of diet as to be quite uneatable, and even their eggs have an unpleasant taste. So well is this fact known that as soon as the locusts make their appearance in the locality the price of eggs drops to one-half or one-third of its former figure, and even then there are few buyers, as the yolks of such eggs can be distinguished by their colour, which is of a reddish tinge. Pigs also feed on the locusts, and with the same result—their flesh is tainted. In fact, all the animals about the farmyard seem to be affected adversely, for even the horses have a strong aversion to eat grass which has been polluted by the presence of locusts, and unless very hungry they will not touch it.

**There are the pioneers sailing around,**
**Not very sure of the ugly black ground;**
**Here come the myriads rather more quickly,**
**The eye is bewildered, they float down so thickly.**
**Alas, the poor lilac! alas, the laburnum!**
**How soon into ghost-trees these mad fellows turn 'em!**

The above lines of Allan Park Paton seem so characteristic of a locust-invasion that it may come as a surprise to learn that they are merely descriptive of a fall of snowflakes on a winter night. The advance of the locusts takes place just as described in the above verse: first a few pioneers, the advanced guard of the vast army; then the main body of the

army, a host which is as invincible as it is destructive. The description of the trees applies equally well to their condition after the locusts have left them; completely stripped of their leaves, they seem to have passed through an English winter, although it may be midsummer. The writer has seen the same effect produced in the West Indies—a land of perpetual summer and eternal verdure—after a cyclone, when the naked trees, absolutely devoid of leaves, reminded one of a Northern winter.

All true locusts are migratory by nature, for the simple reason that, being gregarious in their habits, it would be impossible for them to exist without continual migration. The ground on which they settle is completely cleared in a few hours, and they must perforce seek other fields and pastures new where they can repeat their depredations. For the same reason the destruction which they effect is purely local; one district may be completely devastated, while another a few miles away is altogether spared from their presence.

When the locusts have eaten their fill, the females commence to deposit their eggs, which they do by making an opening in the ground, in which the eggs are laid. The infant locusts soon make their appearance, scarcely so large as a pea, hopping about in countless swarms. In this stage of their existence they have no wings, but progress by hopping. While in this state—that is, before their wings are developed—they must be ruthlessly destroyed. Long trenches are dug, into which the 'hoppers' are driven by rows of men, women, and boys armed with branches of trees with which they beat the ground, driving the insects in the direction of the trenches. On the opposite sides of the trenches sheets of galvanised iron are placed upright, so as to form an effectual barrier. On arriving at the trenches the 'hoppers' fall into them, and cannot easily make their way out, especially as their progress is barred by the wall of galvanised iron in front of them, the smooth surface of which affords them no foothold. The trenches are soon filled with millions of young 'hoppers,' the weight of those above crushing to death the under strata of their fellows. Earth is then shovelled on the top of the seething mass of insects, and they are thus smothered and killed. This is the most effective method of exterminating the locusts; but in order to ensure the success of the operation it is necessary that the attempt should be properly organised, and that all the neighbours should act in concert. In countries which are subject to the ravages of locusts the Government generally grants assistance by buying the eggs in mass at a fixed price, supplying galvanised iron for the trenches, &c. A Board for the extinction of locusts exists in Argentina, and no expense is spared on the part of the Government, though one often hears the complaint locally that the results obtained are not in proportion to the expenditure.

It is surprising to find that locusts are capable of making long overseas voyages. Thus we are informed that in the year 591 great hosts of locusts migrated from Africa into Italy, crossing the Mediterranean, and after they had ravaged the country, the putrefaction of millions of their dead bodies caused a pestilence which carried off nearly a million men and beasts. To take a more modern instance, locusts have frequently been known to make their way to the Canary Islands from the coast of Africa, being blown thither by easterly winds; though whether the migration, which applies, of course, not to single insects, but to vast swarms, is voluntary or compulsory is not apparent.

In ancient times the visitation of locusts frequently produced a famine even in Europe. In the territory of Venice in the year 1478 more than thirty thousand persons are said to have perished in a famine produced by the devastations of locusts; and, to come nearer to our shores, instances of their ravages on a large scale have been recorded in France, Spain, and Germany. Their numbers at times are almost incredible. In Russia their dead bodies are said to have been in some places heaped one upon the other to the depth of four feet; and when, in South Africa, they were driven into the sea by a north-west wind, they formed, says Barrow, a bank three or four feet high along the shore.

Once the locust has attained the flying stage—that is to say, when the wings are developed—it is almost impossible to destroy them on a large scale, as they fly high in the air and can easily surmount any obstacle, while their countless numbers make destruction a very difficult task. In the Argentine Republic they are subject to the attacks of a species of parasite which, in the form of a maggot, lodges in the thoracic region, and eventually destroys the locusts by eating away their internal organs. In the perfect state this parasite develops into a fly, and each fly lays from three hundred to five hundred eggs, depositing each of them on a separate locust. It has been suggested that these flies should be bred artificially and turned loose among swarms of locusts in order to prey on them and effect their extermination. Experiments recently made are said to have given satisfactory results.

Although the British Isles enjoy a happy immunity from these as from many other insect pests, some of our colonies, such as South Africa, are subject to their ravages, and any person who may discover some method of effectually combating them deserves to be rewarded as a public benefactor of the first rank.

# ON OLD SPEYSIDE.

CHAPTER IV.—AT THE TOWER (*continued*).

SIR ARCHIE'S back was towards Errachdale, his wife's face hidden from him, her arms loose, her slender lines unresisting. The dog—loyal beast—was the first to see and recognise his master, welcoming him with a spring and a whole-hearted, ringing bark of delight. Sir Archie flung round at the sound, and the men's eyes met. The girl, released from the arms that held her, paused for a moment, half-dazed. Then she remembered, with a catch at her breath, the message—the ring—Ludovic! He was in danger. She must go to him. The lights steadied again, and then she saw him looking down on them, pale as death, travel-stained, strange and hollow-eyed, the spectre of himself. Joy, doubt, alarm, snapped her taut nerves. She fell like a stricken flower to the floor. Sir Archie looked at her husband, then at her. Errachdale, misreading the whole scene, made no sign of having seen her, and after a moment's hesitation the other man lifted her to a bay in the hall and waited until she opened her eyes.

Errachdale came slowly down to the centre of the hall, his lip curling.

'Before we exchange—other courtesies, permit me. I am Laurie of Errachdale,' he said. His voice was as icily contemptuous as his bow.

'My name is Lyon,' said Sir Archie; and after a pause, 'My felicitations on your deeds in the Peninsula.'

'And mine on yours at home, out of the fighting-line,' replied Errachdale.

Sir Archie flushed, arching an eyebrow. 'You mean'—— he said.

'I mean that you give the lie to your surname, Sir Archibald. I mean that you found it easier to ruffle it in town than to draw a sword for King George,' he said, in his deliberate, clear voice.

The girl, clinging to the curtain, found her voice. 'Ludovic, I did not—I did not mean'——

'You did not mean me to see,' he interjected with a wintry laugh. 'I gather so much from your toilette. I ought to have announced my arrival. A thousand pardons!' He glanced at her unbound hair. 'But perhaps it is the mode.'

She flushed at the injustice, and her chin lifted defiantly.

'If you but listen,' she began, pride and her heart warring, her little foot in a tattoo on the floor, two red danger-signals flaming on her white face.

'Spare me. You have allowed my name'—— He choked on the words, and turned to the man. The pruned speech, the unspoken charge, stung her like a blow. She walked proudly back to the bay, dry-eyed, head in air.

Sir Archie stood, inwardly cursing. The cartel was plain in Errachdale's sneer. Women were the devil, he thought. And this had not even grown to any affair! He had laid and watched a powder-train without the excitement of an explosion. That had not been his fault, but he left this factor out. Your squire of dames has a genius for manipulating his mental balance-sheet to the point of self-deception; none so difficult a matter when a man is his own auditor. He felt almost virtuous. He glanced at Laurie, hating him, and their looks crossed. Something was written plainly in the unblinking glow of Errachdale's dark eyes, in his deathly pallor. Sir Archie dearly loved life. Did the man mean blood? 'Twas a ridiculous business. He must reason with—that is, he must try to bemuse—this deliberate man of the blazing eye and the direct speech.

''Pon my honour, Errachdale,' he began. ''Pon my honour'——

'Your honour! Yours! I heard a little, but enough, concerning your honour from the gentlemen who were foolish enough to sit down to cards with you in town.'

'You insult me!'

'One supposes it to be possible! Tush! We but waste time,' said Errachdale impatiently.

'Our friends shall arrange a meeting,' said the other. 'If you think that so light a cause'—— His airy speech was suddenly cut short by a sounding blow on the mouth with the other's wet glove.

'We fight here and now.'

The girl started forward.

'Ludovic! Your hands! The message—your fingers,' she said in a tremor.

He held out his hands, still without once looking at her. A wild impulse in her to run to them died at his words.

'My hands are fairly clean, and I have ten fingers. Ten. The same number, by the way,' he went on slowly, 'as the Commandments.'

He turned towards his pistols. The other stood, his face a miracle of smoothness, but breathing hard, murder in his heart. Errachdale came forward.

'I have the honour to offer you the choice of weapons. Unless'—— He paused. 'It might touch murder,' he said half to himself.

He lifted one of the pistols, and fired, it seemed almost without aiming, at one of the candles. The light went out suddenly, the wick neatly cut through by the bullet. Twice, thrice, he reloaded and fired, each time with the same result.

'Yes, it might almost be murder.' There was faint, thinly veiled mockery in his bow this time. 'But do not allow this to influence you unduly. Permit me still to offer you the choice of weapons. Luckily there are some rapiers here.'

He turned and sauntered towards the weapons hanging on the walls, his back to the other man.

Sir Archie took up the other pistol swiftly, quietly, his smooth mask dropped, his face livid.

Errachdale caught a sudden glimpse of him in the mirror, and turned round on the instant just as the trigger clicked, and in time to see the pistol hurled from Lyon's hand, with a curse, at the mirror. It fell with a crash of breaking glass. Errachdale flicked a fragment of the glass from his sleeve, and slowly picked up the pistol. He looked at the scowling coward steadily for a long time, his temples throbbing, his eye dangerous.

'A Bayard!' he at length said. 'My God! a Bayard!' and turned to the wall, sauntering along the row of weapons there, talking to himself, the words coming from him slowly. 'A Bayard! And to break the mirror! The vandalism! 'Twas not the mirror's fault that the pistol was not loaded. A hasty temper, our Bayard! I have heard a little blood-letting prescribed for hot humours!'

He took down two rapiers from the walls, and tested them leisurely; Sir Archie, in a fury of hate, uneasily watching the glittering steel jumping from a supple arc back to its delicate, tremulous line.

Errachdale unbuckled his own sword, and leaned it in the corner of the hall; then held out the other two weapons towards his opponent.

'Two well-matched Toledos! I protest you have my regrets that we fight under my roof,' he said. 'Doubtless it would be more romantic in the snow, but with less comfort, and you and I,' he said grimly, 'have had enough of romance!'

Without an outward sign of quailing, Lyon chose one of the wicked-looking Toledos. They doffed their coats and bared their right wrists.

The girl watched them in silence, deathly pale. There was a tense moment as they took their distances. Errachdale gave the salute with a punctilio that mocked his next words.

'On guard, cur!' he called, and the rapiers closed. The metallic rustle of the blades engaging, the quiet, light footsteps of the two men, sounded in the stillness; thrust and parry, parry and thrust, bent knee and supple fingers, each gauging the other's swordsmanship. Sir Archie was making an assault, the other giving way for half the length of the hall, then back again in the counter. The busy steel tinkled eagerly. Errachdale feinted. He was the taller man, and biding his time; and Sir Archie, tempted, made a devilish thrust in tierce to within a couple of inches of him. The parry struck true; in Lyon's over-extension Errachdale could have spitted his adversary like a sheep. Instead, he brought his rapier indescribably swiftly down on the other's hand, ludicrously like a master caning a pupil, and was back again and on guard with a ghost of a smile. His wife's eyes shone, but he did not look at her. The daring of the riposte ought to have warned Lyon that here was a master of arms; but the ridicule in the feat was even a nimbler weapon than the rapier. It laid a hot iron on the raw of his vanity. He engaged, in a passion more dangerous to himself than any want of skill.

This time the bout was short. Lyon made a vicious attack. The swift steel writhed and circled. Errachdale finessed, got his man's measure, and waited until his point was too low. There was a dainty flick, point over hilt, and Sir Archie's rapier flew through the air and fell at Alicia's feet.

Errachdale waited, reading the question in the other man's covert look.

'Again! On guard!' he said, flinging the words.

Lyon picked up his rapier too slowly. The man was using him like a hooked trout, curse him! He was lost, afraid of death, his hand clammy, chill beads on his brow, his weapon trembling, lath against steel; but he took his position carefully, elbow, hand, foot, rapier, everything in the right place, everything, except his heart, the one thing needful. His retreats real, no true attack left in him, he fenced raggedly, and after a minute's play he was again disarmed, his rapier clanking on the floor.

'So!' said Errachdale, leisurely turning down his sleeve. 'So! Our Bayard is clearly not a man of his hands. He arranges matters differently, of a choice when one's back is turned. In all things'—he looked straight at his wife for the first time—'in all things when one's back is turned. Well, well! one does not shoot barn-door fowls!' He picked up the rapiers, replacing them on the wall, and sat down at an escritoire.

'I—I—— My presence here is no longer'—began Lyon.

'You will have the goodness to remain until you have my permission to leave here alive,' said Errachdale, without looking up from his writing.

The quill rasped in a few rapidly written words; then he rose, folded up the paper, and handed it to his wife. She took it mechanically, and it fell from her lifeless fingers at Sir Archie's feet. Intending to hand it to her, he picked it up.

Errachdale spoke again. 'And now—I wish to be alone in my house. Our little affair is ended; the play is over. You both have my permission to leave. Bayard shall have escort-duty, though the night promises, as a song runs'—there was a tremor in his voice for the first time—'"no enemy but winter and rough weather."'

He walked to the fire. The girl, her little head erect, went slowly towards the tapestry, turning at his last words for a moment, her lips parted as if about to speak, her eyes seeking his. He stood still, looking down into the fire. With one white hand holding the tapestry, she waited for a moment, her eyes still seeking his in a mist. He did not turn his head. The arras fell and she vanished.

Sir Archie waited, irresolute, with darkling face, venom italicising his face's evil lines. He had cut a sorry figure, and Alicia's face during the scene had been an enigma. He had tried to betray Errachdale; in a blind, cowardly moment had tried to kill him; and now, stripped of his tinsel, his own life thrown at him, a thing not worth having, a bone to a dog, he stood, his mind writhing under the lash. He looked at Errachdale's uncompromising back.

Jealous, no doubt! The fellow meant to let him slink out like a beaten hound, did he? He took up a strategic position for sudden retreat near the door, cleared a parched throat, and found his tongue.

'Colonel Laurie,' he began, 'I'——

The figure at the fire wheeled round, and at the sight of the agony seared on his changed face the other man stood dumb and staring.

'Go!' said Errachdale. He pointed to the door, and Lyon went out on the instant without a word.

Outside the door he deliberately read the document. It was an order on Errachdale's agents in Edinburgh in favour of his wife for the worldly goods she had brought him. The sum was considerable. The man was a Quixote, thought Bayard as he pocketed the slip and started to pick his steps in the snow.

He caught a flutter of her dress against the trees, and followed. She did not look round. The snow had deadened the footfalls, and he had not been heard. She was on the path sloping to the river, the man ten yards behind her. Another second or two and she had gained the bridge and halted, and was looking up at the Tower and the silent woods. Lyon came nearer. She was fair, he thought, but the affair promised the salt of intrigue no longer. Still, she was a jewel; and Errachdale's humiliation of him had goaded his vanity and fanned his mean mind's fires. Desire and black-hearted revenge stirred uneasily, raising their evil heads. The affair would be dalliance no longer, he promised himself. He would take her away from these dull solitudes, and a vision of a round of gaiety and the beckoning lights of London rose. Then he remembered his empty pockets, and swift on the heels of the thought's chill clutch there came another. The document that she had dropped. The money was hers, no doubt. Lucky for them both! With all his faults, her glowering husband had been considerate. He conceded that. He came nearer, and she turned round, startled. He did not see the disappointment in her eyes, as she stood in silence, waiting for him to speak, scornful inquiry in the lift of her head.

The silence grew irksome to him. He felt irritated; worse, he felt ridiculous. He had expected a few tears perhaps; had been prepared magnanimously for a scene. After all, she was a woman and might be overwrought; but there she was standing like a statue without a word. Considering her plight, he had looked for a welcome; but there was barely recognition in her steady gaze. The affair was shaping badly; it would serve her well, he thought, savagely, if he abandoned the siege. Then he remembered the money, and masked his thoughts.

'Alicia!' The tone was silken.

'He spared you,' she said at length, a weariness and contempt in her voice. 'Why do you wait?'

The stone-wall directness of the question stung him. This was surely caprice. His implacable vanity refused to recognise the barrier in her eyes, and a coarse physical instinct, some animal resource in him, prompted him to seize her hand. She withdrew it as if stung.

'Do not touch me! Do not come near me,' she said. And again, 'Why do you wait?'

'A thousand pardons. I thought'—— He began marking time uneasily. 'I have a message.' Instinctively she looked towards the Tower. 'This. You forgot it.' He handed her the slip and watched her covertly. She glanced at its contents in the clear moonlight, then deliberately tore it into tiny pieces, opened her hand over the bridge, and watched the fragments flutter down to the dark river.

'Leave me! Coward!' she ordered.

'Alicia,' he began, with an infinity of tender reproach, preparatory to a romantic exit. Like all feminine men, he preferred a picturesque punishment. 'Some day perhaps'—— He broke off suddenly, for in the clear moonlight he thought he caught a glimpse of Errachdale's tall figure, dark against the snow, coming swiftly over the rising ground. He was mistaken, but the promptitude of his exit made up for its lack of romance. In a twinkling he was out of sight, swallowed up among the shadows of the trees, trailing maledictions.

Errachdale, alone in the hall of the Tower, was a strangely different man from the Errachdale of a few minutes before with a lissom rapier in his hand; suddenly older, weariness in his pose, suffering stamped on his white, shrunken face. Of high courage, he was loyal, even Quixotic, in his few ideals—his wife, his duty, his name, his honour, his regiment. 'Keeping these bright, a man may gain Heaven,' was his creed. Of a strong and simple nature, but with gusty elemental passions; cool, brave in the field to the verge of fatalism; clear of subtleties; experienced and yet with limited intuitiveness, the sudden axe at his life's roots had left him stunned. He was, of course, unaware of the man Neil's visit. Reaching the turn of the staircase, joy in his heart at the sound of Alicia's voice, just when Lyon had taken her, half-fainting, to his arms, he had seen the prodigal gold of her hair on Lyon's shoulder, his burning kisses on her lips, and in a flash the evening at the Buck Inn came back to him, and his heart turned to gall. Now the tension of the last few minutes relaxed, the fierce throbbing growing in his temples, and in the grip of a physical exhaustion strange and new to him, he sat drinking disillusionment, staring into the dusty desert of his future, his mind at breaking-point.

He rose and paced the hall wearily, the solemn deerhound at his heels. Better to have fallen at Fuentes de Onoro! he thought. His eye fell on the pistols. He stopped dead, a sombre light on the frontier of madness in his hollow eyes, the touch of fatalism in his blood whispering to him. After all, a bullet here, now, or in the Peninsula, what matter? He had seen Death and had braved it often. The world, what was it? A dusty heap of savourless duties, lost ideals, broken idols marking its vanished mirage. But a moment, and its drab to-morrows and its jeering yesterdays would be as

naught, and he would drink long forgetfulness with the shadows of the unnumbered, unremembered dead. They were near him; he felt their presence in the dark shadows of the hall, watching him. He saw them, a sea of grave, expectant shapes. They beckoned to him. Their lips shaped the words, 'Forget! Forget!' He heard their voices. He went to a window and lifted the arras, and the light flooded in, showing a still world, peopled only by the cowled brothers, the white, silent Order of the Forest. He stood for a moment, the peace of it stabbing him. One of the shadows came closer, and touched him with a kind, pitying gesture.

He lifted a pistol and loaded it. At the bridge, the girl wept, alone.

Suddenly, in the hush of the night, Errachdale thought that he heard a sound. He listened. Once, twice, the call of a child, clear and wholesome as a bell. He knew the voice instantly, although he had never before heard it. The blood surged into his face. He strode quickly to the hall, called, and an old man-servant appeared, astonishment veiled in a discreet eye.

'I am Errachdale,' said his master, with a tremor in his voice. 'I wish my son brought to me.'

'Something wrang, I doot,' he said as he withdrew. 'He fair daunted me, glowerin' like a corp. Imphm! I'll bring the loon to him masel'. This is no' a job for a wheen bletherin' kitchen-hizzies.' He once had bairns of his own.

He came back carrying the boy, and Errachdale took him from the man, his heart drumming, old Andrew softly withdrawing without a word. Outside the door, for the only time in his life, he put his eye to a keyhole and looked through with a whispered, 'Now, may the Lord forgi'e me!'

The two in the hall looked at each other steadily, the boy unafraid, and under the tumbled fair hair Errachdale saw his own dark eyes.

'Vic!' he said softly. The boy looked at him with direct eyes, that widened as they travelled to the sword leaning in the corner. Errachdale followed the look. He lifted the sword, and half-unsheathed the bright blade. The boy came forward, closing a chubby hand on the hilt with a chuckle of delight, and his father drew him to his knee, a sudden, singing warmth in his heart. The boy's ancestors had borne arms. The sword would one day be his.

Errachdale felt miserably clumsy; his voice had never sounded so strident, his movements so startling, he thought, striving in the new and curiously difficult essay of making friends with a child, and the child his own. Ludovic Secundus listened gravely to him, meeting his advances with the steady searchlight of a child, taking him in slowly from the boots upwards and down again, and broke at length into a smile, the shy prelude to a stream of prattling. The man's voice mingled with it, and the dark, sorrowful shapes of his overwrought brain vanished suddenly. The big deerhound watching them, solemnly interested, gave the little conference his imprimatur in the offer of a paw, and the three shook hands. So they sat, gradually making friends.

Old Andrew rose from the keyhole and drew a hand furtively across his eyes.

'Hang the dust!' he said, but without conviction.

Errachdale rose and unloaded the pistol.

He stood the boy in his chair, and went a pace or two back to the chimneypiece, feasting his eyes on him, pride in his heart, as he marked his son's well-bred looks—pride shot with pain when, suddenly brushing back his fair hair, the boy opened by the gesture a floodgate of memory.

Errachdale's eye caught the letter on the canopy of the fireplace. It was, something told him, in his wife's writing, and his first impulse was to burn it; but as he lifted it he read his own name. It was addressed to himself. He read it once, twice, holding it with a shaking hand, his face as one suddenly loosed from the clutch of an appalling dream, clasped the boy for an instant to him, and strode to the door. He flung it open, his burning eyes searching the night, and listened. No sound but the river's voice muffled by the intervening woods like the sound of a faint wind stirring among them, and the owls hooting in sad monotony. He called her name aloud in an agony of self-reproach. The silver night threw back a maddening echo. He called again, more of entreaty than hope in his voice, and then started swiftly down the path. He would find her. He must find her. The wooden gate refused to open, and in the torrent of his purpose he tore it bodily from its hinges and rushed along on the track of her footsteps. A breath of frost had hardened the snow; her light footsteps soon became vague and untraceable. Errachdale paused for an impatient moment.

The night was unearthly in its stillness, not a branch stirring in the forest, the dark beauty of the sky's arch unstained by so much as a wisp of cloud; the snow's cunning artistry lending the scene stature and dignity strange and beautiful in its every feature, the frozen billows of the hills, the plumed ranging pines limned in acute and startling definition, the very shadows magnified and incisive, bitten on the white canvas. As he listened eagerly, a faint rustle in the brake reached him. He held his breath. A roebuck trotted out, raising a powder of snow, and, seeing him, tossed its head and wheeled in a twinkling like a terrified wraith back to the dark, safe heart of the forest. There was quiet again. Chill and dejected, he turned from the inscrutable woods towards the river.

The path hesitated, then lost itself among the bracken. He plunged forward, tramping savagely through the shackles of the undergrowth, tearing aside the clutching spruce-branches, beating them down, heedless of his bleeding hands or the trees' rude armfuls of snow, on, on towards the call of the Spey, and emerged breathless on a spur clear of trees above the hurrying stream. There he stood in check for a moment. The moon was scattering sequins on the river. Following carelessly the caper-

ing ricochet of a glint from the bright, trembling shower down-stream, his questing glance caught its leap to the span of the bridge, and suddenly the blood sang in his veins. For the vagrant moonbeam lingering there on the golden coronal of a solitary little figure had touched the centre of the world. It was she! Alicia! The river sang it. His heart sang it. The stars sang it.

She stood there, white, still, leaning against the parapet clear against the sky, alone in the spaciousness of the night. As Errachdale looked, the awful accusing image of a deserted soul rose before him, wresting from him a broken cry to her, but the sob of the river at the bridge's foot drowned it, and she could not hear. He came nearer, within a few yards of her, and stood still, his head bowed in the drooping flower of her presence, his heart aflame with compassion, love, understanding. He heard her voice; his wife, the mother of his son. A new glory shone in the pure, far distances; a new message in the silent white peace of the forest. The place became a shrine.

Unaware of his presence, she had raised her head for a moment towards the Tower, and 'Ludovic! Ludovic!' was what he heard.

'Alicia!'

She turned round with a low cry, paused for a moment that seemed an hour to Errachdale, and then held out her white hands to him, joy in the swift ebb and flow of the red tide in her face, reading his face in a glad mist, her eyes twin stars.

'Come, Alicia mine!' he said at last; 'I shall carry you. Come home!'

The word 'home,' the order, the masculine note, were music to her.

'It is the King's Majesty. He has been pleased to command,' she said, and bent in the demure witchery of a curtsy that hid her dewy eyes. 'I am helpless.' Her laughter was a chime. 'It is so helpful, sometimes, to feel helpless. "And I think,"' she quoted, '"that a woman is happiest when she is doing what she is bid—if she wants to."'

Hush! Full-hearted voice of the river. Hush for a golden moment, lest they lose one whisper of each other's names, of their lovers' foolish wisdom, of their sweet surrenders of forgiveness, as they rescue their truant happiness from its pitiable dark places; a single heart-beat as each hears the magic of the other's voice, every gesture recalling the dear past trifles of their common life, eager heralds of the future.

In the harbour of his arms she told him, her heart aflutter, of her fits of loneliness, her childish, wilful playing with fire, the strange messenger with the ring, the dénouement when Errachdale arrived. He showed her her letter, and they lingered there tracing life's purpose, in glad silences, with tremulous freshets of laughter.

He swung her to his shoulder, and as they breasted the ascent and entered the woods, it seemed to these two that the world around them held gracious loyal presences. The Spey called 'good-night,' a friendly neighbouring sound in the hush; light airs breathed a Laudamus among the giant white aigrettes of the pines; overhead, the moon, in serene knowledge sailing royally through a tremulous fleet of stars, transfigured the lined face of the Tower; and the old house met its master with kindling eyes.

On the threshold she paused for an instant and pointed to the legend's lichened characters above the door:

✠ MARK WEEL: TRAVELER DOUN: YE YEIRES: NANE GET WYSDOME: WIOUT TEARES ✠

They looked from it to each other, and she laid a hand in his. They entered.

In the hall, watched by the solemn-eyed deerhound, the boy lay asleep in the glow of the firelight, both arms round his father's sword.

THE END.

# THE ABUSE OF THE CAMERA.

## WANTED A LEAGUE.

IF all the applied arts which have added to our intelligent enjoyment, none other can compare with that of photography, which has, thanks to new devices and improved processes, made such strides during the past two decades that in place of the old, hard daguerreotype, itself almost an incredible miracle to our unsophisticated grandparents, we now have such delicate studies of the human form and of landscape as are deemed worthy to rank with the work of great painters.

Side by side with this wonderful improvement in the technique of the professional photographer, the present generation has witnessed a yet more amazing development of facilities for the amateur. Not only are really excellent cameras offered at a price which puts them within reach of all, but the inventive ingenuity of rival makers, with America as the pioneer, has reduced the art to a rule-of-thumb precision—tersely summed up in the formula devised by the leading firm, 'You press the button, and we do the rest'—which makes it possible for even careless amateurs, with their share of luck, to turn out work of very high, if not perhaps the highest, order. Apart from a passing regret that such results should be brought down to the level of mechanical achievement, this extraordinary popularising of a beautiful hobby would be an unqualified boon were it not for the fact that, like other blessings, it is abused.

Three improvements in photographic apparatus have contributed to the possibilities of mischief.

The first and worst of these is the extreme portability of modern cameras. With the stand-camera of other days there was little risk of misdemeanour, since, what with the steadying of the tripod and the operator's dive under the black focussing-cloth, ample warning was given to all and sundry in the picture. Stand-cameras still give the best work, and always will; but, so far as amateurs are concerned, they are preferred only by those of serious proclivities, who could in no conceivable circumstances put their art to improper uses. It is the hand-camera that has added a new terror to life. Hand-cameras are made in a thousand patterns, ranging in size from the bulky reflex or twin-lens instruments (which, being conspicuous, are little more dangerous to the unconscious subject than the stand-camera) down to wicked little contrivances made to go into the waistcoat-pocket. The best of these lilliputian instruments are fortunately so expensive as to be beyond the reach of the million, but there are some of sufficiently modest price to have found their way into far more hands than is conducive to the public comfort.

The second improvement on the old order of things is to be found in the rapid exposures attainable with fast lenses and shutters, or even more with the device known as the focal plane. With the old cap over the lens arrangement, the method still adopted by many portrait-photographers in preference to the newer time-shutter, it was impossible to get a portrait without posing the subject. Nowadays, however, the rapid lens and lightning shutter catch a perfectly recognisable likeness in the hundredth part of a second; while even in a thousandth the focal plane will take merciless records of the limbs in some ludicrous position which, without such mechanical aids, human eye would never see or human imagination never divine.

The third invention, which has played woefully into the hands of the *enfants terribles* of photography, is that of highly sensitised dry plates and films, which have not only conspired with the rapid lens and shutter to perpetrate such inquisitorial outrages, but have also enabled the amateur to go forth on his unholy raids with a camera carrying in it material for at least a dozen exposures. I hope I do not appear to underrate the blessing of these ingenious aids to photography so long as they are employed with due regard to decency, for I owe them a deep debt of gratitude for having enhanced the pleasure of many a journey to the ends of the earth, and for providing me with sweet memories after such journeys' ending. Yet the more they add to our legitimate enjoyment by their legitimate use, the more they necessarily aid irresponsible people of vulgar tastes in making themselves obnoxious to their quieter neighbours. My revolt is not against the camera, but against those who put it to improper uses. It is the hand, not the tool, which sins; and I do not love a piano the more when a schoolgirl is strumming on it for having heard it thrill at the touch of Rubenstein.

To make matters worse, nine amateurs out of ten do not nowadays do their own developing and printing, but leave such completion of their purpose to the local chemist or photographer, who is consequently able, if so minded, to make prints for himself, and possibly, when the owner (usually a mere summer bird-of-passage) has left the town, to show them in his window as specimens of his work. Even so much publicity might be exceedingly distressing to some people; but there is another temptation to far wider fame in the shape of those numerous prize competitions that have latterly been promoted by weekly and monthly periodicals. No serious blame can attach to the editors of these publications for encouraging contests so popular with their readers; but the reflection that they are perfectly legitimate enterprise can bring no balm to soothe the ruffled feelings of their victims. What can be the thoughts of some Church dignitary who should suddenly come on a prize-winning picture entitled '*Otium cum dignitate*,' and depicting his reverend self *en villégiature*, lying on the sands with one of his sufficient feet blotting out the horizon? Or how poignant the dismay of an affianced couple 'snapped' while sitting together on a breakwater, and enlarged, with the title of 'Love's Young Dream'! Such publicity is enough to break off an engagement or to send the archdeacon to his bishop! In any case, it is an outrage.

It is not as if the camera always told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. As a matter of fact, even that would be bad enough at times, for not all of us go through life with the stereotyped smile and æsthetic gestures of the ladies who bulk large on picture post-cards. No; we have our homely moments of frowning and goloshes, and even a veracious picture of a man in such mood and raiment could be pleasing only to his own mother. But the camera, even if it never tells a downright lie, may easily be made to prevaricate in unskilful or unscrupulous hands. Any one who doubts this weakness of the camera in unscrupulous hands should satisfy himself by standing close to a church tower and taking a picture with the lens tilted at an angle of twenty degrees, when he will obtain all the effects of an earthquake or of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. With a little cunning, or with a little ignorance no less dangerous, the earthquake effect may also be obtained in portraiture, and a dreadful distortion will thus be imparted to an urbane face, giving it the wry expression of a thwarted murderer. Even when the camera does tell the truth it rarely tells the whole truth. A thousandth-of-a-second exposure will, no doubt, show a man as he is for just that period of time. One foot is raised in the air, one arm is extended, the face wears a fatuous expression utterly uncharacteristic of its owner; all this is true —for just one-thousandth of a second! But in the next thousandth, long before the unaided eye has noted the difference, all is changed for the better. This, however, is too late for the ephemeral veracity of the camera, which takes no cognisance of it.

How, then, taking into account the limitations of human vision, can it be fairly claimed that the resulting picture is true to life? Would it not be as reasonable for the parliamentary reporter to quote half-sentences in a speech? The words were actually uttered no doubt; yet, shorn of their context, they are mere idiocy.

Against the soft-treading spectre of the summer holidays, who creeps upon us with the hidden hand-camera and bottles up impressions of moments we fain would call our own, there can be no remedy until a league is formed to put him in his proper place. The membership of such a league—if any one had but the courage to launch it—would, I venture to prophesy, be enormous. Nor would there be anything illogical if it were largely recruited from among the ranks of amateur photographers themselves. As matters stand at present, the law gives no relief; but powerful combinations have before now succeeded in getting the law amended to their liking, and this would happen in remedying this vulgar abuse. The photographer enjoys copyright in his work, but the individual enjoys none in his face or feet. Is this fair? They may be poor things these extremities, but at least they should be his own! They are not. Any one is free to 'snap' them and to publish such caricatures as the lens produces. There is no relief in a protest, for the rampant 'snapper' knows that the law is on his side and is callous of wounded susceptibilities. Very well, then; the protest must be backed by orderly force, and herein lies the *raison d'être* of the league. The only solution at present lies in the outraged victim taking the law into his own hands by seizing the camera, opening the back so as to let in light and ruin all the results, and then returning it to its owner. Apart, however, from the probability of an action at law, this remedy implies that the victim is stronger than his tormentor, and thus precludes all hope of redress for women, the greatest sufferers from this intolerable practice.

The alternative is appeal to the law. At present this would be hopeless. On the formation of a league, with a nominal subscription, but with a membership of ten thousand, the aid of the law might be invoked. It might become the recognised practice to follow the offending photographer and appeal to the nearest policeman. If, then, the 'artist' denied the soft impeachment, proof could be forthcoming in the nearest dark room. There would be a recognised code, somewhat as follows: The parties would have to submit to the test of development. If the picture objected to were found among those developed, the complaining party would have the right to destroy it, and the cost of developing would fall on the owner of the camera. If, on the other hand, the suggested snapshot were not found within the camera, it would fall on the 'plaintiff' to pay the price not only of developing, but also of a refill of plates or films, since it is conceivable that many not exposed would be destroyed in the test. This procedure would doubtless leave an opening for trickery, since the cunning photographer, anxious to get his 'roll' developed free of cost, would merely have to point his camera at some irate citizen, making pretence of releasing the shutter, only to be marched off to the nearest photographer's, there to reap the fruits of his roguery. Yet any one with a sense of humour would forgive such roguery, and in any case even such risks would be preferable to the present intolerable freedom from which none are safe. It would be the business of the league, whenever it was satisfied of a *bonâ fide* case, to recoup the member thus penalised for his zeal in endeavouring to bring a delinquent to book.

We are not all of us beautiful. Some have rather large feet; others have a generous nose, an underhung mouth, or some other feature which, judged dispassionately, and without reference to legitimate family pride in such peculiarities, is distinctly out of drawing. To these possessions, even if we hold them in no affection, we may have grown indifferent; but we shall not be endeared to them by their reproduction in crude prints. A 'live and let live' spirit should be encouraged or enforced. I would suggest that the league be styled the Anti-Snapshot Publicity League, and I shall be happy to subscribe and to join the committee on the day of its formation.

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# WILD OATS.

## CHAPTER III.

A WEEK after this conversation Cyril was living in the little house by the seaside, with O Tatsu San as his wife. Her father, impressed by the accounts of his boundless wealth, and also influenced by the girl's devotion to him, had easily been persuaded to give his consent. Yamada assured him that everything was going to be all right, and that Cyril was quite willing to have a proper Japanese ceremony, and it never entered his mind to make any stipulation about going before the English consul. As for moral and religious feelings on the matter, Cyril had put them entirely aside. He chose to think that this was an interlude in his life not to be judged by the ordinary rules of morality. It occasionally came into his mind that this state of things could not last for ever, that a time might come when O Tatsu San would suffer even more than she would have suffered had she married the man of her father's choice in the usual Japanese way; but he turned from such

thoughts and resolutely looked at the pleasure of the moment.

Had he been entirely dependent upon O Tatsu San for amusement Cyril would soon have been bored with his simple life; but he had a variety of interests, and she was merely a sweet little companion ready for him at any moment that he wanted her. He worked at a big picture of Mount Fuji, and also made studies of bits of the coast's projecting headlands, covered with pine-trees, with fishermen's cottages at the foot and the blue sea sweeping round. He felt that he was doing good work, and that of itself was enough to make him happy.

Yamada had found a Japanese artist in the neighbourhood who for a small sum was willing to come and teach Cyril the use of the Japanese brush and ink, and he took up the study of this branch of art with great enjoyment.

O Tatsu San was absolutely happy. She tried hard to learn more English, and in the evening Cyril would hear her say her new words and roar with laughter over her funny little sentences. She bought a copy-book, and he set her copies, till one day she dismayed him by saying that when she could write well she would write a nice letter to his mother. Poor little girl, she did not in the least realise that the one tiresome part of Cyril's life was the occasional composition of a letter to his mother in which all allusion to her was carefully avoided.

After a couple of months, however, life began to get a little monotonous, and Cyril resolved to do some travelling, taking O Tatsu San with him. He was standing on the platform waiting for the train to come in, when he heard his name called out in a fresh, girlish voice.

'Why, Mr Winston, fancy meeting you here! Do come in with us, and tell us about your pictures, and what you have been doing in Japan.'

Cyril recognised in the speaker and her party some people he had met on the ship. They crowded round him, asking all sorts of questions. Fortunately for Cyril, O Tatsu San happened to have strolled along the platform.

'I will be with you in a minute, Miss Heathcote,' he said; 'but I must first see about my things. I will follow you into the carriage.'

So saying, he hurried after O Tatsu San; and, feeling unspeakably mean, he told her to get into a carriage by herself, and that he would join her later.

His English friends plied him with all sorts of questions as to where he had been and what he had been painting. The girls were very gay and fresh; but after O Tatsu San's little feminine graces they seemed to him more like young boys than women. It was a great effort to him to be lively and reply to their sallies, for in his mind he was all the time conscious of a poor little girl sitting nervously huddled up by herself a few carriages off. It was a relief to Cyril when the Heathcotes got out. The older man of their party lingered by the door in parting.

'I say, Winston,' he whispered, 'I could see that you are not alone. Don't go and play the fool, man, out here. Wild oats sown in Japan may be more picturesque, but they bring just as bad a crop as wild oats sown anywhere else.'

When Cyril got in beside O Tatsu San she was frightened by the look on his face. On arrival at the station where they were to alight he put her into a jinrikisha, and said that he preferred walking. He strode along quite oblivious of the scenery around him, which at other times would have caused him such keen delight; the high trees by the roadside, the splashing river, the vistas of mountains between the trees, were all unnoticed. He had suddenly become conscious of a moral uncleanness, of a life that he must hide, and he was filled with fierce anger against those who had disturbed his calm.

Wild oats! Was his beautiful artistic experience to be designated by that sordid name? But no, there were some people who judged everything by their narrow British standards; he was not one of them, however, and as he was in Japan he would act on Japanese lines. Marriage and divorce were known to be easy there, and surely the girl's parents could be trusted to look after her interests; they had agreed to his having her, so there was no cause for his feeling uncomfortable in his conscience. Yet he was thoroughly upset in his mind. The sight of those English girls had brought Helen vividly before him, and he was suddenly rather weary of O Tatsu San. He paused in his walk and looked round him. How different it would be if Helen were with him! How she would have enjoyed the scenery! She would have been tramping by his side full of life and zest, not shut up in a jinrikisha like poor little O Tatsu San. But O Tatsu San was a sweet little creature; she never worried him, and he meant to be kind to her.

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### CHAPTER IV.

CYRIL had to learn that there is no relationship in life in which one can always be receiving and the other giving. The moment comes when the receiver must become a giver. In his relationship with O Tatsu San, Cyril had always been the receiver. She gave herself, her thoughts, her attention, her life, all to him; he gave her practically nothing. His pictures were much more in his mind than she was; he made no real effort for her. When, as it sometimes happened, her presence bored him, he would calmly tell her to run off, as he was busy. There was nothing strange to the Japanese woman in this life of absolute submission to the will of another; it had been the lot of Japanese women for centuries, and had made her what she was, the most self-

effacing creature on earth. But the moment came when Cyril realised that this poetic, artistic dream, as he chose to consider it, could make stern prose demands upon him. When O Tatsu San told him that she was to become a mother she was astonished at the look of surprise and dismay so plainly written on his face.

'You are angry?' she said timidly.

'No, no,' he said; 'only I was surprised.' And he tried to reassure her, but in a few moments he left her and went out. He paced up and down, full of a fierce rage. To do him justice, he quite realised the great responsibility that it was to bring a life into the world, and he was dismayed and horrified that such a responsibility should fall upon him. What a horrible complication it made! Poor little O Tatsu San, of course the hardest part fell upon her. But, on the other hand, it was all straight sailing for her; she was deceiving no one, whereas he was beginning to feel the deception he was practising on her and on his mother as a burden on his mind. He was not yet tired of his life in Japan, and as long as he was in Japan he liked to have O Tatsu San's sweet, quiet companionship; but he had no idea of bringing lifelong claims upon himself. He had read stories of Japanese life in which it seemed that marriage was easy and divorce almost easier, and he had assured himself again and again that he was doing O Tatsu San no unkindness by taking her to live with him with the full intention of putting her away at the end of a year. One marriage in three, he was told, ended in divorce, so she would be subjected to no unusual or cruel fate. She would probably marry again very soon. But to have a child of his own! He wished to goodness that she had not told him about the matter. However, he was not going to be a brute—he was going to stick by her; indeed, he made up his mind to be extra kind to her.

That evening he tried to carry out his intentions, and said a few words with the hope of making her think that her news had pleased him. But O Tatsu San was not deceived. Their mutual vocabulary was very small, but that very fact made her all the more sensitive to his changes of mood. She did not wait for his words, as an Englishwoman would have done, to divine his wants or feelings; from the first she had studied the expression of his face, and that made it very difficult for him to deceive her now. Their attitude to each other gradually changed; she was as attentive to his wishes as before, but there was an undefinable difference. She would sit on the matted floor by his side; but there was a far-away look on her face that made Cyril guess that she was not thinking of him but of the child she was to bear, and at these times Cyril had an uncomfortable, guilty sensation that made him long to escape from her presence.

He felt it to be out of the question for him to break away and leave her altogether; but he made excuses for trips to other parts of Japan. On the first of these occasions, when he had told her that it was impossible for her to go with him, she laid her hand on his arm, and, looking steadily in his face, she said, 'If you not come again I die. I will certainly die.'

Cyril always took Yamada with him to act as interpreter and to do bits of cooking. Yamada not infrequently entertained Cyril with tales of Japanese life. Of late these tales had shown a strong tendency to end with a suicide. Sometimes it was the double suicide of a pair of lovers, sometimes that of a disappointed woman, sometimes that of a mere boy. Yamada made Cyril understand that the Japanese mind invariably turned to suicide as the way of escape from all trouble.

'When a Japanese woman is very unhappy,' he said, 'she throws herself over a cliff or into a well. Yes, O Tatsu San—she will do that if you are not kind to her.'

'Confound you!' said Cyril, 'what are you talking about?' But he knew very well that the young man's warning was not undeserved, and that Yamada had guessed that Cyril would be only too glad to shake the dust of Japan from his feet; and by various tales and hints it was borne in upon Cyril that if he were to do so he would probably be followed by news which would morally make him a murderer.

It was when O Tatsu San's baby-boy was but two weeks old that Cyril received a telegram urging his immediate return on account of his mother's very serious illness. The telegram brought him a feeling of the most intense relief. Here was a real reason for leaving the country. Even O Tatsu San could not feel herself in any way injured by his obeying such a summons. He spelt out the words of the telegram to her, and made Yamada come in and explain that he was his mother's only child, so he must go at once. It was a great comfort to him that the Siberian railway route made it possible for him to start within two days; he did not want to prolong his farewells. O Tatsu San insisted on rising, and moved about the house in a state of silent, tearless woe.

'You must look after the little chap well,' said Cyril, pointing to the baby; 'and remember that I have left plenty of money in your name in the bank.—Explain to her, Yamada, that it is all invested in her name, and no one can touch it but herself.'

When the moment came for parting she walked down to the gate with him. Mount Fuji rose white and glistening across the bay; a soft breeze stirred the bamboo-grove. She did not sob or cry, as an English girl would have done; but Cyril found her silence more trying than tears.

'Have you nothing to say to me?' he asked.

'Only *sayonara*' ['good-bye'], she said, hiding her face in her long sleeve.

'Is that all?' he asked again.

'Yes,' she whispered, without looking up; '*sayonara—sayonara.*'

CHAPTER V.

THE Siberian express bore Cyril from Japan. His thoughts were not of the pleasantest. At one end of his journey was his mother on her sick-bed, at the other end O Tatsu San and her child. Sitting moodily in his corner, he gazed out at the graceful silver birches, the bracken, the countless wild flowers, the occasional lonely figure which only served to accentuate the stillness of the landscape—all these things, which form a delight to the artistic eye, passed unnoticed. His mind was still in the little house by the seashore, and he was more conscious of a white, glistening Fuji than he was of the Siberian plains and woods. The girl who a year ago had been a happy, smiling little damsel, how had he left her? He could only think of her as a bowed figure with her face in her sleeve. Of the child as a separate existence he thought but little; when the small, blinking scrap of humanity was placed in his arms he had found it difficult to realise that this was a human being and his own son.

He had left ample provision for O Tatsu San, and he was now trying to convince himself that it would be happier for her if he never wrote, and if she forgot him. What made it easier for him to shirk writing was the fact that he could not write straight to her, for her knowledge of English was so elementary that she would certainly need to have his letters read to her.

'In a couple of years she will forget me and be married happily to one of her own countrymen.' He kept saying this to himself, but in his heart of hearts he doubted it.

When he arrived in England he found that his mother was slowly recovering. It was perhaps a mercy for both that she was still confined to her room, and only able to see him for an hour or so at a time. Had she been in her usual state she could not have failed to be at once struck by the change in her son; as it was, she only gradually began to realise that he had become curiously older and strangely moody.

Helen was a constant visitor during Mrs Winston's illness, and the change in Cyril was at once apparent to her. She had looked forward to regaining an old companion and friend, only to find that he avoided her. She had been surprised at the meagreness of his letters to his mother, and his total silence to herself; but she had put it down to a masculine dislike of letter-writing. It never entered her mind to suppose that he had changed till she saw the change with her own eyes.

'I suppose it is his artistic temperament,' said Mrs Winston one day to Helen; 'but I can't make him out; he likes to remain shut up the whole day in his studio. He was all that time in Japan, and must have seen something, yet he does not care to tell me anything about it. I can get nothing out of him. I must say that it is most disappointing.'

Though Cyril avoided Helen Garth, yet she was perpetually in his thoughts. The Helen whom he remembered as a delightful companion but an impetuous girl had developed into a very noble woman. There was nothing small about Helen Garth; the very poise of her head and the frank look of her clear brown eyes gave the impression of a generous nature. The time which Cyril had spent over the gratification of his own tastes had been spent by her in studying the lives and wants of others. She had persuaded her parents to let her go and live in a 'settlement.' All the workers in the settlement were obliged to take a course of reading on questions of social reform, and they could not but see in the lives of those among whom they worked that there was an unceasing sacrifice of the lives of the many to the well-being of the few. When Helen had been less than a year at the settlement, her mother's death made it necessary that she should return home to keep house for her father.

She was more hurt than she was able to express by Cyril's attitude to her on his first arrival; but as time went on he gradually became the sweet-tempered, pleasant companion of former days. The truth was that time brought forgetfulness to Cyril, and he was able to put his life in Japan out of his mind. He had at first been haunted by the pathetic little face of O Tatsu San; but it was fading away, and he was able to look upon her as a mere episode, something quite unconnected with the rest of his life. His mother's health made it necessary for Cyril to be much at home, and as his work brought tone and vigour to his mind the charm of Helen's companionship grew upon him.

It would have been impossible for Helen to explain what it was in Cyril that attracted her; he was not her ideal man, yet she loved him.

As Cyril realised how much her companionship meant to him he began to make real efforts to please her; and when, after a long and quiet wooing, Helen consented to become his wife, Cyril vowed to himself that her happiness should now be his first aim in life.

*(To be continued.)*

## INVERAWE.

This is the land of dream;
The seagulls sweep and whirl,
Gray, over seas which gleam
With lights of mother-o'-pearl.

And this is fairyland,
Where all strange things are true.
Oh glimmering sea and sand,
My thoughts fly back to you!

Land like an opal's heart
Of flame which shines through mist,
Where the golden days depart
In a haze of amethyst!

Oh waters sunny and blue,
Or gray as the breast of a dove,
My thoughts fly back to you
Like gulls to the seas they love!

MARGARET SACKVILLE.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# SLEEPLESSNESS.

## AN OLD MAN'S NOCTUARY.

By EDWARD MARSTON, Author of *After Work; Fragments from the Workshop of an Old Publisher.*

WHEN I complain of the aches and pains which encompass my old frame my friends laugh at me; they won't believe that I have any; they say my looks betray me, that I talk as if I were a hundred years old, but that I don't look fifty. As a matter of fact, I am nearer ninety than eighty—that is one of my misfortunes. I know that a grasshopper is a burden on my shoulders, that rheumatism cramps my muscles, and my knees refuse to help me over a stile. Even our family doctor laughs, and tells me my pulse is that of a young and vigorous man, and that my tongue indicates perfect digestion and a splendid appetite; and so it is that I get no real sympathy. If I tell them that for weeks together I get *no sleep* they simply pooh-pooh! They say I am an old visionary, and that I am sound asleep when I think I am wide awake.

Last night I thought I would put my assertions to this test. I have always a table and a book and a lamp at my bedside. In order to prove my words I provided a sheet of writing-paper and a pencil. The following is a true record of what occurred between the hours of nine-thirty P.M. and nine o'clock A.M.

At nine-thirty P.M. I went to bed. Instead of reading when there, as I usually do, and feeling drowsy, I turned away from the light and tried hard to sleep. I soon felt cosy and comfortable for a time, but at ten o'clock my right shoulder became so painful that I was compelled to seek relief by turning on to my left. Then for a few minutes I was easy, but the drowsiness had gone; my brain went off wool-gathering. I could find nothing definite to think about; but I repeated aloud old hymns, old poetry, old scraps of all sorts. But *no sleep.*

At eleven o'clock I had become so restless that I had to get out of bed, put on my dressing-gown and slippers, and walk about the room quite comfortably. I looked out into the darkness for Halley's Comet (as I have done every night for weeks past), and though I looked always in the direction suggested by astronomers I never got a glimpse of him.

*Eleven-thirty.*—Back to bed, but not to sleep. Tried to read for half-an-hour. Too tiring to lie in one position holding a book. Tried counting a thousand backwards; no good.

*Twelve-thirty.*—Out again, walking round and round in dressing-gown and slippers. Bright night; stars shining; no comet.

*One o'clock.*—Back to bed. Tried to settle some theological difficulties; soon out of my depth. Repeated aloud quotations from *Macbeth* and *Hamlet.*

*One-thirty.*—Out again for a few minutes, then back to bed. Must have had a few minutes' sleep.

*Two-ten.*—Wide awake again. Three cocks crowing about two hundred yards away; a pair of screech-owls flitted past the window, screeching weirdly.

*Two-forty-five.*—Out again, in dressing-gown and slippers. Dog barking, thought I heard burglars, armed myself with a club, went out into the passage, but found all serene.

*Three.*—A little rest and forgetfulness, which I suppose means sleep.

*Three-fifteen.*—Robin first to begin to sing, then blackbirds and thrushes, then a host of choristers praising God.

*Three-forty-five.*—Out again for a tour round my room. Early birds on the lawn catching earlier worms. See that industrious old thrush yonder teaching two of her big babies how to earn their own living, dragging a big, fat worm out of the earth. First she kills it and then tears it into two or three bits. The young ones run up, and she drops a piece into each wide-open mouth. And so the game goes on—sparrow and robin all doing the same thing. I watched a pair of most industrious starlings carrying up mouthfuls of worms to their young under the eaves above my head—at least twenty worms in ten minutes. Seemingly all the worms on the lawn have paid the penalty for getting


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up so early. I saw this morning a very curious bird on the lawn. It seemed to me to be neither blackbird nor thrush, but a mixture of both; it had black wings and back like a blackbird, and light-speckled breast like a thrush. I wonder if hybrids occur among birds. The lawn is clear, and singing begins again in the trees beyond. About a hundred yards away from my window is a large oak-tree; and just as I was going to turn in a cuckoo alighted on one of the topmost branches and kept up his song there for a few minutes, till another cuckoo came up, and then they flew away together. To hear a cuckoo is common enough, but to see and hear one at the same time close at hand is quite uncommon.

*Five-thirty.*—I had just turned in again when my little friend the robin fluttered into the room, took a general survey, and, finding no crumbs about, flew on to a perch. Saw me lying abed, gave me a pleasant little nod, and a chirp as much as to say, 'Good-morning, old man; just dropped in to see you. By-by,' and off.

From five-thirty to seven-thirty I had various experiences but no sleep.

From seven-thirty to eight-thirty all is blank. I must have slept profoundly, and was only roused out of it by my hot-water call.

I think this pencil-record has quite sufficiently proved my case, for it was quite an average night. It does not represent more than two hours of scraps of sleep at most. My sceptical friends are still sceptical; they say I kept myself awake on purpose to write this noctuary, and that it is not a fair example. I do not sleep during the day, except it may be forty winks after luncheon. I am not conscious that my health suffers from this absence of sleep. I can only assume that my age does not require it.

By the way, the word 'noctuary' is not a common word; it is for the night just what 'diary' is for the day. It is rarely used because it is rarely needed, for no one in his senses would prefer keeping a record of being awake to lying abed comfortably asleep.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER LIX.—HOW THE TIGER REACHED THE TUILERIES.

JACK followed at a distance, but with keenly interested eye, Bonaparte's slow progress through the shouting crowds that lined the roads from Fontainebleau to the steps of the Tuileries, and started that same night for London.

England seemed very dull and quiet after the wild enthusiasm of which he had been witness during these last weeks.

'And, as far as you could judge, it was all genuine feeling, John?' asked Sir Charles as they sat at dinner the night he arrived.

'On the part of the military and the country-people without a doubt, sir. As to the Paris folks I am not sure. The crowds were mostly of the lower class. It seemed to me that the *bourgeoisie* kept indoors and closed their shutters. I think all they want is to be left alone to get on with their affairs. Bourbon or Bonaparte, it is all the same to them so long as they have peace and quietness. M. de Montessonne was chuckling over the *Moniteur's* record of Bonaparte's progress from day to day. It ran something like this: "The Man-Eater has issued from his lair." "The Corsican Ogre has disembarked in the Gulf of Juan." "The Monster was three days at sea." "The Chief of the Brigands has advanced as far as Grenoble." "The Tyrant has passed through Lyons." "The Usurper has been seen within sixty leagues of the capital." "Bonaparte is advancing rapidly, but he will never enter Paris." "Napoleon will be beneath our walls to-morrow." "The Emperor has arrived at Fontainebleau." "His Imperial Majesty has made his entry into the Tuileries in the midst of his faithful subjects."'

'Yes, I can imagine the marquis enjoying that, and I have no doubt it represents the feelings of a good many people over there who are anxious only to be on the safe side,' said Sir Charles.

Jack told them also of a meeting he had had with Etienne at Avalon.

'It places his grandfather in a difficult position,' mused Sir Charles. 'And Etienne would have been well advised to keep out of it, as the marquis has done. One cannot prophesy; but my own belief is that the Powers will never be satisfied till Bonaparte is laid by the heels. There is no other way to a lasting peace, and all the world—except Bonaparte—is sick to death of wars. It is just as well we got home, Mavie, apart from other matters. What grade has Etienne under the new Empire?'

'Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel in the Cuirassiers. He said he was to get his full step after their first battle. I thought him greatly improved, though he did at first half-threaten to hang me as a spy.'

'To hang you!' said Mavie. 'I'd like to see him do it!' and she coloured furiously at their shout of laughter, and then joined in it herself. 'Well, you know what I mean.'

'We know what you said,' laughed her father. 'I hope John won't take it too much to heart. I can't spare him yet.—She only told me the other day,' he said, turning to Jack, 'that Bonaparte had set his mind on marrying her to Etienne. There were apparently some lively scenes between them.'

'He was so accustomed to having his own way, and to every one bowing down before him, that I was something of a surprise to him. I told him

flatly that I would not marry except to please myself, and that according to his own laws he couldn't make me against my will. And he used to take me by the ear each time he saw me and pinch it till I nearly cried—only I'd have died first!—and ask, "Well, mademoiselle, are you in a pleasanter temper to-day?" And I would say, "I am always in a good temper, sir. It comes natural to me." And then he would say, "And how goes the study of our code?" And I would say, "It is an admirable code, sir. It does you greater credit than your battles, especially the laws relating to marriage. Paragraph 2 of clause 1, titre v., runs thus"—— And then he would give my ear an extra hard pinch and pass on, saying, "Some demoiselles are too clever," or "How very badly they bring up their demoiselles in England!" or something he thought very cutting. I was very glad to get out of his clutches.'

'Well, you had to thank John for that,' said Sir Charles.

'Lauristons never forget,' said Mavie.

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### CHAPTER LX.—HOW THEY WATCHED THE FIGHT AT WATERLOO.

NO man saw the battle of Waterloo, but I suppose John Sax saw more of it than most. He was there for the sole purpose of seeing, and was able to give himself to that and nothing else. As he knew full well what must follow, his mind was naturally full of anxiety as to the event; but, apart from that, he was free to watch the course of matters, and this was not the first conflict he had witnessed. Of those who came out alive from that hot day's work many have described such fragments of the fight as they were personally engaged in or witnessed; but every one, from commander-in-chief to drummer-boy, had his hands so full that day that he saw only what was impressed upon him by hard necessity. Not one had time to view that fight from the purely spectacular point of view, and that was how John Sax watched it. He watched the great fight from the spire of the little church on the Braine-l'Alleud road, from the first sharp crackle of the musketry in front of Hougomont to the final unavailing assaults on the British squares by the French cavalry and the Old Guard; and all that he saw you will find duly set forth in full elsewhere, but here space forbids.

When at last the Frenchmen buckled and broke, and the sorely tried raw British lads sprang after them with the bayonet, he descended hastily from his perch and rode after them across the hard-fought field. If the country behind the French ridge showed no signs of a rally, all he had to do was to gallop to the coast and carry the mighty word to London.

He climbed that farther slope, at which he had been gazing all day long, in fear and trembling for what of death it might still have to launch at England; and, far as his eye could reach, the country was black with hurrying troops. He saw Lord Wellington come slowly down that hill, his face grave and white, but perfectly tranquil, and go slowly along the road towards the white farm-house.

Then he turned and sped back, and stopped so suddenly that his horse reared and almost fell. He leaped down and knelt on the ground with a white and twisted face, and the wonder and glory of the day faded as though it had not been.

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### CHAPTER LXI.—HOW JACK COUNTED THE COST AND TOOK IT HOME WITH HIM.

MANY a notable deed was done on that heroic day, and one of these we must notice very briefly. The Greys, after their torrential onslaught on Marcognet's infantry and their own subsequent cutting up by Jacquinot's Lancers, were joined to Vandeleur's brigade, and helped to stiffen the Allied centre against the terrific and unceasing attacks of Ney's cavalry. When, at terrible length, after nearly eight hours of such fiery flailing as few troops have ever suffered, Wellington waved his hat and loosed the leashes, the British line sprang forward under the concentrated impulse and venom of all those awful hours of stolid and nerve-grinding endurance. Then human nature would out; and, taking the bit in its teeth, it went for the flying foe with Berserk fury.

Charles Lauriston, in the former dash against the infantry, had found himself, to his great disgust, suddenly out of the game through his horse dropping dead from a bayonet-thrust. The charge passed him by, and when he struggled up, sore and bruised from the passage of hoofs and feet, his men were sabring the gunners on the crest of the French position. He caught a stray horse and sped after them, but was only in time to help to brace them up under the attack of the Lancers. All the rest of the day he had been cursing his ill-luck and hungering for another chance. When Wellington's hat went up his chance came.

The broken French Guard—Bonaparte's last hope—was retiring up the farther slope. A body of Cuirassiers came gallantly to cover them. The Greys swooped at them as their natural prey, with full determination to pay back the score of the morning.

Charles set his eye and his heart on an Eagle in their midst, and made straight for it. He was cleaving his way to the standard-bearer when the Cuirassiers gave way and turned. The Eagle went down for a moment, was caught up by another

hand, and sped towards safety, with Charles thundering behind. His gray had been chafing under the long strain equally with its rider. With flattened ears and streaming mane and tail, eyes white and wild, and clenched teeth grinning savagely through its retracted lips, it seemed imbued with its rider's vengeful fury as it tore after the standard-bearer, as keen on the pursuit as its rider himself.

A hideous, nightmare ride! Before the grinning teeth drew level with the Frenchman's crupper the gray was red to the knees with the things it had trampled on—things that rose before it and looked at it with horror, and sank behind it bruised and broken and shapeless. But Charles saw only the bobbing Eagle and the bent back of him who carried it, thought only of how to wrest the Eagle from him. A shining steel cuirass covered the bent back; a sweep of flying horse-hair protected his neck. His sword had gone in the mêlée. He had no more thought of fight in him, only of escape with his precious charge.

And, keen as he was, and warped by what he had gone through beyond all ordinary human feeling, Charles still felt an instinctive repugnance to striking him from behind; he had not time for thought, but it felt like sheer, undisguised murder. The man's helplessness was his greatest security, but still that Eagle must not escape. Inch by inch the flaming gray drew up level. The jerking shaft of the Eagle was within reach. Dropping his sword to its thong, Charles grasped the pole with his right hand, hauled it up to his left, and recovered his sword for action.

'Let go!' he shouted, and raised his sword for a stroke at the arm that held the Eagle.

And the other turned a furious, dark face on him, and thrust at him the pistol he had dragged out of his holster and was just about to fire, when, '*Mon Dieu*, Charles!' jerked the dark face.

And, 'Etienne!' jerked Charles.

Then Etienne dropped the muzzle of his pistol and fired, and the gray gave a snorting sob and rolled in a heap. Before Charles could pick himself up, a grizzled cuirassier behind swung down and dealt him such a blow on the neck with his long sword as nearly severed his head from his body. And at the same moment a stalwart Scot, who had ridden up on the other side and seen the whole business, drove his sword home between Etienne's front and back plates, and tore the standard from him as he fell.

It was the sight of the hideously severed neck that first caught John Sax's reluctant eye as he picked his way back across the field. Then, with a shock that seemed to stay the beating of his heart, he recognised the face, and leaped down, though he knew that no living man could carry such a wound as that. He knelt by the body, with a sob at thought of those at home. He smoothed back the tumbled brown hair and kissed the livid forehead. And then, thinking of Mavie, he opened his pocket-knife with trembling fingers and cut off a lock and laid it carefully in his pocket-book. He would have taken something else for her, but the risk of that was brought home to him by a gruff voice at his elbow.

'Now then, what are you up to there?' and a burly sergeant, with a company of Guards from Hougomont, came stalking grimly up to him.

'I'm taking home bad news, sergeant;' and he showed him the lock of hair.

'You knew him, sir?'

'He was my very dear friend, Captain Lauriston of the Scots Greys. Can you see to—to him?'

'We'll carry him back to Hougomont, sir. No one'll get at him there.'

'Thank you!' and he was about to mount his horse again when his eye fell on Etienne's body a few paces away.

'Good God!' he cried, and went over to it and knelt by it.

'Know him too?' asked the sergeant.

'We were all in the same form at Westminster. I wonder if they met.'

'Odd place to come together, sir. He's dead. Whoever did it got him clean through the heart from the side here.'

'This brings it home to one,' said Jack gloomily.

'Hottest day I ever seen, sir. There'll be a many sore hearts over this day's work.'

'Ay, indeed! See them both buried, if you can, sergeant;' and he slipped a couple of guineas into his hands.

'I'll see to them, sir;' and Jack climbed heavily on to his horse and rode back to the mill and his men.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE PHYSICIAN'S CANE.

THE old-time physician made an imposing display as he visited his patients. Let us try to give a picture of him in a few words. He is personable, and wears a three-tailed wig, a velvet coat with stiff skirts, large cuffs, silk stockings, buckled shoes, and in his hand is a gold-headed cane. In later days the stick was carried more for display than utility, but in earlier ages its handle was filled with strong-smelling disinfectants. Before the reign of the second Charles the medical man made his daily rounds on horseback, sitting sideways on foot-cloths. He must have cut an undignified spectacle as he rode through the streets, but we suppose he would not attract much attention, as his figure would be familiar to the public. Indeed,

from his point of view he did not obtain the notice he so much wanted.

A change came after the Restoration. He visited the sick in a gilt coach drawn by a pair of fine horses, and in front was a gaily dressed running footman. With the advent of the carriage came increased fees, and on this subject in *Lex Talionis* is a curious note which is well worth reproducing. 'For there must now be a little coach and two horses,' says the author, 'and, being thus attended, half a piece, their usual fee, is but ill taken, and popped into their left pocket, and possibly may cause the patient to send for his worship twice before he will come again in the hazard of another angel.' The doctors vied with each other in making the most display. In the days of Queen Anne a physician would even drive half-a-dozen horses attached to his chariot, and not fewer than four was the general rule.

When a doctor entered the room of the sick he carried his cane with him, and the practice was maintained from early times to the commencement of the nineteenth century. It has been suggested that the physician's cane had its origin when magic played its part in the work of the remote healer, who in superstitious ages worked on the ignorance of the credulous. To-day the conjurer uses a wand when performing his tricks. In early times, when sanitation was neglected, plagues of various kinds cast a gloom over the land. Death swept away young and old, and longevity as we know it in modern times was not attained. The doctor in making his visits in the plague-stricken times carried a long cane with a rounded knob or head frequently of gold, often of silver, but in later times usually of ivory. The knob was perforated with holes, and in it a cavity or chamber was filled with aromatic or Marseilles vinegar, which was regarded as a safe remedy against the pestilence. 'The use of this preparation,' says Dr William Munk, F.S.A., 'and its repute as a prophylactic in contagious fevers is said to have arisen from the confession of four thieves, who during a plague at Marseilles plundered dead bodies with perfect security, and who, on being arrested, stated on condition of their lives being spared that the use of aromatic vinegar had preserved them from the influence of the contagion.' When a doctor visited a sickroom he held the cane to his nose, with an assurance that its fumes would protect him from contagion and the noxious exhalations of the sufferer he was visiting.

In course of time the aromatic vinegar was discarded, but the cane was still carried. In some old lines we are told:

> Physic of old her entry made
> Beneath th' immense full-bottom's shade,
> While the gilt cane, with solemn pride
> To each sagacious nose applied,
> Seem'd but a necessary prop
> To bear the weight of a wig at top.

The old-time doctor prided himself on his big wig. It is remarkable that when an article passes out of use, although once common, it becomes rare. Dr John Anyton, Paris, was an eminent member of the profession who passed away in 1856 at the age of seventy-two years. In 1844 he was called to the president's chair of the College of Physicians, and ably filled it until his death. He was much struck with the rarity of the vinaigrette canes, and said that he had only seen one of them, and it was in the West of England. It had belonged originally to a celebrated Exeter physician in the time of James I. Strange to state, there is not an example in the Royal College of Physicians, and the head of the department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography of the British Museum says there is not one in the museum, and the curator of the National Museum of Antiquities at Edinburgh tells us that there is not one in its collection. Pictures of the canes are by no means uncommon.

At the Royal College of Physicians is the gold-headed cane successively carried by Drs Radcliffe, Mead, Askew, Pitcairn, and Baillie. Its history has often been told, and it only remains for us to state that its head is not perforated, and there is not any cavity to hold disinfectants. It may, and most probably does, denote the period when the vinaigrette cane went out of fashion. Mrs Baillie presented the cane to the college. The story of the lives of the doctors who carried it has been made the subject of an interesting volume bearing the title of *The Gold-Headed Cane* (London, 1884). It is a book full of forgotten lore.

A belief in the protective power of sweet-smelling herbs, camphor, &c. has long prevailed in this country, and still lingers. We are told long before Howard made known the insanitary condition of prisons that it was customary to sprinkle aromatic herbs before the prisoners, so offensive was the noxious effluvium which exhaled from their filthy bodies. A bouquet carried by the chaplain on his way to Tyburn was used for the same purpose. In courts of justice might be seen large nosegays, not for ornament but as a means of protection against plagues. Our churchwardens' accounts yield many items bearing on this theme; for example, in the old parish accounts of Newcastle-on-Tyne is the following charge: '1700. For herbs for rubbing ye pewes, 1*s*.' The charge is only one of many relating to the same subject in the northern city.

The barber's pole is a reminder of a staff used by barber-surgeons in bygone times. We know that in the days of old bleeding was a frequent occurrence, and during the operation the patient grasped a staff, stick, or pole, which the barber-surgeon kept ready for use, and round it was bound a supply of bandages for tying up the arm of the person operated upon. When the pole was not wanted it was suspended at the door as a sign. In course of time a painted pole took the place of the one employed in the operations. Lord Thurlow, addressing the House of Lords on July 17, 1797, stated: 'By a statute still in force barbers and surgeons were each to use a pole [as a sign]. The barbers were to have theirs blue and white

striped, with no other appendage; but the surgeon's, which was the same in other respects, was likewise to have a gallipot and a red rag, to denote the particular nature of their vocation.'

Bleeding was largely practised down to the earlier years of the nineteenth century. We gather from the *History and Annals of Northallerton*, by the Rev. J. L. Saywell (1885), that in the spring of the year the inhabitants of the Yorkshire town and neighbourhood, nearly all the robust male adults and occasionally females, repaired to the surgeon to be bled, which they considered essentially conduced to vigorous health. A shilling each was charged for the operation. An epigram makes the celebrated Dr John Coutsley Lettsom say:

> When patients sick to me apply,
> I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em;
> Then, if they choose to die—
> What's that to me? I lets 'em.

This surely is a libel on the great and good Quaker doctor, a man not less gifted than generous.

As we lay down the physician's cane we are reminded of the important parts the stick has played and still plays in history. It is the sceptre of kings, the baton of field-marshals, the club of policemen, and even a mace is but the outcome of a staff.

# WILD OATS.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE date of Cyril Winston's marriage to Helen Garth had been fixed, and the engaged couple seemed to have everything necessary to happiness. Their relations were all much pleased —nay, more than pleased. Mrs Winston was overjoyed; she felt that she was not only getting a daughter-in-law after her own heart, but that her son, too, was becoming much more to her than he had been before, for his moody restlessness had passed away, and he was gay and sweet-tempered.

It was a wet, gusty afternoon when one day Helen expected Cyril to come and talk over some of the arrangements for the wedding. She piled up a cheerful fire, and putting two comfortable chairs together, prepared to enjoy a good talk. When the door opened and Cyril walked in, it was, however, only to inform her that he had to go to the neighbouring town on some business for his mother.

'It is a horrid bore, darling; but it can't be helped. The mater must not go out in this sort of weather, and I must go for her. You said that you wanted to see some Japanese prints, so I have brought you a whole bundle to look through.' So saying, he put a pile of books on the table.

Helen opened one. 'They do look fascinating,' she said; 'but I wish that you could stay and explain them to me. Be sure you come in to-morrow morning.'

She walked with him to the front door. 'Poor thing,' she said, 'you have to go out in the cold and rain, while I shall spend my afternoon in sunny Japan with your books. *Sayonara, sayonara!* You see I actually know some Japanese;' and she laughed gaily.

It was well for Cyril that he was struggling with an umbrella which hid his face, or Helen could hardly have failed to notice the sudden compression of his lips and the sudden look of pain that came on his face. '*Sayonara!*' Strange the power of a little word; it can annihilate time and space; it can carry the mind into long-past years or transport it in a second to distant lands. Cyril suddenly stood by a sunlit sea; Mount Fuji glistened with snow in the distance; there was a gentle rustle of the wind among the bamboo-leaves; a little, bowed figure stood by him. '*Sayonara, sayonara!*'

The O Tatsu San whom he had put from his mind, the gentle, smiling little girl whose life he had taken hold of and then pushed from him, seemed to start into vivid personality. Where was she now, she and that tiny atom of humanity whom he had left on her hands? Yamada's tales of how even the quietest and gentlest of Japanese women turned to suicide as the way of release from trouble came to his mind. O Tatsu San down some dark, deep well! He shuddered at the thought. 'My God!' he groaned, 'can a man never be free from his past? Is one to go through life with it perpetually coming up at the sound of a chance word? I must invent some excuse to keep Helen from saying "*Sayonara*" to me. I can stand anything but that.'

He began to wonder whether it would ever be necessary to tell Helen of O Tatsu San. At the time of his engagement he had gone over the question in his mind as to whether he should tell her, but always with the same result. No, he would tell her nothing; why should he? It would be cruel to her to do so; it would shake her faith in him; there was nothing to be gained by telling her; it was an episode in his life that was past and over.

Meanwhile Helen, unconscious of the storm she had raised by her chance word, had gone back to her fire and the books. She settled herself down comfortably to look them over. She was pleased that Cyril had brought them to her. She had frequently expressed a wish to see some of his Japanese things, but he had always put her off. She went through one book after another, marvelling at the weirdness of some of the pictures and the exquisite colouring of others. She was nearly at the end of them when a photograph fell out from between the leaves. It fell face

downwards on the carpet beside her, and as she stooped to pick it up her eye was arrested by the big, childish writing on the back, 'Cyril Winston, from his loving wife.' The letters were big and black and childish, but the words were perfectly clear, and the date below was the time when Cyril had been in Japan.

Helen was so astonished that for a moment she sat looking at the photo as it lay on the floor beside her. Then she slowly raised it. She felt as if her heart had suddenly stopped beating. She read the words over and over, and then she turned the photo round. A pathetic, sweet little face looked at her, rather childish, but rather grave. 'What does this mean?' she said. 'Am I dreaming?'

She rose and walked to the window; then she returned to her place and looked at the photo again. Suddenly an idea struck her, and she began with trembling fingers to shake out each book. Yes, here were the words again, this time in the beginning of one of the books, 'Cyril, from his loving wife'—the same big, childish letters.

Helen leant back in her chair feeling cold and sick. No woman would call herself a loving wife without having some reason for doing so, and surely that pathetic little face did not lie. She felt that she must know the meaning of this before night; so she wrote a brief note asking Cyril to come to her without fail that evening, as she must see him.

The long hours passed slowly away. She excused herself from dinner, and then, going to the library, gave orders that when Mr Winston arrived he was to be brought to her there.

'Well, Helen, what is your urgent business? Nothing gone wrong with the wedding-dress, I hope?' said Cyril, advancing into the warm, lamplit room with outstretched hands.

There was no movement on the part of Helen to meet him, and he stood for a moment in surprise, it was so unlike her usual warm welcome.

'Dearest,' he said tenderly, 'I hope that there is nothing really the matter?'

'I have a question to ask you, Cyril,' she said in a strange, hard voice—'a question to which I want you to give me a very clear answer. Who is the woman who signs herself your loving wife? Who is this?' and, so saying, she held up the face of O Tatsu San before him.

It was so unexpected, so sudden, that Cyril was physically stunned. He gave a gasp and dropped into a chair.

That photo! He remembered it perfectly; O Tatsu San's innocent joy in having it done for him, and also her pride in her newly acquired accomplishment of writing. What a fool he had been not to look through the books before bringing them! But he had caught them up hastily at the last moment, just as they were. These things flashed through his mind during the moment's silence that ensued.

'Well,' said Helen, 'I am waiting for my answer, Cyril. Have you a wife in Japan?'

'Helen,' said Cyril faintly, 'let me explain.'

'I want a direct answer first,' said Helen. 'After that you may give me explanations. Have you a wife in Japan?'

'No,' said Cyril, 'I have not.'

'Then who is this, and how comes she to sign herself your wife?'

'Helen,' said he, 'I implore you to let me explain. She never was my legal wife.'

'Legal wife!' said Helen scornfully. 'I don't want to know anything about *legal* wives. Was there a woman living with you in such a way as to give her any right at all to call herself your wife? Cyril, you dare not deceive me. Was there such a woman?'

'There was.'

Helen walked to the window. She pulled aside the curtain and stood looking out for several minutes into the black night, realising that a crisis of her life had come. Then she came back and stood before the fire.

'Now,' she said, 'you can give me your explanations.'

'Helen,' said Cyril, 'I implore you to let bygones be bygones. You love me. Why should anything that is quite past and over make any difference between us and our love now?'

'Is this girl alive?' said Helen, holding up the photo of O Tatsu San before him.

Cyril winced. 'I believe she is,' he said.

'Then go on with your explanations,' said Helen.

He began. It was a disconnected tale: how he had never meant it in the beginning, how the girl's people had welcomed him, how he had drifted into it, how he had saved her from a marriage she disliked. He dwelt upon marriage in Japan being no lifelong, binding union.

Helen listened in silence. 'Did the girl love you?' she asked in a low voice.

Cyril hesitated a moment. 'Yes,' he said huskily, 'she did. But, Helen, that is two years ago, and I have passed out of her life. Helen, now you know all.'

'All?' she said, standing in front of him. 'Can you tell me as in God's sight that you are keeping nothing back?'

He hid his face in his hands, and there was a moment's dead silence.

'No,' he said at length, 'it is not all. There was a child.'

'A child!' she exclaimed. 'Do you mean to say that you have been such a coward as to leave that little girl with your child on her hands—that you have deserted her?'

'I don't know what you mean by deserted,' he said coldly. 'I left enough money for her to bring up the child with every comfort. I left her ample money.'

Helen suddenly sank into a chair and began to laugh hysterically. 'Oh you men!' she gasped.

'You fling a child into the world, and as long as you can fling a bag of money after it you think you are free from all blame.'

'I never said that I was free from all blame,' said Cyril. 'God knows that the thought of that child has been misery to me.'

Helen's laughter changed to deep sobs, and he sprang to her side and would have taken her hand, but she pushed him away violently.

'Go,' she said. 'All is over between us. Don't torture me with your presence.'

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### CHAPTER VII.

EARLY the next morning Helen sent down a little note to her father's room. It informed him briefly that she had broken off her engagement, and begged him to hear the reason from Cyril Winston himself before coming to see her.

It was midday before Colonel Garth entered his daughter's room. He found her in a dressing-gown, lying back in a deep chair, pale, with dark lines under her eyes. She looked almost as if she had had an illness.

'Good heavens, Helen!' said Colonel Garth, 'I am most awfully sorry to see you looking like this. Now, my dear,' he said, sitting down beside her, 'let us talk the matter over. I have heard all about it from Cyril, and I am more sorry than I can say that this should have happened; but, Helen, you must not take it too seriously. You are not a child, my dear, and you must surely be aware that there is many a happy husband and father who would not care to have all his past raked up. You have heard the expression that young men sow their wild oats and then settle down.'

'Yes,' said Helen, 'because of my life at the settlement I know what the sowing of wild oats means, and I know also that if men would only stop sowing their wild oats this world would be a much happier, healthier place.'

'Well, well,' said Colonel Garth, 'do, my dear, let bygones be bygones.'

'Did he tell you that he had a child?' said Helen slowly. 'Do you call that a bygone?'

'My dear,' said the colonel hastily, 'all I ask is that you do not act in a hurry. Come, Helen, do not be hard on him. The poor fellow is really suffering. If God can forgive sinners, surely we must too.'

Helen sighed deeply. 'That is just one of the perplexities of life,' she said, 'to know when one ought to stand firm and when one ought to forget and forgive. But don't you see, father, at the settlement we were always discussing the problem of how to prevent the lives of the poor being sacrificed to the rich. The sacrificed poor, especially the women, were the ones we sympathised with, and we were told that it was the duty of the rich and free woman to do battle for her unfortunate sister. How I scorned those men who built their fortunes on the sweated poor, and those women who considered, as some do, that *their* pleasure and *their* happiness in life was the only thing to be considered! But now I am asked to agree to Cyril's flinging away this girl and her child in order that my happiness may be built up, and she is left to sink or swim by herself.'

'Stop, stop, Helen!' said Colonel Garth. 'You are too hard upon Cyril—upon my word you are. He has not flung her away to sink or swim, as you call it. He tells me that he has made ample money provision. I grant you that many a girl is flung away and sinks down to hell; but that is generally because she is left unprovided for, whereas Cyril has carefully guarded against that; and if the truth were known I dare say that the girl whom you are pitying so much is living comfortably with her parents, and is in no way to be pitied. You are under a delusion, my dear. There really is nothing to prevent you from carrying out your engagement to Cyril, and I am sure that he will make a most kind husband.'

Helen sat up in her chair, and leaning forward, she looked steadily in her father's face. 'Do you realise what you are proposing, father?' she said slowly. 'You ask me to put on my bridal dress and go to church, and stand before the altar and hear that man swear that there is nothing to prevent his giving himself absolutely to me. He is to love and cherish me only. What about the mother of his child? Has she no claims on him? Father, surely there is an imperishable tie between these two. If I were to marry him, knowing what I now know, I should feel as if I were taking the place of his mistress, for the mother of his child is his true wife. I know quite well that he says that she has passed out of his life; but he owns that she loved him and believed him. Has he passed out of her life? Surely not, when she has his child with her. He is the father of her child, and nothing can ever alter that tie. If I were to marry him I should never be really happy; the ghost of that poor girl who believed in him would always be between us.'

The colonel sat silent.

Suddenly Helen sank back in her chair and began to sob bitterly.

'Oh dad,' she sobbed, 'my beautiful, happy life, what has become of it? Gone for ever! Oh, why are men so thoughtless, so cruel?'

*(To be continued.)*

# THE LONDON DOCKER.

THE region inhabited by the waterside population of London extends from the Tower as far as Tilbury Dock, and comprises all the different species of seafaring, amphibian, and 'longshore' men who are connected with ships and shipping. But east of Poplar and beyond the river Lea there has arisen of recent years a new London, on a fairly uniform scheme of brick villa, to the confines of Epping Forest on the north and Barking by the river. The population of 'London beyond the Border' is eight hundred thousand, mostly working-class and clerks, who pour through Liverpool Street Station daily in their many thousands of all ages to and from their employment in London; also those who toil at the chemical and other manufactures, whose need of isolation is met by the tract of waste marsh intervening along the Lea between the older London and the newer one; and lastly, the dockers who find their living at the Victoria and the Albert Docks, opposite Woolwich. East Ham, the largest borough of the district—the sleeping-place, as it has been called, of a population who work elsewhere—is situated on the northern side of 'the Marsh,' which separates it from the Thames; close to the riverside are the two great docks, and close to the docks is a density of human life and poverty, with all the attendant ills of such a condition, not to be equalled probably in any other place in the United Kingdom. The 'Custom-House district,' as it is called, is separated from decenter East Ham by a tract as yet unbuilt upon, as though East Ham, animated by every ambitious desire of expansion southward from its new palatial town-hall, fastidiously holds back from closer contact with the Custom-House. This latter essence of dockland merges, with natural affinities, into Canning Town at its western end, and lies close against the docks from Canning Town Railway Station to the Royal Albert Dock. Between this dock and the river is North Woolwich, upon which, however, the character of the docks is less distinctively impressed, because of the rival influence of the great sugar-refinery and electric cable works associated with the names of Tate and Henley; also Silvertown, deriving its name from its rubber industry. Silvertown and North Woolwich, although their pretensions to the amenities of life may be few, may be regarded as facing a different way from the darkness of the Custom-House world, securely separated by thirty feet deep of dock-water from that unknowable region.

The 'docker' is a type in himself, lending to the study of him and his ways the advantage of being a fixture. He does not migrate either with the seasons or the fluctuations of employment. The term comprehends all the considerable body of labourers who are either more or less regularly or only intermittently employed about the docks. The casual docker constitutes the majority. His average lot is not an enviable one even to the casual labourer of the Metropolis, whose lines are sufficiently hard. Yet it is a curious fact that the precarious subsistence, which is barely attainable by keen and strenuous competition, has such an influence on the man's character that 'Once a docker, always a docker,' has come to be a saying of almost general truth. A man who has become a 'docker' is hardly ever known to turn his mind to another field of labour even in stress of the hardest of times. The explanation of the phenomenon lies in the fact that the character of the man, once he settles here, rapidly undergoes a process of adaptation to or degeneration into correspondence with the conditions into which he has drifted.

The supply of casual labour about the docks is drawn from sea and land, but mainly from land, in the form of an outflow of that constant tide of unemployed immigration which sets into and settles as a shifting subsidence in the great centre of population. This outflow is not the best, nor is it the worst, of the volume of unemployment. It does not bring with it the tramps, loafers, and 'wasters' comprising the class known as 'unemployables'—these remain in London in the form of a sediment more or less hibernal in character and visible in demonstration—and it is free from the taint of the criminal. The average casual arriving at the docks is not an unemployable—dock-work, uncertain as it is, is too hard for the latter individual even to think of. In many cases he is an ordinary unskilled labourer, with perhaps a family, in pursuit of a last hope after continual failure to obtain work elsewhere; and generally he possesses elements of character only awaiting a fair chance, and is still in some degree above the status (if the term is legitimate) of the 'submerged.' He is the *bonâ-fide* labouring man driven to his last resource, or he is a misfit or a failure for whom the general employment-market no longer has a place, or he is a 'deteriorate' who has lost the power of regular application and is morally capable only of casual work. The docker deserves no worse description; and, as has been said and will be seen, he has still certain qualities and potentialities keeping him above the lowest level.

The prevalent instinct of English working men for gambling in chances may be the evidence or the consequence of an incomplete moral development, but it supplies an appreciable factor in the force which draws out-of-works to the docks and which keeps them there. Even when they have realised, as they soon do, the delusiveness of the hope of extracting a living from irregular but well-paid work, they persevere patiently through long periods of intense privation on the chance of a 'call' the next time a ship is to be loaded or unloaded. The

supply of labour is always much in excess of the demand, and the eager and almost brutal struggle of these poor men to catch the foreman's eye is one of the saddest of spectacles, and one which seems to have no moral for the employers who are gainers by the system. No principle of distribution or exchange exists to mitigate the evil: in the fierce effort for profit on the one side, for work and life on the other, humanity has no place in the economic scheme of the docks. The disappointed crowd silently disperse for a further period of want and waiting on chance—want and waiting, too, often shared by dependants, who are not heard or seen.

The casual dock-labourer is a product of the general condition of unemployment, owing his immediate or local evolution to the great dock-strike of twenty years ago. That contest between organised labour and the employers ended in the latter forming a federation for the employment of 'free' labour, and this opening of the docks to the outside world gave the impulse to the migration of men to the shipping region since that time. There are two classes of dock-labourers—those employed by the dock companies (who are merely warehouse porters), and those in the service of the shipping companies. But in each of these classes there are two subdivisions—the more or less regular hands and the supernumerary casuals. The former are the men on the preference lists, who, on condition of being available at all times—a condition which forbids their accepting employment offering in any other quarter—obtain the first 'call' when their employers have work to be done. The casuals follow, if required. The companies are thus assured of a considerable supply of labour at all times. It is only on days of pressure, when time is exigent in loading or unloading ships, that extra labour is required beyond the resources of the preference lists; and the fact being made well known days in advance, an unlimited supply of casual labour is at hand. This system of 'free labour,' as it is euphemistically called, created by the federation of shipping companies as a measure of self-defence against the union men, has proved excellent for the shipping interest, but has had evil results for labour in the disproportionate aggregation of unemployed men around the docks and the demoralisation of the latter inevitable in such a state of things. The men are not only at the mercy of chance, or a foreman's favour, in the obtaining of an occasional day's work; but all alike, preference men and casuals, must work under conditions of 'driving' against which they dare not murmur, the abundance of waiting hands at the gates rendering the employers independent and the workers helpless. Some of the shipping companies continue to employ the union men still; these men enjoy an independence to which the 'free' labourer cannot aspire, and they are more skilful workmen—to which fact, doubtless, they owe, at least in part, the discrimination in their favour by the shipowners who value work that is well done rather than that which is cheaply done.

The salt water contributes to the crowd its ex-officers, sailors, stokers, and others whose 'papers' will no longer pass examination; from the land side the body is more largely swelled by clerks, mechanics, skilled and unskilled workmen, the unfit of all classes, rejected or not wanted by the employment-market. All crowd to the free field of the docks, where, in any chance, one day's work is as good as two or three elsewhere, and 'no questions are asked' as a condition of engagement. Aptitude in the unskilled work of the docks is acquired with facility. That work in the main is hard and, while it lasts, unrelaxing; but it is well paid. The wage is six shillings a day of nine hours—or, rather, eightpence an hour for as many hours as a man is wanted. Overtime is a frequent incident in times of pressure, and is paid for (from 5 P.M.) at the rate of one shilling an hour. A man may thus earn eleven shillings up to ten o'clock—the tea-hour (five to six) being paid for, although not the dinner-hour. If he continues to work all night till six next morning (with a break from ten to eleven for supper), he gets twenty shillings in all—the period from two o'clock in the morning to six being counted as five hours. But it is always the case that the men are engaged not by the day or night, but by the hour, and may be paid off at any moment for exactly the time they have worked. This power of immediate dismissal, maintained by the excess supply of labour, is a potent weapon of control in the hands of the shipping company's foreman, as well as an instrument of despotic efficiency in extracting the last ounce of work of which the men are capable.

A man who has been famishing for days, perhaps weeks—in many instances walking about at night for want of a lodging—has the chance of drawing a prize on these occasions of extra work. The occasions never last long; for a steamer's time is money, and the loading or unloading is pressed on day and night until finished—within a few days. But suppose him to be lucky enough to snatch two days of the work; if these are two 'ten o'clocks' (overtime), he receives eleven shillings each day, or twenty-two shillings. This is usually enough for him. Few genuine casuals will work steadily on for more than two or three days. The reaction after a long spell of privation is too much for them, and in possession of this unaccustomed money in his pocket the docker is as quick to forget past hardships as he is unable to look ahead to their inevitable return. It often takes him less time to dissipate the money than it took him to earn it. The bookmaker has his stand at the dock-gates, and some of the money passes to him to be put on horses; the public-house is also there, and absorbs most of what remains. If a prudent fellow, and the weather is bad, the docker will pay two or three shillings to the common lodging-house for a week's bed. His bed (his 'doss' or 'kip,' as he familiarly calls it) secure

for another week, he feels himself a very provident man, and troubles not the least about food for to-morrow if he has beer and tobacco for to-day. To-morrow may take care of itself, as many such have done before and will have to do again, and the docker cheerfully faces it when it comes. This, it will be understood, is the unmarried casual who has none but himself to trouble about, and takes that responsibility lightly. The case of the other, who has mouths besides his own to feed, presents another picture—free indeed from the same recklessness, but with a like uncertainty of prospect that is much more harassing.

Periods of idleness at the docks recur with considerable frequency, sometimes, for the casual, lasting for weeks. How does he manage to exist through such times? The conditions of the married man's wife and children are generally veiled, or at least withdrawn, from the public gaze, and so the picture may be left. But the single docker is always visible and in evidence; he bears privations nonchalantly enough, probably from the incontestable consciousness that he has mainly himself to thank for them. There are criminal ruffians about the dark network of narrow streets of the Custom-House who waylay and plunder those who may be out late or under the influence of drink; but the docker is not of that class. He starves, but does not thieve. He is around the docks in the early morning and as long as there is a chance of aught turning up, from a job to a gift of twopence or a drink from a more opulent mate. Then he returns to the kitchen of the lodging-house, and hangs about there or the neighbouring public-houses until eleven o'clock at night. If he has a bed, he retires to it; if he has none, he turns out for the night. It is a long walk from the docks to Charing Cross and back; but it is performed leisurely, with the company of a friend and a pipe, and the night's march terminates at five o'clock, when the lodging-house reopens and admits him to its shelter for the day. He may pick up a fragment of breakfast here before going down to the dock at six o'clock and repeating the round once more. The walking all night is no great hardship in the summer, and he can sleep on a bench during the day. In winter the hardship is greater, but brings an alleviation. The up-to-London walk is regulated to end where the free distribution of 'midnight soup' takes place up to 3 A.M.; and, fortified with the soup and bread and an hour's rest, the procession of dockers turns eastward again. But the existence is a wretched and degrading one, and one, as has been said, from which the docker never thinks of making an effort to emerge. Even in the summer and early autumn, when work is usually slackest at the docks, he feels none of that desire of change so characteristic of his kindred inland; he has no inclination to remove, even temporarily, to the country, where the farmers would be glad to have his help and the work would be very light.

'A 'gang' consists of thirteen men and a boy, and a large steamer in full work will employ from eight to ten gangs—up to one hundred and forty men—part on shore, and the rest on the ship and in the barges or lighters 'overside.' Part of the cargo is brought down by rail or road, and is put on board from the dock company's sheds; the remainder is brought by water in the barges and lighters, and is loaded direct from them. The men employed on shore are merely quay-porters, conveying the goods on trucks from the sheds to the ship's side. The rest work in the barges, slinging the cargo for hoisting on board; and in the hold, stowing it. The labour of the men in the barges and of those in the holds—dragging, slinging, and stowing heavy cases and bales—taxes all their strength, and the unrelaxing driving of the foremen maintains work at constant high pressure. The agents of the shipping companies are allowed so much a ton for loading the ship, and every minute means money to them. There are 'long shillings' to be earned at the docks, but no easy ones; and the work is not only hard but dangerous. Under continuous pressure, the men have to take many risks which they could avoid if they were free to do so. When accidents occur, an injured man is at an obvious disadvantage in relation to the compensation the law allows to him. He accepts the employer's offer rather than lose his chance of getting work again when able to do it. There is one special danger to which passing reference may be made. The dock is crowded with barges waiting to be discharged, fastened one to another with ropes or chains, and the men working 'overside' must find each one in its turn and bring it under the ship's side. In the daylight, jumping from one barge to another, and creeping along slippery gunwales, calls for great care even from a practised man. A slip, a stumble, and the man goes into the water, getting drowned being almost a less imminent danger than that of being crushed between the rocking and swinging vessels. When this work has to be done at night, with the light of candles merely, the dangers are much multiplied. In the impenetrable fogs which enshroud the docks so frequently in the late autumn and winter, no one who has seen a gang of men disappear on the water in search of a barge among, perhaps, fifty others would care to watch the incident again. On such a night, when the cry, 'Help! help!' is heard from the darkness amid the rattling of winches, the effect is not easily forgotten. Nor would it be right to forget the prompt and reckless readiness of the docker, at that call, to drop his work and rush to the aid of a drowning man, no matter at what risk to himself. At every step he takes he is within arm's-length of death, but thinks of it just as little as he habitually thinks of anything else of importance only to himself.

The 'preference' men—who, year in, year out, earn very good money—are drawn by the foremen from the ranks of the casuals, and are mostly married men with families. These men do not as a rule live in the Custom-House district, but keep their families

in the purer air of East Ham and Plaistow, whence electric tramways supply a cheap and ready conveyance at all hours. Save for the tendency to drink too much beer (which never quite leaves them), and to indulge in a little betting on race-horses, these are on the whole a respectable and steady class of men. Hard-working they are and must be, and equally exigent is the regularity of early morning attendance at the foreman's 'box.' This enforced habit of regularity, and the consciousness of the 'hostages to fortune' depending on them at home, exert a salutary restraining influence to counteract the latent tendency to relapse. They become, under the conditions, in a great measure disciplined into regeneration, and the fact that he is capable of responding to such influences is evidence that the average docker is not without the elements of moral and social progression under favouring conditions. His improvidence, his intemperance, his weakness for betting and gambling, his disinclination to regular work, are diseases of his social condition which are amenable to remedy. Improve the condition and they gradually disappear—if not altogether, at least to that extent which leaves him a decent average member of his class. He is not deteriorated beyond recall, though well on the way to that dismal stage.

The docker has his full share of the weaknesses of the 'unemployed,' of whom he is a sort of settled type, and he is not habitually or constitutionally disposed to extenuate them. Certainly along with his faults there goes a good deal of unconscious philosophy. Like the rest, he drinks too much beer; but his indulgence, harmful as it is, should not be exaggerated. When he is confronted by his betters with a terrible national drink-bill of one hundred and sixty-six million pounds he inarticulately wonders what it means. He is quite conscious of his sins; but how much of that ponderous burden of millions represents his 'fourpenny' ale and should properly be appropriated to his back? When working men are told from the bench of bishops in the House of Lords that their expenditure in drink works out at an average of over seven shillings per family per week, they feel the injustice of the reproach although unable to expose it. The working man, employed or unemployed, does not mind being told of his faults by those who enjoy the right to criticise him and have the will to help him; but he responds best to fair-play. Temperance is a virtue which should have respect on the platform as well as in the public-house.

The Port of London Act, recently passed by Parliament, opens a prospect of abundant and continued employment to the docker and thousands of others who will be drawn down to the riverside from the larger crowd in London and elsewhere. It is said that a sum of five millions sterling is to be spent in the improvement of the port, and that provision will be made for the suitable housing, within reach of the work, of the workers and their families. This vision of the approaching future will open a new era to the thousands of out-of-works to whom it will give employment under such conditions. It is to be hoped that the era will not be allowed to close in a few years' time, with the completion of the work, without some timely provision being made for the situation which must result to the discharged workers and their families.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

FIFTH STORY.

## THE VANISHING DOG.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

SCHNAPPS the Scots terrier interested me from the first time that I saw him put through his facings. This was generally done by his master, after breakfast, in the back-garden separated from my landlady's by a high brick wall.

Mrs Loftie, my widowed landlady, was much surprised when I chose a first-floor sitting-room with a back view. 'Now, from the front room,' she said, 'you see Dr Acres's front door, so you can tell how he 's gettin' on an' who goes there.'

Acres was my principal's rival; but it didn't matter to me how he was getting on; and I said so, and took the back room. Hence, while at breakfast, or smoking a cigarette just after, I often saw Schnapps and his master, the Honourable Charles Loftus.

Forgive me if I inflict that gentleman's full title upon you more often than is necessary. Mrs Loftie discovered it, and used it so generously that I contracted the habit—at any rate when discussing him with her.

'Miss Mack an' me we turned over his letters together, me bein' there an' the names so similar. Miss Mack she asked me if I had any Honourables of that name in my family.'

'Have you?' I asked.

'Not of the name Charles—that I can mind,' said Mrs Loftie serenely, and vanished with the tray.

The difference between Loftie and Loftus being so slight, 'just a twist would do it for either,' as Mrs Loftie said, she felt more than justified in taking an interest in the Honourable Charles. Hence, finally, my acquaintance with him; though

I have reason to believe that we should have known each other sooner or later in any case; and later you will agree with me.

As it was, when I came down the village street one afternoon, ready for my tea after a dusty walk, I found Mrs Loftie in the little front garden, amiably expressing to the Honourable Charles her fervent hope that the stones with which she had pelted Schnapps from her fowls that morning had not hurt him unduly.

As I passed she called upon me to bear witness that her soft heart would not permit her to hurt a flea, and incidentally introduced us.

We nodded to one another, and I passed on into the house, and so a nodding acquaintance began, which gradually led to occasional remarks on the weather and such mysterious matters; later on, Schnapps.

The Honourable Charles was a wiry, dark man of perhaps thirty-five, with a black moustache and a short, neatly trimmed, pointed black beard. He was practically always alone when I saw him, and, according to Mrs Loftie, 'a widower, an' a gentleman that knows his place, an' doesn't speak to everybody.'

The Honourable Charles cycled about the country a good deal, with Schnapps in attendance, and looked over various farms. He seemed to be trying whether he could arrange to get an unbroken shoot of about a thousand acres. But if one farmer was willing, one of his neighbours generally seemed impracticable.

The Honourable Charles stayed on, cycling and attending to the education of Schnapps.

This last progressed rapidly, as I could see from my sitting-room window. Schnapps was a 'nailer' on rats—and Mrs Loftie's fowls. He could fetch, carry, find a hidden pocket-handkerchief, beg, sham dead, and do a lot of other useful or amusing things.

'But why "Schnapps"?' I asked the Honourable Charles one day when he was sitting comfortably on the stone parapet of the bridge over our little river, while Schnapps hunted water-rats below.

'Well, he's a trifle hard-mouthed, and he has a trick of taking a bit out of any one who meddles with him. See?'

I saw, after a sufficient interval, and suggested to the Honourable Charles that he was a bit of a wag.

'As Schnapps's tail would have been,' he added pensively; and, not finding an immediate and appropriate reply, I watched Schnapps from the bridge in silence.

He was not prepossessing in appearance, and had not the build of the average Scotch terrier, who is a sturdy beast. He was tailless, mouse-coloured, long in the head and the body, short in the legs, and had an appearance of silent, malignant, devilish cleverness. I never heard him bark or snarl. Naturally he did not wag his tail when pleased—having none; nor did he give any warning when annoyed. As far as my experience showed, he simply went for what annoyed him, silent and open-mouthed.

He and his master, however, were always on the best of terms, and from my window, only a few days after I had met them on the bridge, I saw them at a new game—a sort of hide-and-seek—the Honourable Charles chasing Schnapps about the garden, till both seemed quite done up. Schnapps, usually so obedient, seemed impossible to catch. Loftus chased his hardest, and lost his wind but never his temper; and at last dropped breathless into a garden-seat within hail, just on the other side of the wall, while Schnapps kept an eye on him at a safe distance.

'A smart dog Schnapps!' I said affably from my window.

'Oh, very!' he agreed. 'Yes, I expect great things of Schnapps some day.'

'I didn't quite understand that last game,' I remarked. 'It looked pretty warm. What's it for?'

'For?' Loftus tilted his straw hat still farther over his eyes, and lazily scratched the back of his head. 'Why, exercise,' he said at last. 'Schnapps and I are getting fat in this sleepy place, and we need to get into condition. I'll show you a new trick soon.'

'Well, it *must* be soon, if at all,' I said. 'I go at the end of next week.'

'All right. I won't forget, I promise you,' said the Honourable Charles with a grin, and then lounged into the house, whistling to Schnapps, who obeyed as though never in his life had he run from his master.

I didn't see much of either Schnapps or his master for several days. We met occasionally when Loftus and I were cycling in different directions; and two or three times I passed them idling together on the bridge, which was perhaps three-quarters of a mile from home, on the main road. Twice I encountered Schnapps alone, and going for home as though his salvation depended upon his reaching shelter in record time. Next time we met I asked the Honourable Charles if Schnapps were training for a race, and he said I had guessed it.

So things went on until the afternoon before my time was up. That day was as hot as any we had had. Even my Dursley-Pedersen bicycle couldn't make the job easy, and I was tired to death and parched with thirst when I drew near the village.

Seated on the bridge, lightly clad in a flannel knickerbocker suit, and looking exasperatingly cool, was the Honourable Charles Loftus.

Only that morning, while I ate my breakfast, Mrs Loftie had recited to me his possessions and expectations. No wonder he looked cool! The thought of his enviable worldly position made me feel hotter and dustier than ever. Schnapps, seated at his feet, had evidently just been in the water, so he too looked comfortable. I waved a hand and was pedalling on, when Schnapps's master hailed me.

There was a certain farm where he knew I had been almost daily. He wanted to know what I thought of it as partridge-ground.

I am the easiest man in the world to draw or to detain if a matter of sport be put forward.

I leant my Dursley-Pedersen against the parapet, and plunged into the question *con amore*.

The Honourable Charles ended by asking whether, if he secured a decent shoot in the neighbourhood, I could manage a week, say the last in September, to shoot with him.

The temptation was great, and I said so, and he apologised politely for making the date so late, but explained that he must have some of his own folks first. 'They're mostly crocks,' he said; 'so, if there's a decent show of birds, there'll be plenty left for you. To-morrow I shall be running up to town for a few days, and I mean to look in at Aldridge's for a couple of decent pointers and a retriever.'

'You don't mean to rely on Schnapps, then?' I said as a small joke. 'I thought he was clever enough for anything.'

'Oh, he has his limits,' the Honourable Charles admitted, surveying him gravely; while Schnapps, aware that he was being talked of, roused himself from the dust, and watched us with his long head turned aside and a very sharp eye cocked attentively. 'I don't know yet what those limits are,' his master went on. 'You haven't seen this, have you?' and he proceeded to put Schnapps through complicated evolutions, throwing down a lump of sugar, and making the dog quarter the ground correctly and point the sugar steadily before swallowing it.

'Sometimes he's as perverse as the devil,' said the Honourable Charles; 'seems to go off his head, and there's no holding him. There's another neat trick, though. Do you mind lending me a glove? Hallo! that's a quaint sort of ring you wear!'

Evidently he had not noticed the thing before. He forgot all about Schnapps and the glove while looking at it.

'Surely,' he said, 'at home, in one of the cabinets or something, I've seen a snuff-box—was it a snuff-box or was it a patch-box?—with that same flying horse! May I see it?'

I slipped the thing off and handed it over, and the Honourable Charles examined it all round, while Schnapps stood watching eagerly, and wagging the place where his tail ought to have been.

'Well,' said the Honourable Charles, 'that's very interesting. If you manage to get here in September I'll have that patch-box—or snuff-box—here for you to see.—No, Schnapps, it's nothing to eat.—By the bye, here's the trick with the glove.—Hi! Schnapps!'

He moved to toss the glove at the expectant dog; but instead of the glove the ring flew out of his hand at Schnapps's upturned nose. There was a jump, all four legs off the ground, a snap, and the next moment Schnapps had the ring and was whirling down the road, hidden in a cloud of dust.

'Oh my stars, what have I done?' yelled the Honourable Charles, hopping off the parapet. 'He'll swallow it! He'll never stop till he reaches his bed. Quick! Your bicycle!'

That was a good idea. I stopped shouting, hurled myself on to my machine, and in a moment had left the Honourable Charles far behind, in frantic determination never to lose sight of the far-away dust-cloud, which was all that remained visible of the diabolical Schnapps.

How it fell out that no one was hurt that day I cannot tell. Perhaps some one was. I switch-backed over a wandering goose within the first fifty yards, and did something or other to a dog soon after. There were shrieks from nursemaids and children; a primly promenading young ladies' school dispersed giggling and screaming in all directions. At the cross-roads I steeplechased most miraculously over an open drain, charged a motor at the last corner, and can still see the horrified face of the one lady occupant. I hurled myself into a ditch to escape it (the motor, not the lady's face), lost sight of the dust-storm that represented Schnapps while I picked myself out of the ditch, and finally landed at Schnapps's temporary home, to find that he was not there, and had not been there, but had been seen going past 'more like a racin' motor than a dog,' as Mrs Loftie said.

I was pretty sure that Schnapps had swallowed the ring at the start, and I was determined to act upon that belief as soon as I got hold of him.

I took to my machine again, spurting out at the far end of the village, and getting news of a flying dog or dust-cloud now and again.

I had not, however, got far before occasional and increasing bumps warned me of a deflated tire. When I could disregard these symptoms of distress no longer I dismounted, using wild words, and found more than one puncture in each tire. Finally I stopped my futile attempts at repairs, my small stock of patches (and my patience) proving inadequate, and I returned to the village on foot, pushing my crippled machine and perspiring freely.

As I neared my own quarters I was astonished to see Mrs Loftie and the Honourable Charles's landlady, Mrs Short, chattering madly to one another over the low wall separating their pretty front gardens. Socially speaking, they did not know one another, and even then I found time to be surprised. So busy were they that I was close upon them, and shouting, before they noticed me.

'Has that dog come back?' I demanded.

'As that dog come back?' Mrs Short echoed bitterly. 'Now *do* you think we've been noticin' if that dog's come back, with 'is pore master lyin' at death's door?'

'An' which side o' the door, who knows, by now?' added Mrs Loftie. 'Oh, say you didn't do it on purpose, doctor—do!'

'An' you to be chasin' a dog through this 'ea',' Mrs Short continued, 'an' w'ich is maddest don't ask me, instead o' restorin' 'is dead master. Chasin'

a mad dog, while one o' the proudest families lies askin' for medical assistance, 'owever poor, an' askin' in vain!'

'Oh, *say* you didn't do it on purpose, doctor—do!' Mrs Loftie persisted. 'I wouldn't have such a thing said of my house'——

'For heaven's sake speak plainly, and say what you mean!' I entreated them; and gradually they made me understand that the Honourable Charles was lying senseless, if not dead, at the other end of the village, having fallen off the bridge, and that I had been hunted for, of course in vain.

'Dr Acres is likely with him by now, anyway,' Mrs Loftie ended.

'An' a very good doctor 's is, too,' said Mrs Short pointedly.

'An' how it happened *you* know best,' Mrs Loftie started afresh, having got her second wind. 'An' what he'll say when he comes back to-morrow, about the way might-have-been patients were neglected, while you were chasin' pore dumb animals'——

Her sentence ended abruptly in a gasp, and, turning to see what had so effectually stemmed her eloquence, I found the one constable of the place, a stout man, hastening along the street as fast as fat and dignity would allow. He did not come to arrest me, much to Mrs Loftie's relief and Mrs Short's obvious disappointment, but to ask my help for Loftus, who undoubtedly had fallen off the bridge, and landed, if I may say so, in shallow water below, where apparently he had struck his head.

Much puzzled, since when I saw him last the Honourable Charles was starting in pursuit of Schnapps, I went with the constable, and found the injured man lying in a cottage close to the bridge, insensible and evidently suffering from concussion.

The nearest hospital was several miles distant, and, I was told, had no ambulance-van. The Good Samaritan who had picked the Honourable Charles out of the river-bed had afterwards put him into his own, where he now lay half-clothed. The bed was clean and the cottage quiet, a kindly neighbour having taken charge of the younger children. I shaved the patient's head, applied an ice-cap, and did what little else was immediately possible, arranging with the sensible woman of the house that he should lie quiet there, at least until morning, when a nurse, or hospital treatment, or removal to Mrs Short's should be arranged for, according to circumstances. Then I left the cottage, still considerably puzzled, and, returning to the bridge, seated myself, in the dusk of the July night, on the parapet just where I had seen the Honourable Charles, to hear the story of the Good Samaritan, otherwise Mr Thomas Clay, agricultural labourer.

It seemed that Mr Clay, a tall, wiry-looking individual, who showed no very great liking for the continued presence of our fat constable, had been close at hand when the game (as Mr Clay called it) began. He was coming home from work to his tea, and spotted us at some distance, having often seen Schnapps and the Honourable Charles there of an evening before.

He saw Schnapps get away—'an' a very good start 'e made,' said Mr Clay appreciatively—and he saw me mount and ride. 'Glad to see you ain't none the wuss,' said Mr Clay kindly and incidentally.

As for the Honourable Charles, apparently he did not get far; but when the hunt was fairly started he returned to the bridge, doubled up with uncontrollable laughter.

Mr Clay was greatly interested, he admitted, and stood watching, believing this to be a wager, which I was likely to lose, and being keen to see the finish. He had, he said, seen Schnapps start from that bridge some half-a-dozen times, and judged him hard to beat. 'Fact is, I was wishin' I 'ad a bit on,' he told me regretfully.

'Ah, Tom Clay, you mark my words!' said the fat constable solemnly, 'if you put a bit on less often, an' put a bit away more often, w'y, you wouldn't be put away yourself, as you 'ave been for a bit; an' them there rabbits'——

''Oo's talkin' to *you?*' Mr Clay asked excitedly. ''Oo said rabbits? Because I saves a man's life this very day, *an'* takes 'im in, *an'* gives 'im my own bed—an' where I'm to sleep *I* dunno—are you *never* to stop nosin' an' 'angin' about—never?'

'"Quoth the raven—Nevermore!"' I muttered; and then, seeing their bewilderment, I suggested that the fat constable was naturally held by Mr Clay's thrilling story, and begged the latter to proceed with it, which he presently did.

The Honourable Charles, he said, then reseated himself upon the parapet, being evidently shaken and tired with laughter. He leaned over sideways, and dropped something into the river, and that no doubt was my glove. Then the humour of the situation, one supposes, seized him again.

''Ad a sort o' a shakin' fit,' Mr Clay explained, 'an' seemed to forget where 'e was, like? Put 'is right 'and be'ind 'im to keep 'isself up like, an'—put it on nothin', as you may say. Went over, clawin' wi' the one 'and. See'd it meself, an' pulled 'im out as soon as I could get down to 'im, or 'e'd 'a drownded, bein' face down.'

'Very creditable to you, Tom Clay,' the fat constable allowed, making a pencil note in a pocket-book. 'An' if I wasn't in uniform an' on duty I'd stand you a pint. I would indeed.'

Mr Clay grunted incredulously, but I thought looked appealingly at me through the shadows; and I produced the price of a pint, suggesting that virtue would be more amply rewarded when the Honourable Charles recovered.

Mr Clay then disappeared, saying he had an appointment with a friend; but the constable and I stayed on the bridge a few minutes longer.

I explained the misadventure with which this affair had begun, and the constable promised to watch for Schnapps, should I not find him in his

master's quarters. We agreed that the joke had been a poor one, but probably unintentional on the part of the Honourable Charles. I expressed a guarded opinion that I might quite possibly find him considerably better in the morning, and we agreed that if he was not, a Peerage, or other similar authority, must be searched for and consulted, in order that his family might be advised of his condition. Then, suddenly being reminded of the fact that I had eaten little since breakfast, I dived into the cottage again, took another look at my patient, gave a few directions, promised to call early in the morning, and went home to my dinner.

*(To be concluded.)*

# A FLUCTUATING CURRENCY IN PARAGUAY.

A CORRESPONDENT in Paraguay, one of our readers for thirty years, writes as follows with reference to the article, 'Vagaries of a Fluctuating Currency,' appearing in Part 145, January 1, 1910:

'You may have heard that an Asuncion paper in opposition to the present Government had that part of the article which relates to Paraguayan finance translated and published, so as to show the effect of such financial gambles on the outside world; but even a paper with so little patriotism as to apply your criticism of the country's general practice to the existing Government only found itself obliged to disassociate itself from some of the statements in the article. It gives a very false impression of the country to quote the instance of the friend who, after having sold all his belongings, could not buy a gold draft, as only some one in a very out-of-the-way corner, or perhaps trying to run matters too fine speculatively, would not know that in the few days or weeks taken up by a revolution (less harmful than strikes, as the writer says) the banks do not sell gold drafts. Again, we should be told what it was the friend had sold, and how much unearned increment he was expecting to scoop. In 1894 we bought camp at two hundred pounds per square league which to-day we could sell at two thousand pounds, but we don't want to. We are cattle-breeders and graziers, not business men; and when gold goes up, prices, after a pause, go up too, and so we sell for more paper dollars and wait a favourable opportunity to change to gold. We have been buying gold drafts from the Banco Mercantil of Asuncion for years, and only once—during the last revolution in October—were we refused, but got what we wanted early in November. I may mention that we ran it too fine, and missed by a few days. The article would lead one to suppose that the gold premium was rising steadily all the time; but this is not so, as after being up to 1800 last year it is now down to 1445. This must occur, otherwise no one could make anything at the game, and if no one made anything it would not go on. The gold drafts which we have obtained whenever we needed them, with the one exception mentioned, amount to over eight thousand pounds during the last few years, this sum representing profits on a moderate-sized cattle-farm which we run ourselves.

'I may mention that Liebigs control considerable interests here, and are putting in a meat-extract plant so as to produce with paper-money expenses and sell for gold. The statement that the Government issues more notes when it wants to buy gold is untrue. There has been no new emission since July of 1903. Although the Government has been buying gold, as stated by the writer, the gold premium has fallen steadily, which may be partly due to the fact that this Government, and others for many years past, have paid their foreign obligations notwithstanding the high premium. The Government has also created a reserve to be applied to the conversion of the paper currency of ninety thousand pounds in the last few years, obtained by putting a tax of one dollar gold on each hide exported, and this has not been touched, although the Government has been hard pushed for funds. Another reason for the fall of the premium is that the country is exporting more than it imports, and this on a rapidly rising scale. Yerba-maté, hides, tobacco, and wood are all being exported at better prices than formerly, and in larger quantities, so that a fluctuating currency, although sometimes inconvenient, does not stop trade, as the writer of the article would lead one to suppose, and it is doubtless a stimulant to the establishment of industries in the country, as commodities once sold on a high premium scale seldom come down proportionately. The Argentine has done well, as the writer says, but not only on account of reconverting its paper currency to a gold basis. The secret of Argentina's success is in having an enormous surplus of meat and wheat to sell for gold; and when the Paraguayan Central Railway extension to meet the North-East Argentine Railway at Villa Encarnacion and Posados is open next year, then perhaps people will come and plant wheat in the Paraguayan Misiones again, as the old Jesuits used to do, and not talk of the wheat-zone of the Argentine as if wheat would grow nowhere else.

'This railway will put Asuncion in direct communication with Buenos Ayres by means of train-ferry-boats across the Parana, and so bring the marvellous Iguazu Falls within easy reach of travellers in search of the picturesque, and our splendid cattle-camps and agricultural lands to the notice of those in search of fresh pastures or the simple life. By which time it is quite within the bounds of possibility that we may have a fixed currency.'

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

FOR some interesting study and reflection upon the people and manners of the period, and for the practice of some quiet philosophy concerning them, there is no other such place as London in the holiday season. It is because the majority of men and women leave it then, telling you that they could not endure life in the town when it is in its dead state, that it gives such opportunities for rest and peaceful contemplation to those who know how to use them. Business, professional, and social engagements cease to make their imperative calls upon you; the places of resort, such as the clubs, wear a new aspect—one that savours a little of drowsiness and induces a certain restfulness of thought and action. Lounging in the west, we pass the doors of the theatres, which have an accumulated bank of dust lying against them, and the legend, 'Closed until 20th September,' is displayed in big red letters from a placard. It is taken for granted that not so many people are left in London who need entertaining; and so Miss Phyllis and Miss Kitty, who fulfil this function, and fulfil it well, in the proper season, are now at Ostend or perhaps in the Highlands. In this walk about the west, if you are an old Londoner and an observant one, you will notice two things specially. You will perceive how the movement is slower, the bustle easier, now than it is at any other time. The rate of action in the London streets varies considerably during the year according to the pressure of life. At the beginning of the year it is a little slow, and then gradually increases as the time moves towards the spring. In the bright days of May, the green month of the season, when, as Horace tells us, heat returns to the bones, the pace of life quickens with the rising of the hopes and the stimulation of the energies, and you have the rate of existence faithfully indicated on the pressure-gauge of the streets. And then, about the middle of July, it begins to slacken away again; and in August, and until towards the end of September, it is at its slowest and easiest. Early in October the pressure will be at the full again. Men and women will come back from the moor and mountain, from the river and sea, and from places on the Continent, full of a great new energy in both mind and body. The wheels of London will whir again, and yet they will hardly seem to turn fast enough for the demands and necessities of the people to whom the new life has been given.

* * *

To the man of the town, the old inhabitant, no place is there so slow as London now, none so quick as she will be in a month. This slackness is one of the things that are noticed, and the other is a certain change in the style and ways of the people who move about in the streets. The two points are in association with each other, for a fair proportion—one that is large enough to make its influence felt—are not of London, but merely come to it for the season from the country and the Continent, where the ways of life are more leisurely. Were it not for this considerable influx of visitors, and the busy preparations of the Americans, who come back to town from all parts of Europe for their return to New York, Chicago, and Boston, the old place would seem much thinner than it is. All these people are wise to spend their time in London, for there is no place that is so good for a holiday; and he who stays in town, and is a patient and observant man, may get good interest and profit from watching those people and discovering their views and points of view. They oftentimes see better and clearer than we do; and then there is a freshness in their manner of dress, in the style and accent of their speech, and we are refreshed by the open sincerity of their country natures. London life makes men reserved, discreet, even suspicious; characters and temperaments are not to be found on the surface. In the country—and even, we may say, in the great provincial centres—it is different. Some simplicity of


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nature—using the expression in its best and least derogatory sense—remains and is to be seen, and with it some good, honest belief in the general goodness of things and in the soundness of the human heart. Therefore I would say that it is a good thing for the tarrying Londoner to make some companionship in August and September, if possible, of these visitors; and if he has the gift of a comfortable adaptability, he will find it neither uninstructive nor dull. The country view of things, original always, can be at times most entertaining. Reflection upon it may lift the Londoner out of himself sometimes, as he needs to be lifted. To convey an impression of what is here meant we must take some exaggerated and humorous examples, which are more or less set up as standards, are almost certainly fictional, and none the worse for that. By tradition it is the old lady—dear, kind creature that she always is—who, among our visitors, gives most humour to our minds. It was one such, new from the country, homely to the uttermost, and with the domestic instinct always paramount, who, on coming up from one of the London railway tubes and making exit, as is done in some cases, into a side street where there was comparative peace and quiet, noticed a cat leisurely stalking across the asphalted road—as cats and pigeons, strangely, will always do in the busiest parts of London—and, the simple and homely native instinct and idea arising at once, this excellent lady stayed for a moment's consideration, and then, in the manner of vague rumination, said to herself, 'Now I wonder whose cat that is.' Perhaps it was an intimate friend, a cousin, a sister even, to this kind old dame who was coming up to town from a fastness in the north, as she had not done for many years, and on leaving her main-line train at Willesden Junction to join another that was running from the city to the suburbs, the hour being six at evening and the day's work done, noticed the professional men and the merchants and the clerks all going back to their homes, for the most part clad, as always, in their sombre and respectable black. She saw it all, and two or three train-loads of these black-garbed people pass along through the station before her own train came in, and then she found again that the same gloom of dress pervaded the compartment to which she attached herself. She was overcome with an immensity, and could no longer deny herself some open comment; and so she remarked audibly to the others, but not exactly to their understanding, 'Goodness me, what a big funeral it must have been!' And there is also the case of the country lady who was walking down Piccadilly to the west late on a fine afternoon of June, when light and fancy costumes were in abundance. She had not seen London before, and no other part of it had seemed quite like this to her. It is one of the most admirable features of the country character that analyses of cause and effect are so constantly demanded in regard to the most commonplace matters of everyday life as it is seen in the town. The Londoner passes on and does not stop to inquire. But the country-people want to know, and when they do not know for certain they conjecture. So this kind lady, whose last act before coming up to London was to scald the buttermaking utensils in the dairy, stood for a moment on the kerbstones in Piccadilly, and looking up and down, and no doubt feeling glad in the happiness of others, observed, 'I suppose there is a tennis-party somewhere.'

* * *

Until some nine years backwards we were in the way of talking and writing placidly, even with a curl of the lip at the time or a knitting of the eyebrows that suggested some suppressed dissatisfaction, of mid-Victorianism and of early Victorianism, the styles in art and manners that those periods had fostered. Since then, however, full vent has been given to the lurking displeasure. All that was of the Regency and of the different eras of Victorianism, even to the later ones, is mentioned with contempt. The impression is encouraged that there was no soul behind those times, that thoughts and ideas were always plain and smug, that taste was of the poorest, that everything was dull and insipid. Those were the days when life and living were very plain and simple things in comparison with what they are now. Think of it, and you will realise that there is more difference between our views and our ways, between our demands and our desires, between our necessities and our hopes at the present time and those which were held when Queen Victoria came to the throne, than there was between the latter and the period of three hundred years before. Latterly we have ransacked Nature and the earth for new pleasures, new conveniences, new experiences. We call it progress, and it is progress; and we accept it all, without much thought, as addition to the comfort of life. But it is perhaps a point as to whether, with all this fine elaboration of existence, we are the happier or life is the fuller and better. If we had now to revert to our stage-coach travelling, we should greatly miss our fast expresses and our motor-cars. But the coaches on the roads were fine things in their time; and the day may come when, travelling through the air at a hundred and fifty miles an hour, the people who do it will look back with some pitying contempt upon our present systems of making journeys. We are in a nervous state of restlessness; we must have change in all things; and it is in this mood that we glance behind us, with an irritation amounting almost to anger, upon the last period of a settled plainness and simplicity. There was certainly much about it that was quite indefensible upon the score of art and taste. When they had a house to build in the early part of the last century, their chief concern seemed to be to set up outside walls which would satisfactorily enclose inside rooms, and when they had done that there was an end of it. It was conceived that streets were to walk and drive along,

and to contain shops at which purchases might be made, and that if said streets properly served these purposes they were good enough—as good as streets could be. It has sometimes seemed that, for all its noble aspect, London came in for rather more of these exhibitions of the simple taste than other places. However that may be, in the modern revulsion of feeling and the vast extension of ideals the chief town is being most severely handled. I sometimes try to picture to myself the London as I knew it of only fifteen years ago, and so vast have been the changes that it is not an easy thing to move the fancy backwards to a proper realisation of what the place and the life in it were like at that time. Yet when the effort has succeeded there is a sense of happiness of remembrance, for in the last years of the old century London was a pleasanter place to live in than it is now. Home life was agreeable in it then, when it sometimes seems impossible in this present day; the clubs had their full charm; the sections of society and the professional and other coteries were closely knit and all compact; there was a certain repose, and yet there was a keenness and an ardour in life, in the chief town. All that has gone. Hurry and whirl, tension and nervous strain, fevered excitement, and a passion for change have come instead. And so it is that the old London, in its looks, no longer satisfies. We must have a new London, and a grander one. It has been said that London is not so beautiful as the cities of the Continent, and it is the desire to make it compare with them to a better point of satisfaction to ourselves. New thoroughfares, wide and of noble appearance; new open spaces, adorned with splendid sculpture; new public buildings, making fine exhibition of architectural fancy—it is all meant to be something worthy of the great capital of the most magnificent of empires. The effort is an honest one; the danger is in the tendency towards vulgarity and loss of dignity.

* * *

Now in this attack upon all the plainness and simplicity of a hundred years ago, some sharp attention at last is given, at the beginning of a new reign, to the house of the King—to Buckingham Palace itself. It marks the extreme advance of the assaulting party; and this clearly is a national matter, and not a thing merely of local London. Buckingham Palace! The name is a rich one, and in the imagination of the people who have not seen it the building represents the summit of costliness and grandeur. The young person who would be rich and great to the last extravagance of his dreams puts it to himself that in some far-off day he will live in a place that is the equal of Buckingham Palace! Whether he would like it when he lived there is a doubtful matter. Perhaps at the first view of the stranger the place is not really disappointing, as it is now being said. It is not the palace of the fancy, but yet there seems to be some sort of high dignity about it. People without knowledge come by a feeling that it has great historical association—which it has not. Not long back in history other houses stood upon this site. In the time of the Stuarts there was Goring House, whose name was changed to Arlington when it was bought by the earl of that title; and sometimes, when I pass this way, I recall that one of the chief points of its history is that here it was probably that tea was drunk for the first time in England, for Lord Arlington was the man who brought the first pound of it into the country, having paid sixty shillings for it when in Holland. Then the Duke of Buckingham bought the house in 1698, and after he had it rebuilt and entitled Buckingham House, it was described by Defoe as one of the great beauties of London, both by reason of its situation and its building. A long time afterwards it was purchased by George the Third, and was settled upon Queen Charlotte instead of Somerset House, and was called the Queen's House. And then at last it was rebuilt for the fourth of the Georges, and as recently as 1846 the long and ugly east front—yes, after all, it is really ugly—was added to it. So on the historical side, as on some others, the Palace is weak—it does not appeal warmly to the sentiment. Therefore they say that it should go; that it should have been pulled down, demolished; and that in its place there should be built a new Palace that would be a fit home for the King of England, something that would be a credit to London and the empire, something as splendid as the best palaces that are to be found in Europe.

* * *

There have been three parties among the people in regard to this Palace of the King. There were old Conservatives who said that it is good enough. Another section was of the mind that we should try to patch up this old Palace and make it presentable. It was suggested that the addition of another story to the building, and a scheme of decoration for the eastern façade, would do all that is necessary. But the majority of those who took the trouble to form any opinion at all in the matter—and they included many of the foremost architectural authorities of the time—said that Buckingham Palace should be pulled down, and they ridiculed the idea of any attempted embellishment of a building that is built of Bath stone, the average life of which in London is not more than twenty years. This Palace, so we hear, has to be constantly painted at a cost of three thousand pounds each time, to prevent it from falling to pieces. At one time the place looked much better than it does now. Before Queen Victoria came to the throne there was a fine courtyard, which was enclosed on two sides by extensive wings, and in the middle of the main building was an entrance which led into the grand hall. There was a dome in the centre also, and the Marble Arch, which stood in front of the building until 1850, helped the general appearance of things. But in the early part of the great reign there was much

tampering with the place, and little benefit to itself. In recent years a great scheme for the beautification and glorification of the Mall has been in progress, and is now advanced some way towards completion. The Mall becomes a noble thoroughfare, finely adorned. We think it will achieve a European reputation. At the one end we have a new and magnificent outlet to Trafalgar Square, from which, through the archway openings, the whole length of the drive can be viewed, and at the other end there will be the great and splendid Victoria memorial. This truly majestic monument has the Palace for its background, and that is now held to be one of the most forcible objections to the retention of the Palace — that it spoils the memorial. For all the agitation that there has been, and the undeniable argument that this is the most suitable time of all for the building of a new Palace, it will not be done just yet. Palaces are not things for war. We do not have to build a new one because Germany is doing something of the kind. A new one that would be equal to the best ideals would not, so we are informed, cost more than a million of money—not so much as a new Dreadnought (and the man who the other day dropped as many oranges as he pleased from a high aeroplane on to the deck of a small yacht confirmed us in a new nervousness concerning our many millions' worth of Dreadnoughts); but we can be a very parsimonious people when nothing more practical than art and beauty is being considered. More than one of our great show-places would look much better than they do had it not been that while they were being constructed the people repented of their extravagance and economised towards the end. The French people would care more for these things; but we are not the French. We have not the same artistic temperament, and we do not think of things in art and beauty in the same great way. Our ideas are puny. That is made a complaint against us by the architects and artists. That is being said of us now in regard to the Palace. But you cannot hurt our people by telling them that they have not the artistic temperament, that they have no proper regard for or appreciation of the beautiful. Say such a thing to a man in the City, and he may point to the Bank of England, and perhaps ask afterwards if the artistic temperament would have helped to paint so much of the map of the world in simple red. Another fear that is entertained is that, so little encouragement and opportunity having been given to our architects for thinking out ideas on the grandest scale—the scale of palaces —we may have none who is quite equal to designing such a royal palace as we should require if we determined that we should have a new one. But necessity would surely produce the genius. In the meantime it has been determined to do some expensive patching up of this chief Palace of London.

A book which has given the most excellent and profitable entertainment of late, and one which is probably more read at present than any other of its class—the class of memoirs—is that comprising the recollections of the Duchesse de Dino during the period from 1836 to 1840, which have been edited by the Princess Radziwill and published by Mr Heinemann. The duchesse was the niece of Talleyrand, had a keen and highly cultivated mind, a considerable taste for the higher politics (Madame de Lieven was her most constant correspondent and told her all the news), knew everybody in Paris and most people of account at the other great capitals, and generally was one of the great women of her period. A first volume of these memoirs was published some months ago, and dealt chiefly with experiences and impressions in London, where the duchesse accompanied her uncle while he was French ambassador there. In this second volume there is more about Paris and Berlin, but one does not find the reading less illuminating. A thousand topics are discussed, and more, and always with a finely keen intelligence. The duchesse had her moods; and we enjoy her philosophical introspections, a little gloomy as they sometimes are. She was constantly discontented with Paris; and in an early part of this section of her memoirs she makes a comparison between it and London, to the considerable advantage of the latter. 'My old dislike of Paris,' so she wrote, 'has been growing upon me for some time. Not that people are in any way disagreeable—indeed, the contrary is the case; but life at Paris is too exhausting; the atmosphere is too keen; attractions are too numerous and widely spread, while at the same time they are not sufficiently strong. There is no leisure, constant worry, and a continual sense of want. At London I lived amid a society at once high and simple-minded; social success and leisure were possible at the same time. The excitement which I then experienced had its compensations. I had time for my own occupations, for reading, working, writing, and thinking; nor was I pestered by every idle person. If calling is a tax upon one's time, calls can be paid at London with an empty carriage and with cards; in short, life was then a pleasure. Hence my deep and melancholy regret for those years which will never return; hence my longing for the calm and sweetness of Rochecotte with its wide horizon and its pure sky, for my clean house, my kind and simple neighbours, my workpeople, my flowers, my big dog, my little cow and goat, the good Abbé, the modest Vestier, the little wood where we used to gather fir-cones—the place, in short, where I am at my best, because I have time for valuable introspection, for enlightenment of thought, for the practice of good and the avoidance of evil, time to unite myself in simplicity of heart and mind with the beauty, the strength, and the graciousness of nature, which there gives me shelter, refreshment, and repose.' There are some interesting observations upon Queen Victoria during the earliest years of her

reign. Thus: 'She is very fond of her husband, whom she treats as a small boy. He is not so clever as she, but is very calm and dignified.' And then: 'They say that the young Queen of England gallops down the streets of London through all the omnibuses and cabs. Her old aunts think this is very shocking, and so it is.' There is also quoted a remark that the young Queen made to the Duchess of Sutherland when the latter had been guilty of unpunctuality: 'My dear duchess, pray do not let this happen again, for neither you nor I ought to keep any one waiting.' Here and there we have a mention of some of the literary men of the period. In a note in 1836 she says: 'M. de Chateaubriand has sold his works, unedited or as yet unwritten, for a hundred and fifty thousand francs cash, in addition to a yearly income of twelve thousand francs payable to his wife upon his death. He is said to be completely upset by the payment of his debts, and his future existence, which is thus defined and circumscribed, seems to him a heavy burden. Everything he writes, even apart from his memoirs, will belong to his publishers in return for a scale of payment now laid down. The manuscripts of his memoirs have been solemnly sealed up in his presence in an iron box, which has been deposited with a solicitor. He says that his thoughts have suffered imprisonment for debt in place of himself.' The duchesse did not like Balzac when she met him a little later in the same year. She wrote: 'M. de Balzac, who is a native of Touraine, has come into the country to buy a small estate, and induced one of my neighbours to bring him here. Unfortunately it was dreadful weather, and I was forced to invite him to dinner. I was polite, but very reserved. I am greatly afraid of these publicists, men of letters, and writers of articles. I never spoke a word without deep consideration, and was delighted when he went. Moreover, he did not attract me; his face and bearing are vulgar, and I imagine his ideas are equally so. Undoubtedly he is a clever man; but his conversation is neither easy nor light, but, on the contrary, very dull. He watched and examined all of us most minutely, especially M. de Talleyrand. I could very well have done without this visit, and should have avoided it if I had been able.' In books of this kind we inevitably find some new tales of the great Napoleon. There is one here which is not a little pathetic. 'Yesterday, at the home of M. de Talleyrand,' it is written, 'M. Mignet related that Marchand, a former *valet de chambre* under the emperor, proposed to publish a commentary upon the "Commentaries" of Cæsar, which Napoleon had dictated to him in the last weeks of his life at St Helena. Marchand often spoke to M. Mignet of Napoleon's last moments, of the loneliness and emptiness of his life; in illustration, he said that one evening, when the emperor, who was then very ill, was in bed, he pointed to the foot of the bed and said to him, "Marchand, sit down there and tell me something." Marchand said to him, "Dear me, sire, what can I tell you who have done and seen so much?" "Tell me about your youth; that will be simple and true, and will interest me," replied the emperor.'

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER LXII.—HOW JACK RODE THROUGH FUNERAL PLUMES.

'YOU go by Ostend,' said Jack to his first rider. 'A boat awaits you at the usual place. Make all speed to London and give this token to Sir Charles. And you,' to the other, 'go by Dunkirk. I go by Calais. Get a fresh horse every two hours. One hundred guineas to the one who reaches London first. And remember, you know nothing.'

They nodded, and all three spurred away without a further word—the one back to Brussels, to take the high-road by Ghent and Bruges, and he arrived in London just twenty-four hours after Jack; the other went with Jack as far as Halle and Enghien, and thence by Grammont and Oudenarde to Dunkirk, and he was never heard of again, having probably been shot on the frontier. Jack himself took the great south road to Ath and Tournay.

And the mighty news he carried—well in advance, he was sure, of any other, and therefore likely to be turned to the greatest possible advantage—was to him but gall and bitterness in the shadow of Charles's death. How was he to break it to them? The thought of their incurable loss and grievous sorrow chilled his heart. He rode with bowed head, and only nodded when the other bade him *au revoir* at the cross-roads at Enghien.

It was falling dusk when he left the field, and the gray road led through a country dark with trees. They seemed to crowd to the roadside to see him pass, and swung solemn benedictory arms above his head. Where they thinned, the road was bordered by two long lines of naked trunks with well-bushed tops. Without consciously seeing them he was aware of them, and it seemed to him that he rode between endless lines of nodding funeral plumes.

Once he sped past a field of yellow corn, and it was splashed all over with blood; and in one place, where the poppies had their way, there was a brimming red pool of it.

The farmhouses he passed were dusky red, and their roofs were red. There was a lurid red splash across the western sky behind the swaying funeral plumes, where the red sun had sunk aghast at that which he was leaving behind him; for on that

woeful plain lay piled and strewn the mangled remnants of forty thousand men—valiant men all, with no personal quarrels or reasonable grounds for hatred—a terrible blood-offering to the unscrupulous ambition of the stout little man in the gray coat.

But now, thank God! he was down and done with, down and done with for ever. But—but—but Charles Lauriston lay there dead among the valiant forty thousand, and his death was part of the price of the world's peace; and John Sax was taking home the word to Mavie and Sir Charles.

The lights faded out of the sky and left it cold and sad. The roads were deserted save for the nodding funeral plumes. He seemed the only soul abroad that night, for it was a farming country, and those who needs be up with the light go to bed with it.

The red-brick houses which had looked like clots of blood gave place to whitewashed and green-and-pink and yellow-washed ones, which gleamed like livid dead faces in the moonlight. On the crests of the rolling ridges on either side stood little black windmills. They seemed to him to be lifting their motionless arms in mute protest against that dreadful day's work. And once, away on the right, a hill with a pointed church spire stabbed his heart with sudden pain, it was so very like Harrow, and of all their little company who had played within sight of Harrow Hill only Mavie and he were left.

Only Mavie and he! Only Mavie! Why had she not married? he wondered. Not for want of asking, he was sure. And, truly, she never showed any signs of lack in her life. She was always charming and full of spirits, as though no single thing were wanting to complete her happiness; and there, behind him, on that blood-soaked little plain, Charles lay dead and half her happiness with him, for she had lived in Charles and her father.

The church clocks were ringing ten as he slipped off his winded horse at the door of the 'Tête-de-Bœuf' outside Tournai. The little town had been hastily fortified against the menace of Lille, and all travellers arriving after sunset stopped outside, to the great advantage of the 'Tête-de-Bœuf.'

'A glass of your best mulled wine, madame, and something to eat,' he said as he strode through to the stables.

'Ah, you come once more, monsieur,' cried the landlady; 'and in a hurry as usual.'

The ostler was snoring on a truss in a corner of his stable, but at Jack's summons he was on his legs in a moment, and reached for a saddle before his eyes were open; for Jack had been this way many times before, and the magnitude of his largesse for quick and effective service kept every ostler on the lookout for him.

'Your best horse at once, Jacot. Quick, my lad!'

'The roan,' flinging the saddle over the unexpectedly disturbed one's back. 'When I heard monsieur's hoofs on the stones I said to myself, "Ah, ha, Jacot, my friend, you are in luck. Here comes Monsieur Always-in-a-hurry, and it's a good thing the roan's in and as fresh as paint, for monsieur never forgets the man that serves him well."'

'Rascal! you were sound asleep and dreaming. See to the other. He has carried me well. I will take a glass of mulled wine inside, and then I am off.'

Madame brewed him a tankard of the mixture for which she was famous, and would have enjoyed a chat. But he had no time for talk. He sipped his wine while he bustled out of her half a cold fowl and a wedge of cheese and the crusty end of a long loaf; and had dowered Jacot with a month's wages, and was galloping down the *chaussée* before madame had recovered from her surprise at the sight of him.

'*Mon Dieu*, what haste! He surely rides for money, that young man. I see his face as he comes, and I see his back as he goes, but never has he time to speak a word to me.'

'He speaks well,' said Jacot, with his hand in his pocket. 'He is a man of great affairs, and he knows a good horse and a good ostler.'

The roan fulfilled Jacot's estimate. His still lively hoofs set the good folk of Hazebrouck turning in their beds and wondering what was toward at half-past one in the morning, and he seemed so fit and capable that Jack carried him on as far as St Omer.

Always, hitherto, on these rapid rides home with the news that was eagerly awaited there, the feeling of arduous accomplishment and the certainty of the warm welcome that awaited him had filled him with a sense of exhilaration. But now—now—the weight of what he had left behind and what he carried with him was upon him. The great belts of woodlands lay on the countryside like a funeral pall, and those endless rows of poplars by the wayside would remind him of funeral plumes to the end of his days.

The good news he brought would be cancelled by the worse news, and as he covered the gloomy road and turned things over in his mind he came to doubt the advisability of disclosing the ill news until the good had been turned to account. For his grandfather's words had impressed him beyond his full understanding of them. All that he knew was that very great matters depended on the information he brought. If the chance of turning his early news to account should be lost through the overwhelming shock of his later news the bank might suffer. He decided to leave the decision to his grandfather, in whose wisdom he had the most implicit confidence.

In the pallid half-light of the very early morning he picked his way through the lush meadows and innumerable brimming waterways of St Omer, changed his horse there, and felt the back of his journey broken. The east was lightening behind the grim old spires as he turned his back on them and sped away towards Calais. He scented the

freshness of the sea an hour before he reached it, and the sun was shining gaily on the old gray walls as he rode round them to the little smuggling colony in the dunes where he was well known and always welcomed.

'At your service, monsieur,' grinned a red-cotton night-capped head which anticipated his second knock on a cottage door. 'We have been expecting you every day for a week.'

'Then, my good Blaize, you should be ready to start without delay.'

'Quite ready, monsieur The wife will heat us some coffee while I rouse the others. This wind'—with a quick glance round the sky—'will carry us across in less than three hours.'

The hot coffee was very acceptable, the coarse brown bread and fresh country butter unusually sweet. Within a quarter of an hour Jack was curled up in a bunk in the stuffy little cabin of the *chasse-marée* as sound asleep as a fox after a stiff run home. A heavy hand roused him to the near sight of Dover cliffs shining white in the sun; and but for the thought of Charles lying dead in the hollow by Hougomont he would have felt life very good.

That he was well ahead of everything he felt certain, and of the welcome that awaited him, and the sight of Mavie after these months of absence; but—Charles lay dead by Hougomont, and the nearer home he got the more heavily did that dreadful fact lie on his heart.

When he left the field the news of Bonaparte's utter rout had seemed a mighty thing, and Charles's death but a dreadful shadow. Now that shadow of death dwarfed all else and obscured all his outlook. The nearer he drew to them the more he felt what it would mean—to Sir Charles a blow from which he might never recover, to Mavie a rending of the heart which would dim her brightness for many a day to come. His own heart went out to her in uttermost love and sympathy. Would to God he had the right to comfort her! If his own life could have saved her from this, how gladly he would have given it!

His face as he paid his Calais crew was set and grim.

'He carries bad news this time, I trow,' said Blaize of the red cap as he wished him a good journey and speedy return. 'But his pocket shows no sign of it.'

And so judged all with whom Jack had any dealings on the road. Everywhere he was known and expected. Stable doors flew open before him, and deft hands saddled the fastest horse at the mere sight of him. They had long since learned the futility of asking questions which he never answered; but this time they drew their own conclusions from his gloomy face, and their conclusions were the same as those of red-capped Blaize. 'Bad news! bad news!' said they, and ached for facts, for every man knew of the mighty game that must by this time be played out on the other side of the water. Rumour spread through Dover that day that Bonaparte had won, and that same rumour was carried to London by the coaches; but the only ground for it was the gloom of John Sax's face at thought of Mavie and Sir Charles.

The distant sight of Canterbury towers had always cheered him until now. They had seemed like familiar landmarks very near to home. But this time they set him thinking only of funeral dirges and graveyards, and of Mavie and Sir Charles, a few miles farther on, all unconscious of their loss.

Eight o'clock rang out as he picked his way through the old streets, and pressed his horse to its speed as soon as he reached the open again. He changed horses again at Sittingbourne and at Dartford, and was crossing Blackheath, with Greenwich Park on his right and Ridley Marsh on his left, at eleven o'clock. At half-past twelve he flung his reins to old Jenicot at the door of the bank, and strode in, hoping devoutly that Sir Charles might be on 'Change and his grandfather somewhere about. And so it happened, for each day they had been expecting him, and knew he would go straight to the bank; and he was thankful. The office buzzed at sight of him, as it always did, and hummed with fears of ill news as the door of the private office closed behind him.

'My dear lad!' was old John Sax's greeting. Then, 'Bad news from your face. You must teach it to tell nothing, my boy.'

'Thank God you're alone, grandfather!'

'Is it so bad as all that? Never mind! Good or bad, we'll turn it to account so long as we're the first.'

'You're the first, I'm certain. I left the field at eight o'clock last night. Bonaparte is beaten to shreds—utterly routed'——

'Well, then?' and the old man eyed him curiously.

'And the last thing I saw on the field'—and he dropped his voice to a whisper lest the very walls should hear—'was Charlie lying dead.'

'Mr Charles!' And the old white face, schooled as it was to show no signs, pinched and grew the colour of lead for a moment. But only for a moment. 'That is terrible news, my boy. Terrible!' He was thinking fast and deep. 'Don't say a word of it to any one yet. Sir Charles must not know till this day's work is over. You don't know what hangs on it. You are quite sure?'

'Sure? His head was nearly severed from his body. I have a lock of his hair in my pocket for Mavie. And almost alongside him lay Etienne dead also.'

'Poor lads! Poor lads! We pay heavily. But, for God's sake, John, not a whisper to any one! Get away home and stop there. I must go to Sir Charles at once.'

And, to make sure that he spoke to no one, they went out together and parted on the step outside.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE CITY OF TIFLIS.

NOT quite half-way between the Black Sea and the Caspian, between the ruined port of Batoum and the oil-wells of Baku, of which in happier times it was the outlet, stands the greatest monument to Cossack tyranny ever reared, the city of Tiflis, capital of the Caucasus and headquarters of those who hold the knout over the Georgian and keep the Armenian in subjection. Tiflis is a teeming hive of three hundred thousand bees, most of them very angry bees, and buzzing, it is said, in seventy different tongues. Its summer climate is not such as to allure the tourist, and I found myself in its streets during the hottest days of August only because so good an opportunity of visiting its bazaars might not occur again. In truth, it is, with the possible exception of Damascus, the most amazing city between Brighton and Bagdad.

Tiflis is a two-faced city. To the kid-gloved tourist, who emerges from the comfortable Hôtel de Londres only in a cab, with a dragoman on the box, it is just a pleasant modern provincial centre, with palatial buildings, shady gardens, broad streets of handsome shops, and a peaceful, if not altogether hilarious, subject-population of Georgians, Armenians, Lazes, Kurds, Persians, Turcomans, and others, lacking the spirit to make common cause against the Cossack, who bayonets and bullies them at every turn. But there is another Tiflis altogether. Stowed away behind the trim red houses with the green roofs, which, seen from the breezy summit of the funicular railway, look like a newly built American mining-town, there is an older Tiflis, a city of hovels and alleys, which has been there for centuries, seeing the passing of Georgian rule, the invasions of fierce Mohammedans, and the final aggression of Russia. Not long since the Caucasus tried to shake off the yoke of Petersburg, but the attempt was badly engineered and proved abortive. Yet even to-day every Georgian goes armed, and there are few Armenians but have bombs in their possession.

It was the old Tiflis that drew me. There was a magic about its babel. Georgian dandies, clad in their favourite claret-coloured ulsters, with the cartridge-belt of silver ornaments, would saunter past the shops, here stopping to inspect a new smart sheepskin cap, there perhaps drinking a glass of the heady amber wine from a bullock-skin. At a street corner two little Tartars, each mounted on a stocky pony, would proceed from words to blows, until a gigantic Cossack, a walking armoury, carrying the majesty of the Tsar in his belt, would pull the combatants from their horses and belabour them as if they had been schoolboys. Brutal he may be, but no one can accuse the Cossack of being a coward. Nothing would have been easier than to trample the hated uniform underfoot and hustle the body into some old cellar, yet he calmly, alone among all those Tartars, upheld the authority for which he stood.

The Kura is a dirty stream, yet swift enough even in summer to carry away the drainage of the city. In winter it is said to rage with torrential force, sweeping away bridges and interrupting communications; but I saw it only curbed by an August sun, a very lamb among rivers. Tiflis is a city of gardens, though they are a sad disappointment to those who know the gardens of Java or Australia. Indeed, the Botanic Garden beside the walls, which is considered worth the excursion from the city, lovely as it may be in spring-time, is the veriest wilderness in summer, more dreary by far than the streets themselves, and inferior at any rate to one of the smaller and less vaunted public gardens in the heart of the city.

The fascination of Tiflis is that of a volcano. He who can read the signs of the East realises that all this peaceful acquiescence in Russian rule is but feigned until the occasion shall arise for another bid for freedom. There is a sensation of electricity in the air, of racial and religious elements in inflammable combination. In short, a visit to Tiflis has all the charm of any other experience involving a spice of risk. One of these days we shall see its name in leaded type in our morning paper. And perchance, if some of us have by then reached the sunset, it will be pleasant to conjure up the memory of those crowded streets and swaggering Cossacks, with the sun-baked slopes of the Caucasus overhanging the city smouldering in its discontent.

# WILD OATS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THAT afternoon Cyril sent Helen a note begging that he might see her, and that she would hear him once more; but she returned a message by her father to say that her decision of the night before was unalterable, and that an interview would only be painful to her.

Cyril had then to go to his mother. He told her that difficulties had arisen, and that there would be some delay about the marriage; but she saw by his face that there was some great trouble.

'I implore you,' she said, 'to tell me the truth. Yesterday you and Helen were perfectly happy together. What has happened? I must know.'

In a very few words he told her.

Mrs Winston was overcome with surprise and emotion; then she made a great effort to speak quietly.

'Cyril, do I understand you? You say that you were living with a Japanese girl as your wife in Japan. What more? Go on; tell me all quickly.'

'There was a child,' he said.

'A child! Oh Cyril!' said his mother, and she leant back in her chair and the tears began to drop from her eyes. 'To think of it!' she said at last in a low voice. 'I, who have so looked forward to being a grandmother, I who have longed to possess a grandchild, I have been a grandmother without knowing it, and my grandchild is growing up without ever having heard of me. Cyril, I have heard of the geisha girls of Japan. Is this girl—is the mother of your child one of them?'

'No, no,' he said, 'she was not.'

'Then what kind of girl was she?' demanded Mrs Winston.

'She lived with her grandmother in the house where I had rooms. She was what you women would call a nice little girl.'

'Cyril, you have deserted her and your child?'

'No,' said Cyril irritably. 'You and Helen don't understand the state of things in Japan. I made ample provision for her. You can't call it deserting.'

Mrs Winston laughed bitterly.

'No,' she said, 'my son, I don't understand the state of things in Japan, as you say; but I do understand one thing, and that is that women's hearts are the same all the world over, and if she is, as you say, a nice little girl, and you left her, then you did desert. May God forgive you, Cyril; I find it hard to do so. Just to please your passing fancy you have blighted three women's lives—her life, Helen's life, my life. Helen Garth has always been like a daughter to me, and to think that this sorrow should come to her through my son is a very bitter thought. Did you forget all religion when you were in Japan, Cyril? You used to believe in God. Have you cast off belief?'

'No,' said Cyril drearily; 'I do believe in God; but somehow everything seemed so different out of a Christian country.'

After receiving Helen Garth's final decision Cyril at once left his home and went to London, where he had already begun work in a studio. He thought that by incessant work he could banish from his mind painful remembrance, the remembrance of poor little O Tatsu San, and still more the remembrance of Helen Garth, to whom he was most devotedly attached. But he found that the power to work had left him. He had an artistic temperament and a certain originality, but he had not the mind of a great artist, and his art could not govern and satisfy his life. The necessary drudgery of the classes became unutterably wearisome to him; London he thought hateful; his former friends did not interest him. The more he realised that the bright companionship and love of Helen Garth was never to be his, the more the thought of O Tatsu San's sad little face preyed on his mind. What had become of her, and what had become of his child? He had no real wish to see them again, but he wondered whether he could not get quiet and healing for his mind by making happy the gentle little girl who had given herself trustfully to him.

It was Cyril's mother who decided the matter for him. She had come to live in London to be near her son, about whom she was very unhappy, for she saw how restless and moody he was. She felt that some definite change must be made in his life, so she opened the subject one day by asking him if he ever heard from O Tatsu San. He replied that he neither wrote nor heard.

'Cyril,' said his mother gravely, 'you are a man, and I do not wish to dictate my wishes in any way to you, especially in such a very difficult matter; but I wish you to know that if you think it right to go to Japan and marry this girl I am prepared to receive her. The beautiful, happy life that would have been ours had Helen become your wife has been destroyed by your own sin. There will certainly be many difficulties in your life if you marry this girl; but it is better for you to be a man and face them than lose your self-respect by casting off those who have the strongest claim on you, as she and her child certainly have. I understood clearly from you that she is a nice girl, who gave herself to you without doubting but that she was entering into a proper marriage. Bring her to me.'

Cyril was glad that the suggestion had come from his mother, and when he started for Japan he felt that he at any rate was regaining her approbation as well as bringing joy into the life of O Tatsu San. How happy she would be! He never for one moment doubted her joy at his return. He would find her in the little house by the seashore; the child would be getting quite big; he would be very, very kind to them both. If only he could keep Helen Garth and the sparkle and pleasure of her companionship out of his mind he might again be happy!

Landing at Yokohama, Cyril went straight to O Tatsu San's. It was autumn; the maples were brilliant with their red leaves; the air was bright and cold, and as he approached the house he could see Mount Fuji in the distance standing high and white against the blue sky. Passing through the well-known bamboo-grove he felt like a ghost revisiting the earth. From the house came the sounds of women's voices and the cry of a child. Was it his child? He supposed it was. An unknown girl stood at the door. He asked for O Tatsu San. She smiled and shook her head, and called the others. Several people came, but no one knew him. The house was full of strangers.

Deeply disappointed, he turned back. It was clear that she must have gone to live with her father in Tokyo. He was glad to think that he had the Tokyo address, but he had so counted on finding her where he left her that it was a blow to realise that time had brought changes. On arrival at Tokyo Cyril went to an hotel, where the address was carefully written out for him in Japanese and explained to a jinrikisha-man. Cyril drove in the

jinrikisha through the labyrinth of streets, and then the man stopped and began to ask questions at different shops. Cyril had forgotten the little Japanese he had once known, so he was none the wiser when the man tried to explain to him what the difficulty was.

'Confound it all!' said Cyril, 'with the address clearly written down why can't he find it?'

He then stopped at a police-station, for he knew that the Japanese policeman is expected to know the name of every street and of every person in every house. Here the address was shown, but drew forth nothing but shakes of the head. Finally a young man was produced who could talk English.

'The policeman tell you that this house not here now. All the street taken away for new tramway.'

'But surely some one must know where they have gone; they must have left an address with some one. Tell the jinrikisha-man that he will have a yen if he can find out from some of the neighbours where these people have gone.'

The jinrikisha-man on learning this set about with great alacrity going from house to house inquiring if any one knew the wanted address; but all shook their heads and said that the family had moved a year ago, and no one knew where they had gone.

Cyril became desperate, and spent a very unhappy night. The next morning he set off at once for the bank, where at any rate he felt sure he would get information. He asked for the manager, and, on his explaining the matter, a bank-book was brought. To Cyril's dismay, it was shown that the whole sum had been taken out a year before.

'The sum was drawn by the person in whose name we held it, so as far as we are concerned it is all correct,' said the manager; 'but the clerk who attends to this business may have some recollection of the matter.'

The clerk was called, and he said that he remembered the money being taken out; for it was unusual for a young Japanese woman to have the control of so much money. He could give her address as it had been at that time.

Cyril felt profoundly relieved to hear that he could get some address; and having it written down, he returned to the hotel to get an English-speaking guide. He was told that a Japanese man was waiting for him, and going to his room, he found Yamada at the door.

'Winston San,' he exclaimed, 'I heard from a hotel-boy that you had come back, and came to see you.'

Cyril seized him by the arm. 'Yamada,' he said, 'tell me quickly, where is she? Where is O Tatsu San?'

Yamada looked very grave. 'Did they not tell you?' he said. 'O Tatsu is dead. Yes, she was very sad, and she died.'

'Yamada,' he gasped, 'you don't mean that she'——

'No, no,' interrupted Yamada, 'not that—she did not kill herself; but she was so sad, and then she had consumption, and she died.'

Cyril was terribly upset. Dead—poor little O Tatsu San! How much was it his fault?

'And the child?'

'Her child is with its grandparents. They are very fond of him. I can take you to see them.'

Cyril, half-dazed, got into a jinrikisha. How different this was to what he had anticipated! He knew now how much he had counted on O Tatsu San's glad greeting. Quickly he and Yamada passed along the busy streets till in a quiet road the jinrikishas stopped before a low gate. Cyril sprang out and entered.

Seated on the veranda was a small child, who, seeing the big, strange man, set up a howl and rushed away, but not before Cyril got a glimpse of that strange, inexplicable thing we call family likeness. The child was in Japanese dress, and at the first glance looked quite un-European, yet the sight of its face reminded Cyril of his own mother in such a way that he knew it to be his own son.

The old grandmother came to the door. There were many bows and exclamations of surprise and welcome; but at last Cyril found himself seated on the matted floor by her side. She poured forth for Yamada's interpretation the tale of how O Tatsu San, pining away after Cyril's departure, had finally fallen into consumption, of which she had died. It would almost have been a relief to Cyril had the old dame reproached him, but her simple mind had never imagined that he meant to desert the girl. England was a long, long way off, and he had had to go and see his own mother, and now he had come back, and he was too late! She lavished her sympathy on him that he had not been able to come sooner.

Her son, O Tatsu San's father, was out; but Cyril directed Yamada to ask whether the family would like him to take O Tatsu San's child and have him brought up in England.

The grandmother became terribly agitated. She declared that it would break their hearts if their treasure were taken away. He was the joy of their lives; and as for education, was there not all the money which O Tatsu San had taken out of the bank in her last illness and reinvested for the child? He could be educated in Japan. Surely it would be cruel to take him from those who loved him to that far-off England.

'Tell her, Yamada,' said Cyril, 'that if they wish to keep him they can do so. I only want to follow out their wishes in the matter.'

That evening the grandmother guided Cyril to O Tatsu San's grave. The old woman wept as she performed her simple rites, offering a cup of rice on the grave and arranging fresh flowers in the bamboo stands. Then she left Cyril.

The chilly autumn evening closed in; a deep silence was around him. As he stood among the high trees and the mossy tombstones he thought of the gentle little girl whom he had found in the

house by the seashore, and he realised that no man ever indulged himself and sowed his wild oats except at the expense of another's field.

### CHAPTER IX.

IT was exactly a year from the date which had been fixed for the marriage of Cyril Winston and Helen Garth. Time had passed very sadly for Helen. She had given her friends no reason for having broken off her engagement, and many thought that she had acted from mere caprice. She was a proud woman, and none beyond her own family and Mrs Winston knew how much she had suffered. On this day, which ought to have been a happy anniversary, she was very lonely, even though she felt that she had acted rightly, and that loneliness was preferable to a marriage entered on with a condemning conscience. She sat in the garden surrounded by a wealth of spring flowers; winter was past; and the world was full of fresh, new life bursting out of what had seemed so cold and dead.

'All vegetable life is able to build itself up afresh,' she thought, 'so we human beings must surely have the God-given power to rouse ourselves from the past and be new creatures.'

Her thoughts went to Cyril, and she wondered what he was doing with his life. She had never seen him since the evening when she sent him from her. She knew briefly what had happened on his second visit to Japan, but his name was rarely mentioned to her. As she sat musing a shadow fell beside her, and looking up, she saw Mrs Winston. She sprang up to welcome her.

'Darling Helen,' said Mrs Winston, 'I could not let this day pass without coming to see you. Surely the past need not cloud the whole of life? You know all about my poor Cyril, and you know that his love for you is not one that will pass away. You only have the power to make his life what it may yet become. Helen, absolute forgetfulness may be an impossibility in this world, but absolute forgiveness is possible. You will wrong no one by becoming my son's wife. Helen, may he come to you?'

There was silence for a moment. Helen's eyes were full of tears. 'He may come,' she whispered.

THE END.

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### A GLASS-BOTTOM BOAT.

THE boatman anxious to improve the shining hour might certainly profit from an American development—that is, if local conditions are amenable thereto. Out at Catalina Island, off San Francisco, glass-bottom boats are in great demand, for they reveal to those who patronise them an unknown world and new beauties—the bottom of the sea. They are a distinct novelty, and ply a thriving trade upon the Bay of Avalon, which inshore is not deep, while the water is as clear as crystal. In the bottom of the boat are placed large sheets of transparent glass, and through this the passenger can see, as he is propelled slowly along, dense clusters of seaweed assuming fantastic shapes, shells, fishes of infinite variety of hue in their native element, as well as some of the strangest creatures that are known to live in the deep. The charms revealed in this manner are so kaleidoscopic as to exercise a peculiar fascination upon one. A trip in one of these glazed craft is not only a recreation, but an educational experience as well. There should certainly be opportunities for similar enterprise upon this side at frequent points around our coasts, and judging from the Californian results, great success would be attained.

### WOOD-SEASONING BY ELECTRICITY.

Among the latest uses to which electricity has been applied is that for the seasoning of wood. The process, which is of French origin, is said to be simple, inexpensive, and, moreover, to require but a few hours. There is a large tank, which is filled with a solution comprising 10 per cent. of borax and 5 per cent. of resin, with just a trace of carbonate of soda. In the bottom of the tank is a lead plate which is electrically connected to the positive terminal or pole of the dynamo. The timber to be treated is stacked on this plate, and when the tank has been filled another plate is superimposed and connected to the second or negative pole of the dynamo. When the current is switched on it is passed right through the stack of wood between the two plates, and in its passage it is stated to drive out the sap in the timber and to deposit borax and resin in its place, completely filling up all the pores and interstices. When the process is completed the timber is removed and dried, after which it is ready for use. It is claimed that the timber submitted to this treatment, no matter how green it may be, becomes completely seasoned.

### WATERPROOF CONCRETE.

A simple little specific has been brought out for the purpose of rendering cement and concrete perfectly waterproof. The preparation is in the form of a paste about as thick as butter and of a creamy-white colour. For use it is broken down considerably, one part of 'ceresit,' as it is called, being added to twelve of water. It readily dissolves, and produces a milky-white fluid somewhat resembling very thin whitewash. By using this instead of ordinary water when making up the concrete or cement, the latter can be rendered absolutely proof

against the penetration of moisture. In fact, it is said to be so resistant as to be proof against a pressure of seventy-nine pounds per square inch. Furthermore, the substance possesses sufficient elastic properties to be able to contract and expand under temperature fluctuations. Consequently damage cannot be inflicted either through intense frost or heat.

### ROPES FROM PLANTAIN FIBRE.

The economic exploitation of plantain fibre in India appears to be of conspicuous promise, especially in the manufacture of ropes, for which it seems to be eminently suitable. Though such ropes cannot compare in strength with those made from hemp, yet for all practical purposes they are just as good, and have the advantage of being about 20 per cent. cheaper. In India there is an increasing demand for this rope, and Europe is also inquiring for the same article. Various authorities have taken the subject up, and are pushing the matter vigorously in those districts where the plantain flourishes abundantly. The great thing is the decorticating operation in order to remove the glutinous matter and comb out the fibres. The industry should prove sufficiently profitable to attract attention. Even the fibre in its raw state is distinctly valuable. About two pounds of fibre can be obtained from every plantain-stem, and the cost of production ranges about three pounds per ton, as native labour is cheap. The market value of the raw article here is about thirty pounds per ton, leaving a profit, after payment of all charges, freightage, and so forth, of some twenty-two pounds per ton. The rope, of course, fetches a higher price. The cultivation of the plant is very simple, as it grows luxuriantly, and it is quite possible to secure a yield of one ton per acre under cultivated conditions, which in view of the above profit may be considered a highly satisfactory return.

### THE HUMAN HAIR MARKET.

It is a moot point whether 'my lady' who, deficient in her possession of flowing locks, seeks to draw upon the hairdresser's skill ever gives a thought as to the origin of the material in the creation evolved by him. That it is human she quite believes. The market in this commodity, however, is far more extensive than many suppose. The greater bulk comes from the south-eastern corner of Bohemia. In this region the human hair market is a familiar sight, and the preparation of the material is quite a large industry. The native supply is supplemented by cargoes from China, but these combings are restricted to a certain class of article. The importation from China is very large, the hair arriving in bales packed in straw and ranging about one hundred and thirty pounds in weight. The Chinese hair, as is well known, is intensely black, and as such is of no value. Upon its arrival at the factory, therefore, the first process is to change its characteristic colour. This is accomplished by bleaching it in a solution of hydrogen peroxide. Afterwards the hair is sorted according to its length and grade, dyed, and finally finished in any shade desired by the customer.

### LIGHTING LONELY COASTS.

For some time past mariners passing along the dangerous coasts of Alaska have urged the necessity of establishing lights to assist them in their navigation. But Alaska is a lonely country, and quite unpopulated in many stretches, so that the establishing of an ordinary type of lighthouse is quite out of the question. The same problem arose in Sweden, but has been ingeniously overcome by resort to an acetylene-gas lighting beacon which will burn without the slightest attention for a period of six months or so. The system is completely successful, and accordingly the United States Government has decided to utilise the same idea on the Alaskan coast. One great feature of this beacon is the sun-valve, whereby the light is ignited and extinguished automatically at varying periods, according to the time of year. As day breaks the action of the light causes the acetylene flame to burn low; when twilight comes round the diminishing daylight causes the flame to rise again until it attains the full lighting efficiency desired for darkness. By this means great economy is effected, gas being fully consumed only when the light is required.

### SOLDERING ALUMINIUM.

Commendable ingenuity is being demonstrated in the quest for an efficient solder for aluminium. The search is unquestionably one of the most difficult, owing to the oxidisable characteristics of the metal. One of the latest of these has a melting-point of three hundred degrees centigrade, which is far below the melting-point of aluminium, so that the latter is not damaged by its use. In its application, moreover, it is stated that the ingredients of which it is composed prevent, or rather destroy, the excessive and rapid oxidation that takes place; and, furthermore, joints so effected are not subject to electrolytic action. Jointing-work accomplished by means of this solder some months ago gives no sign of defect, and immersion in water has not brought about any deterioration.

### PHYSICAL FATIGUE.

How long can a man work without fatigue bringing about a deterioration in his labour? This is a very elastic question, varying with the constitution and health of the worker and the nature of his task. Some men can continue at work for twenty-four hours or more at a stretch; but there is the inevitable reaction, and the man suffers from its effects until by rest he is able to allow his human engine to pick up. Dr Halger, of Geneva, has made a close study of the relation of labour to rest; and from the results of his study it is obvious that the human system is very vitally affected by these two factors, in varying degree according to which receives the greatest taxation. If a person works regularly seven days a week, then the fatigue-line steadily

and consistently declines until in due course the inevitable happens: the body becomes so exhausted that a prolonged cessation from labour is requisite to restore the debilitated system. Moreover, such continuous labour brings about a very noticeable shortening of the span of life. All goes well till the age of thirty is reached; then the descending line makes a very sharp curve, and the threescore and ten years which is generally accepted as the limit of life is reduced by twenty years. On the other hand, if one day of rest in seven is secured, although the ultimate result is the same, it is carried over a longer period. The continuous, steady descending line, by the regular and periodic rest on Sunday, is supplemented by a line descending in a series of steps. Though the rest on the seventh day is not quite sufficient to counterbalance the effect of the six days' labour, its beneficial result is very noticeable; vitality is not lowered to such an extent as by continuous labour, and its effects are not so serious or incurable. There is no reason why the average healthy man, living under favourable conditions, should not be able to live to an age of one hundred years; but to do so he must carefully regulate the proportion of labour to rest so as not to permit the effects of work to secure the upper hand.

### A NEW METALLIC FILAMENT LAMP.

It would seem that persistent grappling with a teasing problem has at last been fruitful of success in connection with the metallic filament lamp. Though this illuminating medium gives a far brighter light and is more economical in consumption of electricity than the carbon filament, its advantages in this direction have been rather offset by its extreme brittleness, which brought about a high percentage in breakages. Inventors have been persevering in their endeavours to overcome this defect, and have partially succeeded. The new lamp, however, is stated to be quite as tough as the ordinary carbon lamp, and no more susceptible to damage by shock. The filament is formed of tungsten, and by some secret process is made as strong as steel of the same thickness. All signs of brittleness are removed, and the material can be bent and tied in knots. This is a very remarkable development, and should result in the metallic filament lamp becoming still more generally used.

### FRUIT-FARMING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Those who have read Mr J. T. Bealby's book on *Fruit-Ranching in British Columbia*, with his papers on 'Growing the Big Red Apple' and 'A National Apple Show' in this *Journal*, will find further information in the handbook by Mr J. S. Redmayne, M.A., on *Fruit-Farming on the Dry Belt of British Columbia*. A note appended by Lord Strathcona mentions that a considerable number of men from English public schools are being trained for the industry. The Duke of Argyll points out that two of the late Governor-Generals own large tracts in the interior for fruit-growing. The admirable climate, he says, makes existence a joy, even for old age. The quest for fur and skins, and then for gold, drew pioneers; now timber and fruit are powerful lodestones drawing men thither, Scotsmen being well represented. For the cultivation of apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, and apricots, the dry belt area, where there is a rich, light volcanic loam in the valleys of the mountains, is represented as an ideal one. Irrigation, where wanted, is scientifically practised. A ten-acre apple-orchard of trees in full bearing, we are told, in any good district of the dry belt should yield an average income of six hundred pounds a year for apples alone, after paying cost of working. Besides, small fruit and vegetables between the apple-trees may yield from two hundred pounds to four hundred pounds additional.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

### FIFTH STORY.

## THE VANISHING DOG.

### PART II.

THERE was only one thing I did not like about the appearance of the case. The breathing was soft and regular, there were apparently no broken bones, and the water had been sufficient to prevent any bad external injury to the head. But the left hand was firmly clenched, and this suggested some irritation, possibly hæmorrhage, to the right side of the brain, near the base.

However, as nothing else looked particularly alarming, and as I myself had once lain insensible for thirty-six hours without any permanent after-effects, I hoped for the best. I pointed out the clenched hand to the sensible woman in attendance, and said that in the morning I should want to know particularly whether there had been any movement of it.

Having had a hard day's work, if I may be permitted to include the pursuit of Schnapps in that category, I was in no way surprised at being roused between one and two A.M., and for a matter that would

allow of no loitering. My Dursley-Pedersen was still *hors de combat*, and it was fortunate that a trap had been sent for me. This, however, made me dependent upon my patient's husband for the return journey. He naturally gave me no facilities for leaving his house to visit others at a distance until matters were safely decided at his own.

It was midday before I reached my rooms again, and the day's work was still before me. I had been particularly concerned about the case of the Honourable Charles, and hoped to find that the man whose practice I was working had returned from his holiday, and had seen him.

He had not arrived; but a letter lay waiting for me, which read as follows:

'SIR,—Me bein' a pore man with a large fambly, I send This to deliver Us from Temtashun.

'You bein' a Sportsman like Imself, tho' not as you may say ezacly one of the Gentry, Ile trust You.

'But the Polis wot did they doo with the Rabits they naled from me last Winter? That's wot I want to now. I say they kept 'em, an' me got a munth. They 'll not get This to kepe.

'I kan't cum, but Kate kan.

'If I kum they 'll say Why wasn't I workin'. I must 'ave bin Pochin last night.—Your humbl.,

'THOS. CLAY.

'*P.S.*—I find It in 'is klenshed 'and. I think 'E 's cumin' round a bit.'

*This* was wrapped in an extra piece of dirty paper—and was my ring.

When I had turned the ring over and over, stared at it, and fitted it on to my left little finger, I acknowledged to myself that undoubtedly it was mine, and that whither Schnapps had run, or whether he was still running, did not now matter twopence.

But as my surprise and delight moderated, my wonder increased. Yet, after all, the thing was not unexplainable. Here was a man—the Honourable Charles, to wit—of an ingenious and sportive turn of mind, with a clever dog and plenty of time on his hands. Practical jokes are for many people the highest form of humour. He had humbugged me shockingly somehow, but had not been so careless as I had imagined. Whatever Schnapps had carried off, it was not my ring; and had it not been for the unlucky accident his master would no doubt have been waiting to chaff me on my return, and to give me a pleasant surprise.

There was the ring, and I at once turned out into the street to decide the Honourable Charles's present condition, and suitably to reward the persecuted Mr Clay. Half-way through the village I came upon my fat friend the constable, and halted to tell him that as far as I was concerned Schnapps was now altogether unimportant. He had seen nothing of that meteoric animal, but was so good as to say that he would go with me to the bridge for the latest bulletin concerning the Honourable Charles, who, he said, was always a pleasant gentleman, though no doubt fond of a joke; and why not, if not carried too far?

We agreed that in this case the joke had ultimately affected the Honourable Charles more than it had any one else, and we proceeded through the village, which was now redolent with the savours of many midday meals.

Just as we reached the bridge we saw Mr Thomas Clay coming into the village for his dinner, which was to be appetising, if one might judge by the odour of it quite plainly perceptible. I waited for him at the bridge, and expressed my obligation warmly, with, I trust, a satisfactory accompaniment; while the constable sniffed loudly, but whether in disapproval or because of the smell of cooking I could not decide.

Mr Clay received my thanks in a very good spirit—somewhat dashed, however, by the constable's presence. 'Wot d'ye bring 'im agen for?' he asked discontentedly, and was not pleased by the constable's jocular insinuation that, it being dinner-time, he thought that he might be asked in to 'pick a bit.'

As I moved towards the cottage door, Mrs Clay, who had been standing there for a few seconds, apparently afraid to interrupt our conversation, came forward to meet me, and asked me how the gentleman found himself now.

'I 'll tell you presently,' I said; 'but I 've not seen him yet, you know;' and I stepped softly into the downstairs room, which had been given up to the Honourable Charles, followed by the woman, close behind whom were her husband and the constable.

Not a trace could I see of my patient. I turned in astonishment to the woman, and found her watching me with equal perplexity.

'Where is he?' I asked.

'Well, sir, safe in his own bed, I trust, for he 's not been here these three hours. I thought you knew.'

Knew! I suppose my face showed plainly enough how precious little I knew, for without waiting for me to say so she hurriedly began her story.

She told us that, her husband having gone to his work, Kate, her daughter, left with the letter for me, and the ring which had shortly before been found in the Honourable Charles's half-open hand.

The girl had various other errands to do for her mother, and the cottage was quite quiet. Mrs Clay, not long after, began to prepare her husband's dinner, leaving the doors of both rooms open in case the Honourable Charles stirred, and also looking in on him now and again. Of course she was every moment expecting to see me.

'I'd skinned the—the'—— she continued, stammering.

'Chicken,' her husband suggested.

'Chicken,' she agreed hurriedly, while I shook under a blow inflicted on my ribs by the fat constable's elbow.

'And cut up the onions and things'——

'Nothing like onions with—chicken,' the constable suggested, winking openly at me.

'I take 'em with everything,' Mr Clay told us firmly. 'Everything!'

'Wot for?' the constable asked curiously.

'Doctor's orders when I was a kid,' Mr Clay explained, eying him boldly; but I begged Mrs Clay to go on with her story, which was more or less as follows.

At that stage in the preparation of the 'chicken' which she had mentioned, she heard a little noise in the adjoining room, and going in, found that the Honourable Charles had slightly changed his position. She went to the garden gate, and stood there for a minute or two watching for me, and then returned to the kitchen table. Half-an-hour or more later she heard a voice, and running in, found the Honourable Charles sitting up in the bed, 'dazed-like,' and fingering his shaven head and his beard.

She begged him to lie down, telling him what had happened and where he was; and apparently, while she went about her work, he lay still for some time, 'collectin' 'isself,' as she put it. Meanwhile her daughter Kate had returned from the village.

'Then he hollered again,' Mrs Clay said, 'an' I went in again, an' he was sittin' up again, an' this time there was no 'oldin' 'im. 'E'd got 'is clothes, an' was rummagin' the pockets.

'"I've lost something," 'e said. "'Ave you found anything?"

'"Wot, sir?" I asked, soothin' like.

'"Anything that isn't yours," 'e says. "Money—or pocket-books—or rings an' things."

'"Oh, *that's* all right!" I says. "You lie down till the doctor comes. We sent it 'im to take care of."

'"Sent wot?" 'e says.

'"The ring in your 'and," I says; an' then, to pacify 'im, I calls to Kate in the wash'ouse, "Kate, did you take that ring to the doctor?"

'"Yes, mother," she says. "'E'll likely be 'ere soon."

'"You 'ear that, sir! You lie quiet," I told 'im, an' 'e dropped back on 'is pillow. An' I was gettin' back to my cookin' when 'e says, "Stop!" an' I stopped, an' he sat up again an' thought 'ard. You could see 'im thinkin'. At last 'e says, "Give me something to eat."

'I told 'im 'twould be better to wait for that till the doctor came.'

She hesitated, and stopped.

'Well,' asked the constable, 'and wot did he say to that?'

'I won't repeat it,' Mrs Clay decided, after considerable deliberation. '"Twouldn't be fair—'im bein' light-'eaded no doubt. But I cut up the—the—chicken, an' did a bit o' it quickly-like in the pan for 'im. 'E said 'e'd be all right after a bite o' something, an' would get back an' save the doctor a journey.'

'"The doctor's 'ad too much to do with me already"—these were 'is words. As soon as 'e'd finished 'e made a start. If 'e's not in 'is bed 'e should be, for 'e's not fit to be out an' about.'

'Quite right,' I agreed; and, the little room not being very commodious for four, I moved outside again to consider things.

While we three men stood at the gate, and Mrs Clay again watched us from the doorway, the station 'bus hove in sight on its way into the village.

'Look here, sergeant!' I said, knowing brevet-rank to be often acceptable and soothing; 'I'd be obliged if you would jump on that 'bus and find out for me at once whether Mr Loftus has got to his bed. If not, we must look for him hereabouts, and I'll wait here, for I'm tired.'

No sooner said than done. The constable hoisted himself on to the lumbering 'bus, which went its dusty way up the village street.

Meanwhile I meditated, and wished I didn't feel so sleepy, and looked alternately at the wooded banks of the little river and the small, scattered woods and spinneys dotted here and there to the skyline.

It fell to the lot of Mr Clay to wake me up.

'Knocked about a bit—that gentleman 'as,' he said casually, extracting a clay pipe; 'an' *been* knocked about a bit before this, I should say. You don't 'appen to 'ave a fill o' baccy about you, I suppose, doctor?'

I did happen to have, and I handed over my pouch.

'Ah, you think so?' I said inattentively, with reference to his first remark.

'Think so!' Mr Clay loaded his pipe energetically. 'I'm a time-expired man, I am,' he explained. 'I know. Seven years with the colours, but no stripes—'cause o' prejudice.'

'Hard lines!' I said sympathetically. 'And how do you know?'

'Well, I s'pose you saw there was a mark o' an old tap on the 'ead when you shaved 'im. If you'd took 'is beard off too you'd ha' seen 'is chin was marked a bit. An' then 'is left 'and'—— Mr Clay stopped to light his pipe, and I did nothing to hurry him. Why should I? I had missed many things; but suddenly it dawned upon me what was coming now.

'"Is left 'and,' Mr Clay repeated, and then added something superfluous about a damp match.

'"Is—left—'and. You didn't see that, any more than you did the ring, 'cause it was shut. But 'is left 'and's been 'ashed about too.'

'The last joint of the little finger is bent,' I said softly, 'and there's a ragged scar across the palm, running up between the thumb and the first finger.'

Mr Clay took his pipe out of his mouth to have a good look at me.

'Well,' he said, 'after all, you ain't such a fool—I mean ter say I didn't think you'd 'ad the opportoonity o' noticin' these little things.' And after a short space of silent meditation for both of us he suddenly remembered his dinner, and departed to it.

I sat on the bridge parapet, and awaited the constable's return, because I had said I would, and because in any case the man whose substitute I had been had not returned, and no train to suit me would now be available until the next morning.

I sat and meditated, looking at my ring; and I am afraid that I did not show a proper amount of astonishment when the fat constable returned, quite speedily too, having commandeered a butcher's cart, and announced the Honourable Charles to be not at home.

I listened in silence to his suggestions and speculations. I cordially agreed that he should report the matter and get a search started. I did not, however, give any advice or active assistance; and I do not remember making any reference to my late conversation with the departed Mr Thomas Clay. It might have led to his being disturbed in his enjoyment of the 'chicken.'

In this no doubt I was utterly wrong. The Honourable Charles was quite obviously a public danger, and as a good citizen it was my bounden duty to get him collared, to work out his sentence incurred as a 'connoisseur;' for little more than a year of that had run. But I am a bit of a sentimentalist, a bit of a sportsman, and more than a little pig-headed. We had had two rounds, the Honourable Charles and I, and each time I had come off best, though only by luck. Well, if he liked we should have another. I would give him 'law' at any rate, in the sporting sense. I had a vision of the hunted man, more like a beast, hiding in the woods, half-dazed, more than half-starved, or slinking or swimming, otter-like, down the river.

That night, however, I had dreams of quiet, decent folk murdered in their beds, and the next morning—though it kept me another day and night in the village—I went to the police-station, and managed to convince the fat constable that he had all the time looked upon the Honourable Charles as a suspicious character, about whom he must make further inquiry.

Before the day was over I learnt, what I, wandering about, had heard nothing of before, that Mearns, *alias* Calthorne the connoisseur, had escaped from jail three months before.

They never caught, they never seemed near catching, either the Honourable Charles or that wicked Schnapps. Both vanished at once and altogether, and one imagines that that also had been part of the training. If by my eighteen hours' delay I was responsible for their escape, at least I paid for it later, as perhaps you will see.

With regard to the ring, after my parting with the Honourable Charles I gave that more serious consideration. Why should he want it? Why did he, only lately escaped from jail, risk recapture to get it? I began to believe (though even now I can't prove this) that Mrs Loftie and Mrs Short owed the honour of his acquaintance entirely to his desire for the ring. I thought of the matter now and again. I even had the ring valued. Ten pounds to fifteen might be paid, I was told, as a fancy price, by a collector of antiques. I didn't want to sell, of course, and for the time the matter ceased to have my attention. Still, I thought that the man must have had a stronger motive than the theft of a possible fifteen pounds; and later, as you will see, that was proved.

'As for Loftus,' I heard Mrs Loftie pointing out over the wall to Mrs Short just before I left, 'I don't know if that was his real name or not, an' I don't trouble myself about the folks neighbours may choose to take in without references, except that of course I like to be civil to everybody. But Honourable he wasn't by no manner of means. An' there's as much difference between Loftie an' Loftus as between Long an' Short; Loftus bein' likely come from a garret or loft, while Loftie, as every School Board child knows, means among the highest.'

## A SONG OF THE ROAD.

Birth of soft blossom and lilt of a song
From a bird's silver throat and a fluttering throng
Of delicate leaves round the trees in the sun—
April calls from the road,
'Spring has come! Spring has come!'

Wide blue world, lying still in the dawn,
Pale hills where the morning in silence was born,
With the sea and the light and the sunset and night,
Are to him of the road
His inherited right!

His youth and his hopes, he shall find them again
In the shout of the wind and the soft-fingered rain;
And his thoughts on the wings of the sun shall arise
Through the broad open ways
To the infinite skies!

The power that he lost, and the days that were gold,
Shall return in the silence, and legends long told
Will awaken and live, and at dawn he shall hear
The Songs of the Gods
In their might without fear!

The earth is awake! There's a call in the air!
Then up! Take the road! Slip your burden of care!
Remember your kin are the stars and the sun,
And the heart of the world
And your own heart are one!

Dorothy Fitzherbert.

## *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# SIMON SIMONIDES.

By J. MORTON LEWIS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

SLOWLY Simon put down his glass. 'I shall not taste wine again,' he said, 'until the rivers run red—red with the blood of the Turks who have fallen.'

It was the last eve of the vintage, and Mintos, the owner of the vineyard, was gathered with his labourers beneath the vines, following the final rites of the old superstition which was to bring success to the next year's labour.

The moon at its full shone upon the gardens with a white, almost unnatural, light. It shone upon the slopes of Mount Taygetos, which loomed up in the distance, and it shone also upon the figure of Simon Simonides; and Mintos, sitting next him, saw that his face was stern and his eyes gleamed fiercely.

'Tis a vain boast, Simon,' he said. He spoke slowly, tentatively, for there were already rumours that ere long the Greeks would rise and pay off the deep debt of blood they owed to the men who had made themselves masters of the land; and the wind whispering down the sides of Mount Taygetos, in sight of which he had spent his life, bore with it tidings that Simon Simonides would lead them—the Simon whom he had known as a boy, and loved as only one man can love another.

'Tis no idle boast, Mintos,' said Simon. 'I have sworn it, and there are others—for one, Pueblo the fisher—who have vowed neither to rest night nor day until the land is our own again; men who have suffered as I have suffered, and seen their womenfolk outraged before their eyes.' Simon covered his face with his hands, and for a moment there was silence.

Then he rose, calm and quiet, and the moon shining full upon his figure bestowed on it a grandeur that none had seen there before, though Simon was noted as the handsomest man in the Morea.

'To-night,' he said, 'we have seen a gathering in of the year's labours. In a few months there will be a greater vintage—none can say how soon—when the labour of years will find its just reward. From Larisse to Cerigo, from Arta to Navarina, they are arming; and when the time is ripe the nation will rise, and there will be no Turks left save those who float upon the waters of the sea and those who are given to the carrion.'

'It is what I have heard,' said Mintos; 'but it is like a dream—too good to be real. I have dreamed it myself in the long nights.'

'The other will be a dream from which there is no awakening,' answered Simon.

'But the guns, the swords? We cannot send an army into the field armed with scythes.'

'There will be no need to. There are guns and swords in Greece to arm every man upon the island. For a year we have been collecting them, and they are now in the safe keeping of the Church. In the vaults of the cathedral at Sparta there are ten thousand guns.'

Mintos expressed his astonishment. 'But Sparta is a large garrison town. There are ten thousand Turkish soldiers stationed there.'

'Thus a gun for every man,' Simon laughed. 'Dear Mintos, friend of my childhood, there are none so blind as those who live a life of luxury and ease, and 'twould be harder to deceive a mole than one cursed son of Islam. For a century we have been slaves, so we must be slaves for ever; for a century they have lived by our work, treated us as serfs, and our land is theirs—our womenfolk even; so in their pot-bellied indolence they think it will last for ever. But one night a beacon light will blaze, and every hilltop give its answering fire, and those fires will burn until Greece is free once more—free as she was a hundred years ago.'

'And the first beacon?'

Simon's eyes flashed. 'I shall light it from Mount Taygetos.'

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'You!'

'Yes; then I shall ride to Sparta to take command of the Grecian army, and I shall not rest until I have met a certain Turk—met him face to face, and avenged the honour of a woman.'

Mintos asked no questions, though one was in his mind. And Simon answered the train of his thoughts.

'That woman was my wife. You never knew her? No, and her name has never crossed my lips, but it has been often in my mind, and every time I think of her my hatred for the accursed race burns like an unquenchable fire until I think it must consume my soul.'

'Hate can so enter a man's mind that it will consume him body and soul,' said Mintos. He was an elderly, grave man, into whose heart lust for revenge could never enter. Men spoke of him as 'Mintos the good.'

'Not a hate that is holy, whose very seed is sown in honour,' replied Simon gravely. 'Listen. Natalia was of Thessaly, fairer than the morning sun. To know her was to love her, to see her once to worship the beauty of woman for ever. I met her, and we loved. My God, how we loved! And I brought her back to Kalamata my bride. For six months I lived the happiest life that a man could live with his wife. We adored one another. It was a heaven upon earth. Then business took me away to Missolongi for three months.'

Simon paused. 'There is a Turkish garrison in Kalamata. In those days it was under the command of one Abdul Melik. He met my wife, my Natalia, in the streets of Kalamata. He forced his attentions upon her, and in the end'—— Simon's voice broke.

And those who stood and watched him in the moonlight, the young men of the vineyard and Mintos, saw a shadow pass over his face, one which left him suddenly aged.

'She met me on the threshold on my return, and retreated when I would have gathered her to my arms. "Natalia," I said, "what means this?" A look of sadness came into her eyes. "I am not fit to touch you," she said. "I am defiled." Then she told me, standing in the shadow so that I might not see the anguish on her dear face, "I could not help it, Simon, dear Simon. I fought; but what is a defenceless woman against a strong man?" Then, before I could rush to her side and stay her hand, she had drawn a dagger and plunged it in her heart. As I knelt by her, her eyes were fast glazing, while her life's blood flowed and lay in a pool around my knees. "Simon," she said, "it was the only way. There was no other. Kiss me, dear, once."

'With her dying breath she pressed her lips to mine, and it was as if her fleeting soul passed from her lips into my body to join mine.' Simon beat his hand upon his heart. 'And it is there now, crying aloud for vengeance. When it was over, and I stood alone, I vowed I would not rest until I had led the men of Greece and won with them a free land, free as it was in the days of our forefathers. That was fifteen years ago, and for fifteen years my soul has cried aloud, but the day is at hand now. It will not be much longer delayed. A few months, and our beloved flag will fly upon the citadels of Sparta and Corinth and Athens.' Simon's voice became soft and low, and a look of deep longing came into his eyes. 'A few more months, my children; a few more months.'

There were a hundred men in the vineyard, for Mintos was wealthy and employed many hands, and amongst them were sons and nephews of his. They gathered around Simon, and the pale light shone upon the knives they had drawn.

'Simon,' they cried, 'you will take us with you, and we will fight for the spirit of your Natalia as if she had been our mother, for we too have wrongs to avenge!'

And Mintos, man of peace though he was, nodded his head approvingly. 'There are five sons of mine there, Simon,' he said; 'take them. I am too old to fight for our country myself, the marrow is stiff in my bones; but I give my sons to you willingly; and if they fall they could not fall in a better cause.'

'Greece will have need of all her sons,' replied Simon.

'And Abdul Melik?' asked the youngest of Mintos's sons, pressing nearer to Simon, in his boyish anxiety to learn more.

'He had left Kalamata when I returned. He went back to Turkey.'

'He came back to Greece as Governor of Athens.'

'Yes,' said Simon, 'he will lead the Turkish army when the day comes, and, may it please God, I shall command the Greeks.'

From that moment a silence fell upon those in the vineyard, and they stood together in groups, conversing in low tones. A new hope, a new ideal, had sprung into their hearts, an ideal woven from the tales their grandfolk had told them, and with it a hot revival of the hatred they bore towards the men who had made themselves masters of Greece.

Apart from the others sat Simon and Mintos.

'I have often wondered,' said Mintos, 'of your wife. I knew you had married; but that was all, and I waited until you should think fit to tell me.'

Simon drew deep at his chibouk. 'It has kept the better in silence, Mintos. For it has eaten into my soul, which will know no rest until every Turk is driven from our land.'

'Then it is well for Greece,' said Mintos. 'But there are other things that I would speak to you about. I am too old to fight, but I will give my sons, and the vineyard has been prosperous. You will want money, Simon.'

'For myself I want only a change of raiment, a gun, a mule, and the wherewithal for the day. And that I always have,' answered the man, who

had given his all to his country; 'but the cause is poorly off. There are men who will not fight unless they are paid. They are not patriots, but Greece has need of every arm.' He rose. 'And now I start for Kalamata.'

'To-night?' said Mintos.

'It is safer. Rumours have reached the ears of the Turks of the impending insurrection, and a price is on my head.'

'You are an outlaw?'

Simon smiled. 'Yes, Mintos,' he replied, 'an outlaw in my own country. So it is safer that I travel by night.'

Mintos looked towards the group of young fellows.

'Talus!' he called.

One separated himself from the rest and came towards his father.

'Simon is going to Kalamata,' he said, 'and it is safer for two men to travel than one, so you will go with him. See that two mules and provisions are got ready for the journey.'

Talus, his second son, tall and dark as his father had been in his younger days, bowed, and the light of adventure shone in his eyes.

'Thou art lucky,' said one of his brothers, overhearing the conversation; ''tis always to you the good things come.'

Simon watched the youth walk away. 'They are fine fellows, your sons,' he said. 'With ten thousand such I would free Greece before the harvest.'

Within the hour the mules were saddled, and Simon and his companion started on their journey. Their road lay along the north-west slope of Mount Taygetos, showing up a dark-green in the moonlight, the rays of which, reflected on the small white houses, picked them out like flocks of sheep dotted upon the hillside.

A soft wind was blowing inland from the bay. From somewhere in the distance came the melodious tinkle of a cow-bell. Over all rested calm and peace.

For a moment, as if by mutual consent, the two paused and looked up the hill.

'And in a few days, hours perhaps,' said Simon, 'I shall light a beacon on that hill which will plunge the whole country in war.'

''Twill be a good thing,' said Talus, who was young, with the enthusiasm of youth bounding unchecked through his veins.

''Twill be a good thing when it is all over and the country free, for there will be much blood shed.'

They had left the slopes of Mount Taygetos to the east, and were riding along the main road to Kalamata. A few miles farther on it led through a thick wood.

'Tell me more about it, Uncle Simon,' said Talus. The sons of Mintos all spoke of him as uncle, though he bore them no relationship.

As the miles passed, Simon told him the story, or such of it as he deemed wise for a young pair of ears to hear.

When he had finished they were plunged deep in the wood, and the shadows of the trees lay across their path. Suddenly Simon stopped and checked his companion's mule with a hand upon the rein.

'What is it, Uncle Simon?' asked Talus.

Simon listened intently for a moment, and then unslung his gun from across his shoulder.

His quick ears, trained to woodcraft, had heard something unnoticed by his companion—the sound of approaching footsteps.

A few moments and a voice hailed them in Turkish.

'Keep silent!' whispered Simon.

Hearing no response, the voice hailed them again, and then within a few yards of them a shot rang out. Simon saw a flash illuminating a bush, and behind it the face and uniform of a Turk. He felt the bullet sing past his head.

'It is awkward firing in the dark,' he said, and raised his gun to take aim.

Talus watched him and saw the flash, a strange exhilaration in his heart. He had shot at birds and deer and foxes, but here was higher game. There was much of the primitive savage in Talus.

In a couple of minutes Simon was kneeling beside the body of the man he had killed. 'So, Talus,' he said to the youth standing by his side, 'is the first shot fired.'

'Ugh!' said Talus, looking at the face of the dead man, 'what an ugly brute!'

Simon lifted the body and carried it to a ditch, where he laid it, and covered it with some brushwood; while Talus looked on in astonishment, wondering at the loss of time.

'Though he is our enemy, we will save him from the carrion. They are plentiful here, for they are wise birds.'

Daybreak saw them still fifteen miles from Kalamata, at the foot of a hill.

Simon guided his mule up a path which led to the summit. 'We will rest here until nightfall,' he said. 'I know an eyrie where we can rest, and we have plenty of food.'

'You will not travel during the day?' asked Talus.

'No,' answered Simon; 'it would not be safe. I am a patriot, therefore an outlaw.'

Talus smiled. 'There will be plenty of outlaws in Greece in a few months,' he said.

Simon led the way to a small plateau almost on the summit, which commanded a view of the country for miles, while itself lay hidden by a dense growth of bushes.

'You had better eat,' said Simon.

Talus flung himself on the ground and curled around like some great dog. 'I am too tired to eat, Uncle Simon,' he said, closing his eyes.

Simon watched him for a moment. He loved the

sons of Mintos as if they had been his own and Natalia's.

Then his gaze wandered to the country at their feet: the wood in which the Turk lay dead; the green fields, broken by trees and shrubs, stretching into the distance. The sun was hot, and a deep haze had risen on the horizon. He stood looking at it, for in that haze lay Kalamata and the home to which he had brought Natalia.

'The day is very near now, dear one,' he said, and turned away.

It was long past midday before Talus awoke; then he rose and shook himself. 'I am hungry now, Uncle Simon,' he said; 'hungry as if I had not tasted meat for a week. I will unpack the food.'

When the meal was finished, Simon lay down on the grass and loaded his chibouk.

'I should sleep, uncle,' said Talus, 'if we are to travel through the night.'

But sleep was far from the Greek's mind. His thoughts were dwelling in Kalamata, as he had dwelt there fifteen years before. A soft look was in his eyes which suddenly turned to one of fury.

'There is no sleep for me yet awhile, little one,' he said.

At sunset they continued their journey to Kalamata. Leading the mules down the slope, they mounted at the foot and joined the main road.

It was midnight when they reached the first straggling houses of Kalamata, and as they rode down a hill into the town itself the full moon shone upon the white houses, making the way almost as light as day. Beyond, the waters of the bay rippled and shone, a thousand broken reflections on their bosom. Moored against the quay lay some half a dozen vessels, traders from Corinth and Pyrgos, and by their side smaller fishing-boats.

On the outskirts, Simon led the mules on to some pasture-land and hobbled them, he and Talus continuing on foot.

He led the way through the centre of the town, past the jail and barracks, the former filled with Greek peasants, then past the market-place to the northern portion of the town.

'You are going to your old home, uncle?' said Talus.

'Yes, little one, and I have not been there for five years.'

It stood, a small white house, on a promontory overlooking the bay itself. In the rear was a small vineyard. From the ground in front a flight of rudely cut steps led down to the edge of the water.

'It was there I kept my boat, and Natalia and I used to go sailing nearly every night.'

Talus spoke no word, but followed his uncle up the grass-grown path to the door; the latch was broken, and it opened easily to their touch. A musty smell came out to meet them.

'Phew!' said Talus through clenched teeth.

'It has not been lived in for—fifteen years,' said Simon.

He led the way into a room on the left of the door.

'You heard the tale I told,' he said.

'Yes,' said Talus.

'This is where my wife told it to me.' He pointed to the corner. 'That is where she stood—there where she fell.' He crossed the room, and gazed upon the floor. 'And there still remain through all the years the stains of her life's blood.'

Then he left the room again and passed into the street, Talus following him.

Outside he paused, and looked at it for a moment. 'Perhaps I shall never see it again. If I do, it will not be until Greece is free, then I shall come back here and dwell by the waters of the old bay, where we went fishing together. I could live here in happiness, knowing she was avenged.'

In forty-eight hours they had passed the foot of Mount Taygetos, and by nightfall had returned to the vineyard.

'Mintos,' said Simon, 'you have a horse you could spare me?'

'You do not start again to-night. You have not rested, and there is food awaiting you.'

'I need no food save the memory of that home I saw forty-eight hours ago; and rest—I shall not rest until I have lighted the beacon which shall flare the news of Greece's freedom to the sky.'

'You will not go alone?' Mintos looked in the direction of Talus.

'It is better. I shall go into places where it is safer for one man to travel than two.'

He beckoned to Talus. 'Little one, you have asked me if you can help. One day, a messenger will come to you from me. I cannot tell you the hour, for I know not myself. But he will bring a sprig of brushwood. Then go to the topmost summit of Mount Taygetos and kindle me a bonfire—one that shall be seen from Messeni on the west and at Megalopolis upon the north, and together we will light it.' Simon's eyes flashed. The thought was food and wine to him.

As he stood at the entrance to Mintos's vineyard the young men came to bid him farewell.

'And you will come for us, oh Simon?' they said.

Seated in the saddle, he looked at the fivescore gathered around him in the gloom. 'Greece will have need of all her sons,' he said.

And they watched him ride away towards the north until the darkness swallowed him, and he was lost to sight.

'He is a great man!' said Mintos. 'One day he may be king of Greece, for there is royal blood running in his veins.'

*(To be continued.)*

# THE ROMANCE OF EXTRADITION.

By A Solicitor.

NO criminal records afford at all the same fascinating reading as the annals of the Extradition Courts. They form not only a study of absorbing interest in the ways, methods, and varying characteristics of the world's greatest criminals, but shed a most interesting light on the manifold points of view from which crime is regarded by different nationalities and races.

During the past fifteen years this country has entered into nearly fifty extradition treaties with as many States, so that the fugitive criminal to-day can find practically no part of the civilised world where he is not liable to be surrendered to the State whose laws he has violated. The modern fugitive from justice, however, knows that an extradition treaty, carefully worded as it may be, is capable, as a rule, of several interpretations, and in this lies his hope of escape.

For the enlightenment of the general reader, it may be well to explain before going further what an extradition treaty means. Briefly, an extradition treaty is an agreement between two States to surrender to each other criminals who have fled from one State to the other. The offences for which they are to be surrendered must be clearly defined in the treaty, and it is a strict point of international law that no crime which is not an offence against the laws of both States is to be named in the treaty. Furthermore, when a fugitive criminal is surrendered, the State demanding his extradition must undertake that he will not be tried in his own country for any offence other than that named in the extradition warrant without being set at liberty and given an opportunity to become a fugitive again. Political offences must never, by the way, be included in extradition treaties, a point of international law that is most jealously observed by every important Power in Europe.

A State demands the extradition of a fugitive criminal through its diplomatic representative. In this country the demand is always made to the Foreign Office, which in turn communicates with the Home Secretary, by whom the warrant for arrest is issued. The extradition proceedings are always carried on before the chief magistrate at Bow Street, with whom it rests to decide whether the prisoner is to be surrendered or set free. If the evidence offered by the demanding State is sufficient, in the magistrate's opinion, to show that the prisoner is the man named in the warrant, that he is presumably guilty of the offence charged against him, and that it is of an extraditable character, the prisoner is generally surrendered. Once his extradition is refused, the prisoner is a free man, and can defy his pursuers, at all events, as long as he remains in this country.

The following example will show how a clever solicitor, well versed in the intricacies of international law, may secure the refusal of a fugitive criminal's extradition. A young man named Arton fled to London some years ago from New York, where he had been employed as a cashier in a bank. The charge against him was that of falsifying the bank's books and embezzling money, and shortly after his arrival in London he was arrested. In the demand issued by the United States police for his extradition the offence he was charged with was termed forgery. Now, though falsifying books is so described in American law, it is not known by that term in English law, and Arton's solicitor successfully maintained that his client could not be extradited for an offence which he had not committed. Arton left the dock a free man, smiling defiance at the two representatives of the American police, who stood near, ready to take him in charge.

The very same defence was raised by Whitaker Wright's solicitor in New York during the extradition proceedings consequent on the demand of the English Foreign Office for his surrender when he fled to America to avoid arrest. That was one of the most memorable fights ever waged in an Extradition Court, and it very nearly resulted in the refusal of the United States to grant the prisoner's surrender. A warrant was issued for Whitaker Wright's arrest on the 16th March 1903 by the United States Commissioner for the South District of New York. On the 19th he was arrested, his extradition being granted by the Commissioner. Wright, however, could not be surrendered for fifteen days later; and during that period his solicitor raised the question of the legality of the extradition, maintaining that the actual crime of which he was accused by the English police in his capacity as a director of companies was not an offence against the laws of the United States, which in point of fact was true. The case was tried before Mr Justice Fuller of the Circuit Court. The defence, of course, was based entirely on a technical point. Fraud is a crime in the United States, just as much as it is here; but it is differently described in the laws of each country, and in this difference in the description of the offence lay Wright's hope of escape. For three days the fight over these verbal differences was fiercely waged. On the fourth day it was announced that the English Foreign Office was prepared to withdraw the demand for Wright's extradition, which meant, of course, that a fresh demand made to conform verbally with the requirements of American law would be issued. This closed the case for Wright, and it was generally expected that his extradition would

be refused. The judge of the Circuit Court, however, declared that extradition having been granted by the Southern Commissioner of New York, Wright stood extradited. The only question was the legality of the extradition proceedings; and, though the crime of which Wright was accused by the English police was not described as it would be in America, the offence was for practical purposes the same, and he, therefore, confirmed the Commissioner's decision, and so Wright's last hope of escape vanished, and he was delivered into the hands of the English police.

Our refusal to grant the extradition of a notorious smuggler named Laurence to the United States some years ago was based on very different grounds, though for the time being it caused considerable ill-feeling between the American Government and ourselves. Laurence's extradition was demanded by the United States police for theft. The theft was admitted by Laurence; but he had committed the offence several years before he left the States, during which period he could easily have been arrested; but the fact was that he had refunded the money he had stolen, and no step had ever been taken to prosecute him. This was Laurence's story, which might or might not have been true. On the strength of such a story, unsupported by any evidence of its truth, his extradition would certainly not have been refused; but Laurence confessed to having been engaged in extensive smuggling transactions in America for years, out of which he had amassed a big fortune. The latter part of this story, at any rate, was probably true, to judge by the manner in which Laurence lived, and he possessed a great deal of documentary evidence to show that he had been engaged in many smuggling transactions. Now, smuggling is not an extraditable offence, and according to Laurence's story it was for smuggling he was wanted in the United States. This also seemed probable. Laurence was, by his own confession, a thief and a smuggler, and not, therefore, a very desirable person to harbour; but, whatever his offence might be, he could not be surrendered for an offence which was not of an extraditable character, and it became the duty of our Foreign Office to see that the terms of the extradition treaty between us and America were strictly observed. Laurence's extradition was, therefore, granted on the charge of theft, on the condition that he would not be tried for any other offence in his own country without being given the opportunity of becoming a fugitive again. The United States flatly refused to agree to this condition; whereupon we refused to surrender Laurence. A long correspondence ensued between the United States and our Foreign Office on the subject, and at length the former agreed to withdraw their demand for Laurence's surrender, who was then promptly released from jail, where he had been confined for nearly two months, for extradition prisoners at that time were not admitted to bail.

In extradition treaties the term 'fugitive criminal' includes a person guilty of instigating a crime in a foreign country, though he may never have been in it; such a person can be extradited from his own country, and tried for his offence in the country where he instigated the crime. Some extraordinary cases of this character have occurred, but the extradition of such a criminal is generally attended with great difficulty. A noted European criminal named Alferri, a Spaniard, for years defied the English and continental police from his safe quarters in Madrid, from which he could not be extradited; for although the Spanish Government is in extradition treaties with other States, the former usually decline to surrender their own subjects, though we in common with other Powers surrender our subjects to them.

Alferri was a most remarkable man, and possessed marvellous powers of organisation. He engineered forgeries and robberies in all parts of Europe, from which he amassed a huge fortune, whilst his agents and dupes were left to suffer for the crimes of which their master was the main instigator. Some years ago a series of frauds were perpetrated in London on a number of City firms by means of ingeniously forged bills drawn on a firm of Paris bill-brokers. Two Italians named Lapsi were arrested in connection with these frauds, and in the house where they lived were discovered a number of letters from Alferri, giving explicit directions how the bills were to be discounted. There was little or no doubt that the signature of the Paris firm of bill-brokers on the bills was forged by Alferri. The Lapsis raised four thousand pounds on these bills, every penny of which was remitted to their employer in Madrid. The Lapsis were sentenced to a short term of imprisonment, and were then deported. In the meanwhile, our Foreign Office made every effort to secure the extradition of Alferri from Madrid, but without effect. Like attempts had been made by Germany, France, and Italy, where Alferri had been conducting extensive operations; but the extradition of this remarkable criminal was always declined. Beyond doubt he had the Spanish police in his pay, who always opposed his extradition, and Alferri took care never to operate in his own country. One night he was found stabbed through the heart on his own doorstep; and sticking to the dagger found by his side was a piece of paper on which was written, 'Brought to justice by one of his victims.' The murderer was never discovered; probably the Spanish Government did not take any great trouble to find him, for no doubt they were glad to be rid of so dangerous and troublesome a character as Alferri, who was constantly bringing them into conflict with other States.

A very similar kind of criminal was a man named Bruge, who lived in Berlin, and was the instigator of a number of extensive frauds on banks in different parts of Europe and America. His most remarkable fraud was on the Bank of Russia,

from which he obtained an advance of five thousand pounds under false pretences. His agent in St Petersburg carried the transaction through, the money being raised on the strength of a contract from the French Government for the supply of cloth for soldiers' tunics, which Bruge made out he had obtained. The agent who conducted the transaction immediately disappeared, and it was not until some months later that the fraud was discovered. The Russian Government at once applied to Germany for Bruge's extradition. Bruge's defence was remarkable—he simply denied all knowledge of the transaction. Writing experts differed as to whether a letter—the chief bit of evidence against Bruge—produced by the Bank of Russia was written by Bruge, and ultimately his extradition was refused. Almost at the same time applications for Bruge's extradition were made by the American and Italian Governments, and in each case Bruge managed to secure the refusal of his surrender by the German Government. But, clever as Bruge was, an Italian banker whom he had been the means of defrauding was his match. Two years later Bruge was induced to leave Berlin to visit a man at Rome who had promised to put him on to 'a good piece of business.' The letter conveying this promise was written by one of Bruge's agents, who had been discovered by the Italian banker, and bribed by him to induce his employer to come to Rome. On his arrival at Rome, Bruge was promptly arrested and ultimately sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

No State grants the extradition of any fugitive political offender, and so the nation which is anxious to capture such a person invariably seeks his extradition for some other crime; a ruse, however, that is rarely or never successful in securing the extradition of a fugitive political offender from England, although it is on the Continent, for reasons which will be explained later.

A dramatic scene occurred at Bow Street, a few years back, when a pale, aristocratic-looking foreigner was put into the dock. His extradition was sought by the Russian police on a charge of assault and robbery in Moscow. The prisoner could not speak a word of English, but the proceedings were fully explained to him by an interpreter. The prisoner explained in a few short sentences that he had assaulted a man in Moscow, who had previously stolen some of his papers, and, knowing the man had the papers on him, had committed the assault in order to get them back. The explanation was not deemed satisfactory, and the warrant for the extradition of the young Russian was about to be granted, when a tall, handsome, well-dressed woman rushed into the court, accompanied by a solicitor. The latter hastily explained to the magistrate that he had conclusive evidence that the prisoner was wanted by the Russian police for a political offence, and demanded that the case should be adjourned for further inquiry. When the prisoner saw the woman he fainted in the dock, and the case was adjourned. Ultimately, the extradition of the young Russian was refused on the evidence of his wife, who had escaped from a Siberian prison, and after enduring terrible privations and hardships made her way to London in time to save her husband, whom she had not seen for three years, from the sufferings which she had herself endured.

The only offence of a political character which all civilised Powers have agreed to make extraditable is an act of anarchy, and when the evidence is sufficient to justify a reasonable suspicion that the fugitive whose extradition is demanded is an anarchist our Government always surrenders him to his own country. Continental States surrender fugitive political offenders far more readily than we, for the simple reason that such offenders are a much greater source of terror on the Continent than they are in this country, and continental Governments are only too anxious to get rid of them.

Often the extradition proceedings at Bow Street lift the curtain for a moment on a most extraordinary career of crime, though it attracts but little public attention. Where the case against the prisoner is absolutely clear the extradition proceedings are very short, and he disappears from the dock at Bow Street to answer for his crimes in the country whose laws he has outraged. Quite recently, for example, a gentleman who had been living in a luxurious flat in Knightsbridge was arrested on an extradition warrant at the demand of the Russian Government. The proceedings at Bow Street were very brief. The charge against the prisoner revealed a remarkable career of crime. The man had occupied a post of considerable importance in the Russian secret police service for several years. He got into financial difficulties, and then began to blackmail persons of position and wealth, from whom, under the most cruel threats, he had extracted large sums of money. He married the daughter of a wealthy Russian nobleman, the latter's consent to the marriage being obtained by threats on the part of the prisoner to involve him in utter ruin if the marriage did not take place. For seven years the prisoner had lived on blackmail, and then came the end. A Russian merchant laid an information against the dreaded official of the secret police, and the result was the arrest of the man at his flat in Knightsbridge, where he was living in the greatest luxury. So he vanished from the dock at Bow Street in the grip of the Russian police, to meet himself the terrible fate which he had for years threatened to bring on the unhappy victims of his greed and cowardice.

In spite of the fact that extradition treaties are now in existence between practically all civilised States, large and small, the number of fugitive criminals to be found in all the big cities of the world is increasing. This is due to the fact that the lesser States—now that extradition treaties exist between them and the Great Powers—no

longer afford a safe asylum for the fugitive from justice, who consequently flees to some big city, where he trusts to good fortune to escape capture or surrender to his pursuers. Roughly, about 20 per cent. of criminals in this country become fugitives seeking refuge chiefly in New York, Paris, and Berlin. About half are extradited and brought to justice. The difficulties and expense in connection with the arrest of a criminal on an extradition warrant are enormous; under favourable circumstances—that is, where no unexpected hitch or difficulty crops up during the extradition proceedings—it costs this country about two hundred pounds to extradite a criminal from New York, and about fifty pounds less from Paris or Berlin. But where the criminal raises a plausible defence against being surrendered, as he often is able to do, it may add hundreds of pounds to the expense of securing his extradition, and in such cases, unless his crime is of a very serious character, such as murder or fraud on a big scale, it often saves time and money to drop the demand for his surrender. When fleeing from justice, the professional criminal takes all these circumstances into calculation, and he can safely reckon that if he can once get out of this country the chances often are that he will be able to avoid arrest. His whereabouts may be known quite well to the English police; but they also may know of many circumstances which would render his extradition a matter of great difficulty and expense, and so the matter is allowed quietly to drop by Scotland Yard after the usual formal inquiries have been made. But let that criminal put his foot in this country again and he will find that Scotland Yard has a remarkably retentive and awkward memory concerning his doings in the past, for which he will most undoubtedly be called upon to answer in the prisoner's dock.

# LAURISTONS.

## CHAPTER LXIII.—HOW THE GREAT GAME WAS WON, AND THE PRICE OF IT.

By JOHN OXENHAM,
Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, Giant Circumstance, John of Gerisau, Great-Heart Gillian*, &c.

IT would need a very great financier, and more details than space permits, to tell all that happened on 'Change that day. Crowds of anxious speculators hung round Lauriston's pillar. They saw old John Sax come in and hand a line of writing to Sir Charles, and from the look on John Sax's face some of them drew their own inferences, and acted on them, to their subsequent regret.

The whole campaign had been most carefully planned by Sir Charles and John Sax to meet either eventuality. Ardently as they hoped for the defeat of Bonaparte from the patriotic point of view, from the purely financial standpoint success or defeat was one to them so long as their information was precise and early. The moment the news came to hand a word sufficed to set their widespread agencies in motion, and through them sub-agencies and sub-sub-agencies to the *n*th degree; so that very many, perhaps most, of those engaged in the execution of their plans had not the remotest idea for whom they were really working or with what object.

I do not for one moment hold up Stock Exchange finance as a great and noble thing. It is a fact, however, and direful circumstance had made it the one available factor in Charles Lauriston's long, grim fight against the desperate odds of his inheritance. If happier fate had willed it that that fight should end for him on the field of Waterloo he would have been a very grateful man, and would have met death with a clean heart and a smiling face. It had, perhaps, needed greater courage, and of a grimmer type, to walk steadily and unflinchingly the gloomy road allotted to him, with the rope of the gallows ever dangling above his head, and disaster and dishonour crouching in the shadows of the narrow way. And this day was his—inglorious—Waterloo, and with all the forces fate had given him he fought for liberty and redemption. A bold campaign now, with every available pawn pushed into the game and turned to uttermost account, and to-morrow, or the next day, with a grateful, humble heart he might be able to lay aside for ever the tarnished weapons of the strife, and once more meet the clear eyes of those he loved without that pain at the heart that had never left him since the fight began. His Waterloo too—though he did not know it, nor even its very name—in the tale of loss that should dim the sense of victory.

That day on 'Change was long remembered. Rumour's many tongues multiplied manifold. Rumours of British defeats and Prussian defeats. No one knew what to believe. Every one ended by believing nothing.

If Sir Charles and John Sax had stood by their pillar and proclaimed the truth, as they alone knew it, their pronouncement would by most—in spite even of the acknowledged inflexible honesty of all their dealings—have been looked upon that day simply as a Stock Exchange device. But not by one single word or look—save such as even John Sax's sternly schooled face could not entirely hide—did they seek to mislead the market. Their well-considered plans were carried out to their fullest, quietly, underground, showing no traces, and without deviation even when the general opinion of the community was against them.

Nothing more than a brief word now and again passed between them, until they met in the private office at the bank when that great day's work was done, and all the clerks had gone home. Then, with a sigh of relief that came from the depths of his soul, Sir Charles sank into his chair and looked wearily across at John Sax.

'Now, John, speak! Tell me all the news.'

'He watched the fight from a church-tower. All yesterday afternoon Bonaparte was flinging his men against the British squares, and they stood firm. He threw the Guard at them, and the Guard broke. Then Wellington swept up the field with the bayonet, and Bonaparte bolted. John followed to a point where he could see the rout. He saw the Duke come quietly back by himself, and then he came straight here. I sent him home to bed. He'd been on the go for three days.'

'Good lad! Lauristons never forget. How will this leave us?'

'We shall come out clear and to spare, Sir Charles. We are in at the lowest. A rise of three will wipe out all the past. Anything above three will be to the good. Thank God, we shall be free men again!'

'Amen to that, John! To be free, and to lie down and rest. And to be able to look honest men in the face.'

'We've always done that,' said John Sax sturdily, and eyed him with sudden keen anxiety. 'We've fought a great fight, and harmed no man.'

'By God's good mercy.'

'Surely! The only ones who have suffered have been ourselves.'

'And we have paid, John, you and I. And that is as it should be. He who breaks pays, whether it be God's law or man's. And we have paid—prices that no man will ever know. And now, thank God, it is over! Thank God, it is over! But it never would have come out so, John Sax, but for young John and you. As soon as we have cleaned all up you and John must come in—with Charlie—and Lauristons will take a new lease of life—a new lease—you, and little Jack, and Charlie'—— and suddenly he sank forward over the table, and John Sax sprang to his assistance. The overstrung bow had given way at last.

'Better so,' thought old John, as he raised the limp head and let him slip gently to the floor. 'Better to break with joy than with grief.'

He loosened Sir Charles's neckcloth and stepped outside and called to the porter, who lived on the premises, and had been there almost half as long as himself.

'Jenicot, quick! Sir Charles has swooned—overworked his strength to-day. Get the first doctor you can find. Send me a hackney coach. Then go on to Dr Berkeley. You know where he lives—in Arlington Street. Beg him to go to Grosvenor Place at once. And, Jenicot, not a word of this to any one else! You understand!'

Then he went back to Sir Charles with a rigidly set face, for he could not but fear that this might prove more than a swoon, and he could not but remember how Sir George had been stricken down in just the same way. Often he had wondered how they two had borne the strain of those awful years. He moistened the pale lips with cognac and water, and waited anxiously for the doctor. The time seemed horribly long, but at last a tap on the outer door took him to it in haste.

'He's been at too high pressure to-day,' he said, as the doctor bent over his patient.

'Hand me that basin. I will take a little blood. It will relieve him. The sooner you get him home the better.'

'I told the man to send a hackney-coach. That's it at the door now. How soon can we move him?'

'That is relieving the pressure,' as the red blood trickled into the basin and the heavy eyelids flickered. 'Just moisten his lips with that water. That's better.'

And presently Sir Charles struggled up on to one elbow and looked at them uncomprehendingly.

'What is it? Where's Charlie?'

'We're going to take you home, Sir Charles,' said John Sax soothingly, though there was a grim fear at his heart. 'Do you feel able for it yet?'

'Able for what? I'm all right,' and he tried to get up, but sank back.

They raised him between them and got him into the coach.

'Go first,' said John Sax to the driver, 'to No. 9 Queen Street.'

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### CHAPTER LXIV.—HOW JACK TOOK THE NEWS TO MAVIE.

JACK had had six hours' sound sleep in his own bed when he was wakened by a peremptory knock on the door downstairs. Some knocks carry with them a conviction of their import. He was accustomed to sudden calls and to instant action. He was half-dressed by the time his grandfather came into his room.

'That's right, my boy! Sir Charles broke down in the office—swooned. We had a tremendous day on 'Change—crowded and hot, and high-pressure all the time. I am taking him home in a coach. I want you to run on ahead and prepare Miss Lauriston. Dr Berkeley may be there. I sent Jenicot for him. And, John, if you get the chance, better break the other news to her too. The one will lessen the other.'

'Does Sir Charles know?'

'No. I had no chance. Better so, perhaps. We'll see what Berkeley says. Go as quick as you can. We follow slowly.'

Jack finished dressing and went down the narrow stairs four at a time. He went to the door of the coach, but Sir Charles was lying back in the corner, very still and white, and took no notice of him, and he sped away on his gloomy errand.

Simmonds opened the door to him, and was about to give him hearty greeting as usual, when something in Jack's face stopped it.

'I want to see Miss Lauriston at once, Simmonds.'

'Yes, Mr John. Will you come in, sir? No bad news, I hope?'

But Jack had no time for words. He shook his head impatiently. The coach might appear at any moment, and he must prepare Mavie. He knew the ways of the house. 'If Miss Mavie is in the library I think you'd better take me to her at once, Simmonds.'

'Yes, Mr John, she's waiting there for Sir Charles. He's later than usual to-night.' He knocked gently on the library door and announced, 'Mr John Sax, ma'am.'

And Mavie jumped up from her book with a sudden colour of apprehension in her face, for when one is expecting one's father, and one's father's right-hand man comes in his place one's fears leap from their hiding-places. At sight of Jack, however, her fears gave place to joyous expectation. There was a new light in her face as she ran towards him with welcoming hands—partly the swing-back from sudden fear to sudden joy, partly sheer delight at seeing him again.

He thought he had never seen her look so beautiful. He knew he had never seen any one in the world to compare with her. And her welcome was so much more than kind; but he did not know what hidden fears on her father's account she had carefully kept in check all these years, and how small a thing it took to loose them, and what a relief it was to see him instead of his grandfather.

And she, as she came towards him, could not but think what a fine, handsome fellow he had grown into. His face, she noted, was leaner and sterner than ever. His honest eyes had blazed at sight of her. He carried himself as one accustomed to mixing familiarly with the highest. All this in a glance from either side.

'Oh Jack, how you startled me!' she cried, as he took her hands and held them for a moment. 'I thought it was your grandfather, and that would have meant'—— And from his look she saw instantly that this meant the same. 'Jack! what is it?' And he felt her tremble.

'Your father had a swoon in the office, Mavie. They had a big day in the City, and he was overdone. He is coming in a coach, and I was sent to tell you.'

'A swoon! Oh Jack, tell me! Is he dead?'

'No, dear'—it slipped out unconsciously. Her face had gone so white, and she looked so woe-begone of a sudden. And down in his heart was the thought that if any ill came to Sir Charles she would be utterly desolate and alone in the world. 'I saw him in the coach, and he looked white and spent, but nothing more. We feared you would think it worse than it is, that is why I came.'

'It was good of you. I must tell Hepsy. Please wait. I want all your news.' And she sped away to warn Mrs MacClootie and make preparations.

There came a hasty knock on the outer door; and Jack, expecting the coach and its burden, went out to meet it.

'Well, Simmonds, what's all this?' said Dr Berkeley's cheerful voice.—'Hello, John Sax!' as he caught sight of him at the library door, 'what upsetting news have you been bringing? Where is Sir Charles?'

'They're bringing him in a coach, doctor. I came to warn Miss Mavie. He had a swoon in the office—too high pressure to-day in the City.'

'A swoon!' He looked a trifle doubtful and anxious, while Simmonds looked scared and went to the steps and looked out along the street. 'A swoon is no great thing—if it's only a swoon. But Sir Charles is not of the swooning kind.'

He had gone into the library, followed by Jack.

'Now,' said Berkeley sharply, 'what is it all about? Do you bring ill news?'

'The best and the worst, doctor; but you must keep it to yourself.' Berkeley made a quick gesture at so unnecessary a hint to him. 'Bonaparte is beaten into rags—utterly routed and in flight. And—and—Charles is dead.'

'Good God! You are quite sure, John Sax?'

'I was riding back across the field when Wellington had swept the Frenchmen off it, and came upon his body. A sabre-cut had cleft his neck. His head was almost off.'

'Does Sir Charles know?' asked Berkeley quickly.

'No.'

'And Mavie—Miss Lauriston?'

'No, I had not time. Shall I tell her?'

'I must see Sir Charles first. If matters are serious with him—yes, tell her. The one may help the other. His father went like this, you know. It may be, probably is, worse than they think.'

And then the coach came slowly to the door, and they went out to meet it.

## CHAPTER LXV.—HOW SORROW BROKE THE SEALS.

JACK had helped them to carry Sir Charles to his bed, Mavie and Hepsy hovering, white-faced and tremulous, on the skirts of the crowd. Then he had gone back to the library, eager to see Mavie again, but somewhat fearful lest she should come in demanding his news before he knew what to do.

Berkeley and his grandfather, however, fortunately came in first.

'An absolute breakdown, John Sax,' the doctor said, as soon as he was inside the door. 'Very like his father's, only less severe. It will be a matter of weeks, perhaps months. He has been working at too great a strain. Why can't you business men exercise as much common-sense about your bodies as you do about your affairs?'—And turning to Jack, 'Better break your other news to Miss Lauriston, and get it all over at once. I will send her down shortly.'

'You consider it serious, then?' asked old John.

'Most serious; but he will get over it with care, though I doubt if he'll ever be the man he was. I will send in a nurse. He will be off his head—might even be violent at times.'

Old John looked anxious and thoughtful. 'We don't need any outside assistance, doctor,' he said. 'Mistress MacClootie and Miss Mavie and John here can do all that is needed, I should say.'

'Yes, I should say so, and will give him better attention than any paid help. Very well. Now I must go up again.'

'And I must get back,' said old John. 'This has come at a bad time. We have our hands full.'

'I'm sure!' said Berkeley. 'He's had his too full, I should say.—You will wait here, then, John Sax,' to Jack, 'and I will send Miss Lauriston down presently.'

Jack wandered restlessly about the room, which he knew so well, and where they had so often all played together. He looked at the pictures, which he knew by heart. He looked at the backs of the familiar books. He heard Charlie's merry laugh and Etienne's querulous complaints; and now——

Mavie came quietly in. Her face was pale and troubled.

'Jack, is it very bad do you think? What did Dr Berkeley say to you? He said very little upstairs, but from his face'——

'He said Sir Charles had been overworking, Mavie, and that it would take time and very careful nursing. I did not gather that it was necessarily dangerous. But he may be off his head at times, and they suggest that I take a hand in the nursing, if you will permit it?'

'Oh Jack, of course. We shall be only too glad of your help. Now tell me what news did you bring, and when did you get home?'

'At midday; and my news was the best possible—and'—looking meaningly at her—'the worst possible.'

She caught her breath and looked anxiously at him, and he hurried on. 'Bonaparte was utterly beaten, and in flight when I came away. But the list of killed and wounded must be dreadful. They were fighting fiercely the whole day—for the peace of the world. If Bonaparte had won, you see, it meant'——

'Is it Charlie?' with a hand wandering up towards her throat, as though she felt like choking.

'Yes, dear.' He could not help it, she looked so utterly forlorn.

'He is dead?' she gasped, with strained face and horror-stricken eyes.

'He fell leading on his men. I found him afterwards.'

'Oh my dear! my dear!' Her hands went blindly out in search of support. She fell forward, and he caught her.

She came to herself in a moment, but did not free herself from him. Instead, she put her two arms on his shoulders and her sobs shook him through and through.

'Oh Jack! Jack! is he—really—dead?' she sobbed.

'He died gallantly, dear. He gave his life for England. No man could do more. There are many, many with him—and with you.'

'Never to see him again! Oh, it is terrible! Did father know? Was it that'——

'No, he knows nothing of it, Mavie. The news I brought meant great things for the bank, and I fear he worked too hard in turning it to account.'

He got out his pocket-book and opened it with one hand as the other was given to her support. 'I brought you the only thing I could,' and he drew out the lock of hair.

She picked it up with streaming eyes and kissed it passionately.

'My dear! my dear!' she sobbed. 'Never to see you again! And if father—— Oh Jack!' and clung to him as though all the world were falling from her.

He put his strong arm round her and kissed her forehead. She clung to him the tighter, and held up her streaming face, and he kissed her on the lips. She dropped her face again and cried till she was spent.

'You have had every bit of my heart since ever I can remember, Mavie. But I hardly dared to hope,' he whispered, when her grief had had its way and she had found herself again.

'I knew! I knew!'

'I can hardly believe it is true,' he said, holding her off at arm's-length for a moment to look at her. 'You—Miss Lauriston'——

'Just Mavie, dear. It is you that have altered most since those dear old times.'

'Ah, I forgot to tell you. Mavie, we lost another in the fight on Sunday. Etienne's body was lying there, almost alongside Charlie's.'

'Etienne! Oh poor boy! And the marquis! He was the last of the line. There will be sorrow there too.'

'There will be sorrow in very many hearts. It was a terrible day's work.'

But Mavie was thinking of something else.

'Did you say they lay close together, Jack? Oh, I do hope they—— You don't think they had'—— and she looked up piteously, unable to say the dreadful words.

'No, dear. Charlie's horse went down, and he was probably sabred before he could rise. Etienne lay a little beyond. He had been killed by a sword-thrust.'

'What a terrible business it is!' she shivered.

'Sunday's work has put an end to it for a long time to come, and Charlie gave his life to bring that about. It was a brave man's death.'

'All I can think of is that we shall never see his dear, bright face again. You and I are the only ones left, Jack.

'I will try to make up for the others, dearest.'

*(To be concluded.)*

# NORTH AMERICAN FUR-INDUSTRY.

A LARGE proportion of the furs which the world's people wear for garments still comes from North America, despite the great changes which have occurred on that continent, especially within the last fifty years, by the settling of what was formerly a wilderness. The value of the yearly fur-hunt on sea and land throughout the world is about five million pounds. Of this amount Canada and Alaska contribute nearly one-fifth, not because of the large number of skins secured by the hunters, but because so many of them are rare and valuable, for we must remember that the seals taken in the waters off North America alone represent a very large sum each year.

The history of the Hudson's Bay Company might be called a history of the American fur-industry; because, since it was formed back in the seventeenth century, this corporation has had its agents and hunters scattered over an enormous territory. Over a century ago it had no less than one hundred and sixty trading-posts and 'factories'—the term factories meaning stations in charge of its factors or buyers. It not only obtained furs from most of that part of Canada which is north and west of the Great Lakes, but many thousand pelts were received from the Pacific North-West—that portion of the United States comprising the states of Oregon, Washington, and Nevada—at that time almost unknown to the white man. In those days Winnipeg was the head-centre of the Hudson's Bay Company, the log fort which it constructed being the foundation of the present city. Long since the fort became a ruin, and is now a landmark surrounded by a public park, a modern and prosaic brick building containing the company's stores, warehouses, and officials taking its place. No longer is this the head-centre, for civilisation has crowded the fur-hunter and trader farther and farther north, until Winnipeg is only one of the minor stations of the great corporation.

Seven hundred miles to the north-west of it is Edmonton, the largest market for 'raw' furs in the New World, the capital of Alberta, and the most northern point on the North American continent to be reached by a continuous line of railroad. It is located on the Saskatchewan River at the terminus of a branch of the Canadian Pacific, which leaves the main line at Calgary. Practically its only rival in the whole North-West is Prince Albert, in Saskatchewan. Picturesque yet modern, and an outpost of empire, Edmonton in the old days was an important settlement in that section, the extreme north-western market in the fur-country. It was founded a century or so ago by the old North-Western Fur Company, for a brief time a competitor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Edmonton has now developed into a city of twelve thousand people, and extending for many miles around it are the homes of the farmers; but, as already stated, it is the greatest fur-market, and to it comes the bulk of the skins obtained in North America by the Hudson's Bay Company and other of the great fur corporations.

The industry is now divided into branches. But few of the skins are secured by the buyers direct from the hunters and trappers, most of them being obtained through the fur-traders who yearly make expeditions into the wilderness, and obtain a 'load,' often for a supply of provisions and clothing, and perhaps no money whatever changes hands. In the spring, when the ice and snow commence to thaw, the agents of the big concerns, the free traders and the few trappers who have cared to bring their furs as far as Edmonton or Prince Albert, begin to move back to the north country. The objective point of many of the traders is Fort Resolution, a post on Great Slave Lake, nearly one thousand miles north of Edmonton, as the trail leads, and something like four hundred miles south of the Arctic Circle. Fort Chippewayan, on Lake Athabasca, is another important post, also on the edge of the fur-country; and there are a number of posts in the interior and along the Mackenzie River, which flows from Great Slave Lake into the Arctic Sea. The most northerly post is Fort M'Pherson, on the Peel River, two thousand miles north of Edmonton, and approximately one hundred and fifty miles above the Arctic Circle.

Each company of traders takes a large supply of provisions and goods for barter, in addition to its own stock of food, guns, &c., and the journey in covering the thousand miles to Fort Resolution, or the greater distances to the more remote posts, is one of great difficulty and hardship. The first ninety miles out of Edmonton is overland to Athabasca Landing, on the Athabasca River, where flat boats and canoes are taken and the trip to the fur-country begins in earnest. The route lies downstream all the way, since the Athabasca flows north into Athabasca Lake, which is connected with Great Slave Lake by the Great Slave River. But there are many rapids to be avoided by means of long portages, so that even this part of the journey is not easy.

The traders come back to Edmonton more heavily laden than when they went away. The pelts obtained by barter direct from the trappers or collected from distant posts are packed in bales weighing about a hundred pounds each, and loaded on the canoes and flat boats. Then the fight against the current all the way back to Athabasca Landing is commenced. Tow-lines are attached to the bigger and heavier of the boats, and they are pulled upstream by men who walk along the banks 'tracking,' as it is called. When the portages are reached the boats must be unloaded and the cargoes and the boats carried past the rapids. Going down, it is

possible to send the goods by land and 'shoot' the rapids in the empty boat sometimes. Going up, it is unload, carry, and reload from end to end.

But if the men who do this part of the work have a hard task, the lot of the trapper is infinitely harder. He must pursue the sources of his livelihood with the utmost cunning, varying his methods, from lodging a bullet in the vitals of a bear or other large animal in such a way as will not injure the pelt to setting the subtlest of snares for such wary ones as the little ermine, only the jet-black tail of which is visible as it whisks across the blinding snow. The ermine is very shy, and it must be specially dealt with in order to avoid injury to its delicate skin. Even the smallest of the steel traps are too heavy for the best specimens, which the trapper must catch in snares of tender boughs or in some such way. Sometimes he puts a little grease on his hunting-knife and lays it across the succession of dots and dashes in the snow which show that an ermine has passed that way. Along comes the little white form on its erratic course again. The grease appeals to it, and it begins to lick the blade of the knife; but, alas! that piece of steel is icy cold, and the tiny red tongue is instantly frozen to it so tightly as to render futile all the frantic struggling. The knife is too heavy for the little animal to carry away, and in his own good time the trapper comes and finishes his work.

If he manages to take a silver fox, the trapper is in great luck, for the pelt of a prime specimen of that animal is worth three hundred pounds to the man who buys it down at Edmonton, and the very best will bring the buyer as much as five hundred pounds. But the trapper gets few silver foxes, and for these he receives a price much smaller than the figure at which the white trader will eventually make his sale. The animal of which the trapper will probably capture most is the lynx. One firm of traders brought eight thousand lynx into Edmonton last summer, and these formed only a part of the total receipts. Others which are taken in large numbers are beavers, bears, otters, wolverines, minks, martens, musk-rats, musk-oxen, fishers, weasels, and white, red, black, and cross fox. Tens of thousands are trapped during the course of a season.

The hunter or trapper must carry traps and supplies into the remotest regions, where even lumbermen are unknown. He builds a low, wide sled, holding three hundred pounds, and loads this with pork, flour, underclothing, and steel traps. And when the ice on streams and lakes will bear his weight he starts into the wilderness, there to lead a hermit's life for seven months. Arrived at a point many miles from the nearest habitation, the trapper tries to find two parallel streams running near each other. Here he pitches his home-camp, setting traps along both rivers. The work of taking game from the traps is varied by catching fish, snaring rabbits, and capturing musk-rats for bait and food. Now and then the hunter may kill a wandering bear—an event which may lead him to a big store of wild honey in a hollow tree. In this utter solitude lives the adventurer, perhaps forgetting the day of the week or the month of the year. He fixes the date for breaking-up camp and turning back to civilisation by the condition of the fur on the animals he takes or by the effects of sunlight on the snow. Now and then he will shoot a deer, or even a moose, for the sake of the raw-hide, meat, and fat, which latter keeps his traps from rusting. A file serves him instead of a grindstone to keep axes and knives keen; and he washes his own clothes through a hole in the ice, drying them by an open fire. The dazzling glare of February often brings snow-blindness; and a month or two later the fast-thinning fur on his prey shows that further work is unprofitable. He then secretes his traps in hollow logs ready for the next season, packs his load of pelts on the wide sled, and trudges off through the forest to the nearest post or settlement. On arriving, the trapper sells his furs.

When the trading season is over the trappers go back to their winter hunting-grounds, which they do not leave from October till June. Here they may have a shack or hut built of logs which will enable them to withstand the rigorous weather, but the location must be near the homes of the animals, where they can frequently examine the score or more of traps and nets which are set for their capture. The extreme cold weather largely enables them to keep the skins 'cached' or stored out of doors until the late spring, when they prepare for their journey southward to meet the traders. The furs may be packed on ponies, on sledges, or in boats or other water-craft, for where waterways are available these are used in making the journey. As the traders now advance farther into the wilderness, the hunters and trappers are saved many a week formerly needed in making their way to the nearest factory.

So many are now engaged at the vocation that the American fur-trade is actually greater to-day than ever before, in spite of the immense tracts of wilderness formerly the home of game animals which have been settled by the white men. This is because by the present system the hunters and trappers secure much more in value for their skins than in the past, and have time to cover a larger area of the wilderness. Some of the Indians in the more northerly sections, where the furs are finest because of the greater cold, seldom or never see a white man or any sign of civilisation. They remain in the woods from year's end to year's end. The pelts which they gather and hang on trees, or 'cache' in some more effective manner, are collected by half-breed representatives of the traders whenever the opportunity offers.

Many curious instances of the manner in which the honesty of the Indian manifests itself are cited in the north country. One of the tales told is of a native who, desiring food and tobacco and blankets, broke into the store of a remote trading-post which had been locked and abandoned for a few weeks while the white man in charge transacted business

elsewhere. The Indian supplied his needs, but he left pelts in payment for what he took; and months later he came back to ascertain if he had left enough. Except in the matter of price, the traders deal fairly with the Indians, and ordinarily nothing but good feeling exists between the two classes. One Indian found a post closed when he went to it to dispose of his skins. Being unwilling to wait, he forcibly entered and left his pack, but nothing with it to indicate his identity. Then he retired, fastening the door as best he could, and not until a year later did he return. When he walked into the post and told his story the price of the skins was handed over to him without question. The accounts of the white man had been carefully kept, and he was certain that no claim but a just one would be made.

# FOR THE OLD SCHOOL!

## SOME STORIES OF 'THE LOVE THAT SURVIVES.'

By George A. Wade.

IF you want to get a man to talk, draw him on about 'the Old School.' Such was the dictum of a well-known and clever statesman who passed away just before this present century began its course.

How truly that man understood the feeling for his *alma mater* which every public schoolboy carries with him throughout life! For is there anything purer, more beautiful, more inspiring than the way most men regard their old school, or finer than the things they are prepared to do or undertake for its glory and honour? When you have read the following instances, all true, of splendid affection and devotion for 'the Old School' you'll begin to understand, if you never did before, what enthusiasm, what pleasure, what love for Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Westminster, Rugby, and the other great schools dominate the men who have been there, the men who are to-day fighting Britain's battles in every trade and profession in every corner of the world.

A year or two ago one of our best-known writers (I think it was Mr Harold Begbie) had to go down to the East End on some special literary work. Whilst there he accidentally ran up against a man in a poor position—a man whose manners, speech, &c., struck him as being extraordinary for one in such a place. Then the author noticed, too, how respectable and clean were his home, his wife, his children, and how the man was trying to save every penny possible for some definite purpose or other. After much close inquiry the visitor learned the other's secret, which astounded him, being somewhat of this fashion.

'Yes,' acknowledged the man, smiling proudly as he spoke, 'I was once far better off, and of higher position than you would think from seeing me here! I was, indeed, educated at Eton! And I've never forgotten that fact. When at my lowest I've always said to myself that my boy must be brought up a credit to the Old School, and that I must strain every nerve to send him there by hook or by crook. For there's no school like the old place, you know, sir! And every penny the wife and I can save is put by to help our boy later on to go to Eton, if only for a year or two.'

The author who learned this extraordinary story of an Old Etonian's devotion to the school amid such surroundings made known the circumstances (without mentioning the names) in a London daily newspaper. Immediately there began to pour in on him letters containing cheques, money, &c., generous offers of help from all parts of the world where Old Etonians had read the story! They were so delighted with the way that this former son of Eton had kept the honour of the school ever before him in such terrible straits that they were determined his boy *should* go to 'the Old School' whatever happened, and that he himself should be rescued from the round of trouble which had so long known him. It was literally a small fortune which rolled down on the author for the benefit of that Etonian of the past. And it was the love, devotion, and pride for Eton itself which inspired all this splendid proof of how her children regarded her!

When I sit quietly on a winter's night reading the tales of how Cavaliers and Roundheads contended for the mastery; when I think how stern was the sour Puritan, and how gay was the rollicking King's-man; when I view the frenzied and misguided troops of Cromwell destroying the churches, the altars, the lovely windows of stained glass, the fine organs, the famous carvings—then I turn over the pages till I come to that magnificent tribute paid to grand old Winchester College by her Puritan children whose hearts went out to her more than to destruction itself, even at such a furious time. Have you not read how, when the destroying spoilers came to Winchester, they rent this and that church, they robbed and broke down this or that 'device of the Scarlet Woman,' as they termed all such things? But, when the ignorant soldiers would have attacked the College, did not two of the Puritans themselves, who were Old Wykehamists, take their stand at the gates with drawn swords, and swear that no man should desecrate Wykeham's beautiful foundation except over their dead bodies! And was not their zeal and determination to guard the school so fierce that their comrades agreed to pass by Winchester College in their march of rapine and destruction? Surely it is strange that no famous artist has ever seized on that noble picture for one of his best paintings! Just think how such a man as Ernest

Crofts, R.A., could have portrayed for us those two Wykehamist Puritans defending with drawn swords the school of their childhood against their frenzied comrades at the risk of their own lives! Happy mother indeed who can inspire such devotion in her children!

Some few years back the writer was going down one of the chief streets in Leeds. A carriage and pair belonging to one of the best-known citizens of the town was driving along, the owner himself being seated inside it. Just as the carriage reached the end of a famous cross-street a roving Bluecoat boy came sauntering round the corner. Now, the sight of the celebrated blue coat and yellow stockings is rather unusual in northern towns, and many folk turned to stare at the lad, who was about twelve years old. But as soon as the man in the carriage saw him he told his driver to stop, and, jumping out, with beaming face he came across to the Christ's Hospital youth.

'Well, how do you like Horsham, my boy?' he asked. 'When I wore that dress we were in Newgate Street. I don't suppose Horsham can ever be like the old place; but never mind, the school is the same, isn't it? And whose "house" are you in? Oh, Coleridge's! Then you're honoured with a glorious tradition of the Hospital, my lad! And your name? Oh, is it! Any relation to the great——? Yes? Well, I'm awfully glad to have seen you and had this chat with you! God bless you and the old school! And mind you're proud of her and do her credit when you're older. There, that's just a little gift in remembrance of Christ's Hospital days of my own.'

As he hurried back into the carriage, waving his hand, the Old Blue smiled at the lad's wondering look; and the yellow-stockinged youth gazed with beaming face at the bright piece of gold in his hand whilst he waved his thanks in return. I dare say he probably thought to himself what a decent old crank the eccentric man was after all. But later on he'll understand the feeling which animated the former son of Edward VI.'s noblest foundation whom he met that afternoon in Briggate, Leeds.

Was there any more charming episode in all the stirring career of Baden-Powell during the siege of Mafeking than that about which he wrote in one of his private letters to his mother? This was the substance of his words: 'I did not forget, even in such straits, that it was "Founder's Day," the day so honoured and revered by every true Carthusian. And I sent round all the camp to try to discover if there were any other officers from the old school who would come and dine with me on December 12th, out of respect to the memory of Sutton and Charterhouse. But, alas! I could not find one! Yet I resolved to keep up the school's reputation anyway, so I dined in state all by myself, and gave the time-honoured toast to our Founder's memory as of old, which toast I drank with enthusiasm, and three cheers for Charterhouse!' And this was the man on whom the eyes of all the world were fixed at that very moment, the man who was holding little Mafeking so bravely and undauntedly against a terrible foe, a man living with his few troops on horseflesh and scraps of meat! But even at that awful moment, and in the direst straits, the love for the old school predominated above everything! For he 'remembered that it was Founder's Day!'

And is it not splendid to recall that this devotion and affection for his *alma mater* instils itself somehow into the heart of the Hindu, the African, the Japanese, who acknowledges one of our great schools as his own, just as much as it does into the breast of any Englishman? 'I suppose,' said a friend of the present Sultan of Zanzibar to him, when first he revisited England after mounting the throne, 'that you will go at once after landing to call on the King?' The young Sultan's dark eyes looked kindly on his comrade with that pitying glance one knows so well. Then he said slowly, 'The first place I shall go to when I land in England will be London, for I want very much to have a look at dear old Harrow again! I wonder if she'll have changed much since I was there!' Yes, not even the cares of a kingdom, not even the barbaric splendours of an Eastern Court, not the thousands of miles of sea and land intervening, not all his own native state and friends, could efface from his young heart the memory of the grand 'School-on-the-Hill.' And it was to her that his steps first turned when he set foot again on our English shores!

'Why, bless me, if we aren't all Old Westminsters here!' was the sum and substance of the words of Sir Elijah Impey to Warren Hastings when some six or seven men from the school-behind-the-Abbey chanced to meet together in India. 'Look here, we *must* do something just to show we still remember the school! What do you fellows say if we send a magnificent silver cup to Westminster as a gift from her boys in India?' They hailed the project with delight and enthusiasm, and thus it came about that Westminster owns the celebrated 'Elephant Cup,' as it is called, one of the most notable treasures of plate belonging to any big public school. Its size, its unique decoration, its workmanship, its value, make it a superb present; and one can hardly wonder at the reverence with which all Westminster boys, old and young, regard it, especially when they recall the circumstances under which it came into possession of the school and the famous men who gave it.

That an author or a poet should show his affection for the school of childhood's days in his manhood's writings need scarcely be wondered at; there are many examples of this. But that a celebrated poet should devote a whole volume of the muse to the praise and honour of his *alma mater* as a proof of the deep love he yet bears her is surely an unique thing! It is thus that we find Mr Henry Newbolt sending to Sir Francis Younghusband, the great General in far-away Tibet, a book of his own poems as his most precious gift likely to please the receiver, because, according to the dedication, the two men,

who were close friends at Clifton College, now recollect nothing so delightful as their schooldays! *Clifton Chapel and other School Poems*—the book in question—deals entirely with life at Clifton and the big schools, mainly with regard to its Imperial aspect and teachings. And throughout all the verse runs the well of love and reverence that the famous poet and the equally famous soldier still feel towards the school where they walked arm-in-arm together, and worshipped in the House of God as friends!

An officer of Lord Kitchener's staff was riding alone over the burning sand of the desert during the advance on Khartoum for the attack on the Mahdi. His spirits were low at the news coming daily into camp; his mission this night was a daring and risky one; he was, so far as he knew, miles away from a single friend, with marauding Arabs waiting to murder him at the slightest chance. His heart, though stout and brave, felt dubious about the future; and to cheer himself up he began to sing aloud a song, almost unconscious of what it was, for words and music came welling up from long-past days:

> The Romans came and passed away;
> The Normans followed, where are they?
> But we are here, and here we stay!
> Vivat Haileyburia!

In his enthusiasm at the old song, and his recklessness, as he rode swiftly over the desert he shouted out the strains more and more. Then suddenly he saw the form of another rider approaching quickly over the sand, and he heard another voice singing. Moreover, the new-comer was chanting:

> And though our distant feet may roam,
> Our hearts will ne'er forget the home,
> The grand old school beneath the dome—
> Vivat Haileyburia!

The first officer stared as if mesmerised. Here, on the very desert itself, at midnight, lonely and desperate, he had stumbled across the one great encouragement he needed. He put spurs to his horse, and the two soldiers soon met and clasped each other's hands enthusiastically.

'I needn't ask,' said the first man. 'Your song told me you came from the old school!'

'And yours!' said the other, 'though we've never met before, I think. But cheer up, old chap! We'll pull through all right! Trust Haileybury for that! We come from the right place. Hats off to the school beneath the dome! Let's sing the last verse together.'

And, with hands still clasping, they did. Right up to the clear skies of the Egyptian desert there rang out the two voices:

> For all through life, where'er we be,
> School of our hearts, we'll think of thee!
> And drink the toast with three times three—
> Vivat Haileyburia!

'Yes,' wrote home the first soldier to his father, 'I managed the dangerous mission all right, for it gave me new strength that curious meeting. I felt that Haileybury depended on me for upholding her reputation that night. And I made up my mind there and then that I'd do or die for the school!'

Let me give one more instance of what pride and affection for the Old School did. It occurred in the boat-race not many years back. In one of the crews was a man from Shrewsbury. To see the struggle at Mortlake, and to cheer on their former comrade, two Old Salopians turned up in a boat near the Brewery. The tussle between the 'Varsity eights was very keen, and as the boat with the boy from Shrewsbury came along his friends saw that he seemed nearly done, though he was working as hard as ever. Yet the very result depended on that next two hundred yards!

'He's almost used-up, poor old'—— said one of the two friends as he waved his hat, cheering the crew as it tried to get past its rival, amid the tremendous excitement of the crowd. 'I wish we could encourage him on a bit more!' Then came a sudden inspiration. With a voice like a fog-horn the Old Salopian fairly made himself heard above the rest as he shouted, 'Got 'em! You've got 'em!' There was just the flicker of a smile on the drawn face of the man in the boat who heard the cry. It put new life into him for that last hundred yards! He kept going at his hardest; and the verdict of the judge was in his boat's favour as the rivals passed the white post! It was the famous cry that did it! The never-to-be-forgotten shout of victory which every Salopian knows so well called him to a supreme effort for the immortal glory of the Old School! He made it, and kept going, though he fell over in the boat as the shouts which greeted the winners sounded in his ears.

'For the Old School!' There is no other love like it! For it is pure and strong; it is holy and reverent; and it lasts till death itself. May we not indeed truly call it 'the love that survives'?

## THE COMING OF NIGHT.

Clouds, pinker than the petals of a rose,
Drift in soft fleeces from the crimson west;
Whence, as the golden gates of sunset close,
A gentle wind steals over ocean's breast,
And crooning, ever crooning, landward hies
To soothe the world with dreamy lullabies.

Tired sons of labour, through the twilit dark,
Plod slowly home across the restful moor;
Glad lovers keep their tryst. And, hush! and, hark!
The nightingale sings even at our door;
Rich music gushes from his mellow throat,
And thrills the heart with every liquid note.

Above, the moon's white sickle cuts the blue;
All sounds of human life grow faint and cease.
Fragrant with flower-scents, cool with crystal dew,
Night bears to earth the God-sent gift of peace;
And, beautiful in star-bejewelled crown,
Leans tenderly o'er countryside and town.

R. Matheson.

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# THE QUEEN OF MIQUELON.

By G. J. M'Cormac, I.P.S.

OFF the south-west coast of Newfoundland lie two sister-islands, St Pierre and Miquelon. The islands belong to France, and form the last remnant of the once vast colonies of France in the northern half of the New World. These two islands, which are divided by a narrow strait, are so generally mentioned together that they are known as St Pierre-Miquelon.

Small though these islands be, they form a naval station, do a flourishing shipping business, and have a trade of upwards of twenty million dollars a year. I should have said legitimate trade, as the smugglers who ply their trade in this part of the world (and this is the smugglers' Mecca) are so absent-minded as not to give the Government statistician any financial statement of their transactions.

Perhaps the most important personage in St Pierre-Miquelon is the Governor, who is a vice-admiral of the French navy. But certainly the second place at least in the list of notables must be given to Madame Marie Louise Gavette, familiarly known as the Queen of Miquelon. She is a multi-millionaire, and, more than that, she has made all the ducats herself. She is well educated, has some literary talent, and above all the genius of a Napoleon as a ruler of men, and she rules many.

Madame Gavette, whose maiden name was Bernois, was born in Jarbes, Gascony, but was taken to Miquelon when quite young by her father, who was a sailor. She received her education at a ladies' seminary in Sydney, Cape Breton. Shortly after returning from school to her island home she married, at the age of fifteen. After seventeen years of happy married life her husband died, leaving her a childless widow at the age of thirty-two. I may be excused from telling my readers how many years ago this event occurred, as it has always been considered contempt of court as well as of courtship to tell a woman's age unless it is absolutely necessary for the welfare of one's immortal soul. At any rate, after I have finished my narrative you will see that it is especially desirable for the reader to make personal investigation on this point himself.

Some time before death's finger fell upon him, Monsieur Gavette retired from the sea and bought an hotel, or I might say more correctly a sailors' boarding-house, for it was patronised almost exclusively by followers of the sea, thousands of whom make Miquelon a basis for their fishing operations during the summer months. While her husband lived, Madame Gavette attended strictly to her domestic affairs, and won universal esteem for her bright smile and sweetness of temper. Not that I say she does not possess those attributes of character still, but other traits of a more virile type have developed.

Sailors, and French sailors especially, are at all times a rather lively set, to say the least, and are especially so in a place like Miquelon, where sweet liquors, white liquors, and wines are more plentiful than water. In fact, the Miquelon islanders' definition of the last-mentioned fluid, if given with all sincerity, would be very similar to that of the Scotchman who said that 'water is a liquid used to bathe in, but it is said that some people drink it.' It is needless to say that it requires a strong hand at times to keep the French sailor within the bounds of propriety, and Madame Gavette always proved equal to the occasion.

A short time after her husband's death a row occurred in the hotel bar-room, and the gendarmes were sent for to quell it. But in the meantime Madame Gavette appeared on the scene of conflict with a smile on her face and a revolver in her hand. 'Messieurs,' said she in her most commanding accents, 'settle your disputes out on the esplanade. I'll have none of them here, and I swear to you by the saints of God that I'll shoot the first sailor who attempts to make a fracas in these premises.' When the gendarmes arrived they found the Hôtel République as quiet as a run-down

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clock, and from that day till this the arm of the law has never been called into requisition to preserve the peace where Madame Gavette surveys and rules.

She has organised a police-force of her own to guard her interests, and her interests are great, for she owns a fleet of brigantines, schooners, and lesser sailing craft, trading with France, Newfoundland, eastern Canada, and the West Indies. Over a thousand men are on her pay-roll. All her employés are insured, and upwards of fifty widows draw pensions from her treasury. In all her undertakings she has been phenomenally fortunate.

After her husband's death Madame Gavette had as many suitors as the Grecian Penelope; but their numbers have sadly (for the suitors) decreased, though an occasional European nobleman offers her (by mail generally) a share of his title and liabilities. Her reputation as a man-ruler has spread far and near, as has her reputation as a man-hater. However, 'love will find a way,' we are told; and if there happens to be in this wide world a schoolmaster (all other classes have applied) who is not afflicted with that terrible disease which a few years ago claimed Andrew Carnegie as a victim —the fear of dying rich—he might find it profitable to shake the chalk-dust out of his faded coat, and sail (in imagination would perhaps be the safest) to the bold, rocky islet of Miquelon. And who knows but as a result of his winning ways and classic lore, he might claim as his own the Queen on her rocky throne, and hand down to posterity a name that shall for ever ring through the corridors of Fame, and be uttered with awe and veneration in our classic halls—Pedagogue I., King of Miquelon, the contemporary of Jacques I., King of the Sahara.

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# LAURISTONS.

### CHAPTER LXVI.—AND THE CLOUDS LIFTED AND LET THE LIGHT SHINE THROUGH.

SIR CHARLES had a long and trying time of it, and those who nursed him came to understand somewhat of the reasons why John Sax had declined any outside assistance in that arduous business. Mavie and Hepsy, indeed, understood the import of it all but dimly, but were none the less appalled by the phantoms of the troubled brain. To Mavie they pointed a new meaning to her mother's letter, however, and gave her many a thoughtful hour. Jack guessed the truth very closely, remembering his grandfather's strenuous exhortations to him when he was setting out on his latest journeys, and his hair bristled at times at the thought of it all. He would not have alluded to the matter. It was his grandfather who did so, one night when he had come up after business hours to see how Sir Charles was doing.

'Is he off his head at all?' asked old John anxiously.

'Yes, often. He says some very strange things,' and he looked across at his grandfather, and his grandfather looked across at him.

'Has Berkeley heard him so?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Just before he went off that night he was speaking of his indebtedness to you and to me. He said, my boy, that we must come into the concern along with the poor lad who is gone. And that is what it will have to come to, for he will not be the man he was, though, please God, he'll be with us for many a year yet. And so, my boy, I may tell you this much, as you have a right to know it. The old man, when he died, left us a waterlogged ship. No fault of his—just ill-luck and other people's misfortunes. Now, thanks very largely to your work, the ship is dry and sound, with every leak stopped and a full cargo aboard. We clear close on a million through your last trip.'

'You must have had trying times, grandfather. I'm glad I've been of use to you.'

'Ay indeed! bitter trying times—times, my boy, that would have killed many men. Thank God, they're past. And, please God, they shall never come again to Lauristons!'

Dr Berkeley heard enough to set him wondering; and one day when he met old John Sax there he drew him into the library, and eying him keenly asked, 'John Sax, is all well with you at the bank?'

'Never better, doctor,' said old John cheerfully, and met the keen eye without a shadow of reserve. 'If you knew what that Monday did for us you would open your eyes so that they would have difficulty in closing again. You see, Jack got us the news here a day and a half in advance of everything, and we turned it to good account.'

'He has some strange fancies in his head,' said Berkeley.

'Not any stranger than your own, I'll be bound, doctor, if you went off your head. A man is not responsible for what he says or does when the wheels run free in his brain.'

Those long weeks of close association were very sweet to Mavie and Jack, despite the sadness of their circumstances. Their common loss and joint service formed new links in their golden chain. Their happiness shone the brighter for the darkness of its setting.

Very slowly, and almost reluctantly, as it seemed to the anxious watchers by his bedside, Sir Charles's

wandering spirit came back to its anchorage in the feeble flesh.

Old John Sax had begged them to say nothing of Charles's death, if it were possible, until he had had a talk with the invalid; his hope being, of course, that the good news concerning business matters might have their effect in helping him to bear the rest. But it had not been possible. The very first thing Sir Charles asked when his troubled brain awoke from the merciful lethargy that followed its wild excursions, was 'Where is Charlie?' And as gently as so terrible a blow could be dealt, and tempering it, as they were able, with the glowing words in which the Duke had spoken of Captain Lauriston's gallantry, they broke it to him, and waited in fear and trembling for the result. To their very great surprise he simply lifted a feeble hand from the counterpane and dropped it expressively, and then he turned his face to the wall and lay so for many hours alone with his thoughts. And what those thoughts were we can guess. 'We have paid,' he had said to old John just before his breakdown, 'prices that no man will ever know.' And though in a more robust frame of mind he would perhaps never have regarded Charlie's death as the direct consequence of his own sin, yet in his feeble state it appeared to him as part of the price he had had to pay, and he accepted it with gloomy resignation.

John Sax, as soon as he heard of it, hastened to effect a diversion with his own news.

'Sorry to have left you in the lurch at so critical a time, John. How have you got on?' said Sir Charles feebly.

'I told you a rise of three would do all we wanted,' said old John exuberantly. 'Well, the rise all round was about double that. Lauristons never was in such good shape, sir; and we are justified and free.'

'Thank God! And you and John. Remember, you must both come in, especially now.'

And so, having passed through the valley of sorrow and humiliation—the valley whose sombre depths are strewn with broken laws and their breakers, and out of which so few ever climb, and they only through arduous suffering, having paid the price—he came at last to quietness and rest.

When Jack and Mavie ventured to tell him their own news he showed no surprise. On the contrary, 'She has always known her own mind, my boy.'

'Of course she has,' said Mavie.

'And I know it was not for want of asking that she has waited all these years.'

'Mr Right, as Hepsy says, was overmodest,' said Mavie.

'There is no man I could trust her to more willingly, Jack; and you have done great things for us.'

'And the Lauristons never forget,' said Mavie.

THE END.

# WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY AND STATE SECRETS.

AMONG the revolutions wrought by the introduction of wireless telegraphy is one which, though little likely to be noted by the general public, must prove of vast value and importance to the navy. A 'wireless' installation on board a fighting-ship means the eventual supersession of that historic but cumbersome institution, the signal-book—one of the most anxiously and elaborately protected pieces of Government property for which the captain of a man-of-war is directly responsible.

Communication between ships of the navy is made through the medium of a private code-book—a bulky volume containing many thousands of words, phrases, syllables, and complete sentences likely to be needed in the building up of a message. Each phrase, sentence, syllable, &c., is distinguished by a combination of consonants arranged in groups of two, three, four, and five, the two- and three-letter groups being reserved for 'emergency messages' which demand quickness in signalling.

When an officer wishes to communicate with another vessel or a signal-station on shore, he writes out his message in plain English and sends it to the signal-officer, who looks up the corresponding words or sentences in the signal-book and translates the original into groups of consonants. This is handed to the signaller, who hoists the flags representing the groups of letters. As a long message may require several hoists, it is obvious that the whole operation may occupy some time. Copious though the vocabulary of the signal-book is, it is sometimes difficult to express the actual words of the original dispatch. This was amusingly illustrated in the case when one of H.M. ships, outward bound, wished to convey to a passing cruiser the news of the passing of the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill. The signal-book of that day did not contain the words 'church' and 'disestablished.' The difficulty was overcome by signalling, 'Irish chaplain overboard;' and the ingenious periphrase was both understood and appreciated by the recipients.

There are several serious drawbacks to the signal-book system. First and paramount, the danger of a copy getting into the hands of the enemy by treachery. It is to the credit of the British service that no such case has occurred for a hundred years or more. A year or so ago a drunken signalman threw his signal-book overboard, and it was only recovered by divers after long search. Had the volume not been restored, it is probable that the

signal-book in use would have been withdrawn, and a revised edition substituted at an enormous expenditure of money and labour.

Twice within recent years the French naval signal-book has had to be revised owing to copies having been sold to rival nations. Our service regulations provide for the contingency of capture by the enemy. The signal-book must be thrown overboard promptly. To ensure its going to the bottom, the covers of the volume are weighted with lead, and the box in which it is kept is also weighted and perforated with holes.

Another objection is that the book is constantly being added to by the addition of signals for the names of new vessels, ports, machinery, &c.

The adoption of wireless telegraphy is already rapidly rendering the signal-book less necessary. The secrecy provided by the use of cryptic combinations of meaningless consonants can be equally assured by the various methods used for rendering the electric waves 'untappable.' The system of 'tuning' makes it impossible for a message to be intercepted and retained by a receiver that is not synchronised or attuned to the sending-wire. This means that a message may be sent direct from the original copy without the delay of translation into code-book signals. The enormous advantage of this should be too obvious to require emphasising. In the excitement and hurry of a modern naval engagement, the loss of a minute in the process of sending a message might make the difference between defeat and victory.

Although the vocation of the naval signal-book compiler of every civilised nation will probably soon be gone, it is not so certain that the cipher-expert will find his services discarded. Important despatches that pass between the heads of governments and their representatives abroad always have been, and presumably always will be, sent in cipher. As in the case of the translation of a naval message for the signaller, the coding of a long diplomatic despatch is a comparatively tedious operation; but it is easy to believe that rapidity is not so essential in the case of an official document to be sent by special messenger as in that of an order issued from the conning-tower of a battleship. No unauthorised person can be acquainted with the ciphers employed in our Foreign Office, although the late Mons. Mancini, a famous French-Italian cipher-expert, used to say that he knew every cipher used by every Embassy, and needed only time to unravel them. This boast was quite likely to be well grounded, for the good and sufficient reason that by their very nature all ciphers must be founded upon a similar and systematic basis. It is an axiom that there is no such thing as an impregnable cipher. The most that can be said of the best is what the honest safe-maker admits: 'I do not say that my safe cannot be burgled; but the operation will occupy so much time that the thief is almost certain to be caught before he has mastered the combinations of the lock.'

It is more than probable that if a cipher-expert got hold of a government dispatch and made a determined effort to decipher it, he would succeed; but by the time he had read the message its matter would be too old to be of use. It is true that the knowledge thus gained might be useful later, but no cautious diplomat would employ the same cipher regularly. Any secret system of communication likely to be adopted for conveying secrets of state must be capable of numerous changes and permutations in order to nullify the consequences of a discovery of the key.

Cipher-construction has been developed to the dignity of an exact science, and a modern cipher bears about as much resemblance to the crude cryptograms of fifty years ago as does a motor-car to a farmer's wagon. The ancient vehicle of secret communication was often as transparent to an educated person as a schoolgirl's acrostic or anagram. Up to the period of the Russian war the ciphers used by the British Government were, according to M. Mancini, a puzzle to no one but those whose duty it was to write and read them. They appear to have been the crudest 'transpositions,' a technical phrase meaning a cipher that is constructed by substituting one letter for another in a regular order—as, for example, making B stand for A, C for B, and so on. For a time the Foreign Office used a cumbersome but fairly detection-proof cipher, in which arbitrary numbers stood for certain words, names of places and persons. Such a piece of machinery might be used effectively under special circumstances, but it has two very serious objections—it is slow in use, and the receiver must always carry the key with him. The perfect cipher is unlocked by a key carried in the memory, not in the despatch-box.

An illustration of the 'memory-key' principle, employed in all good ciphers, is supplied in a cipher designed by the writer for special use during the late Boer war. The well-known A.B.C. code was the medium. It was understood that the recipient of a message was not to read the sentence standing opposite the code-word wired, but to count a certain number of words down. That number was found by counting the words in the message. For example: suppose the code-words received were 'absolute, fireside, mankind,' the receiver would count three words down from 'absolute' and find 'absolved.' The sentence opposite that word was the one required. The advantages of this simple system are twofold. First, the key could be carried in the head, and was not likely to fall into the hands of the unauthorised; secondly, if any other person stumbled upon the correct clue, the knowledge gained would be of little use later, for the reason that each message had to be read by counting a different number. There are a thousand ways by which the key could be varied without encumbering the memory of receiver or sender. Although over twenty of these messages were intercepted by the Boers, there is

no reason to believe they were in any instance deciphered. Curiously enough, many months afterwards, the writer was called in by a British commandant to decipher some of these messages which had been found in the Landdrost's office on the surrender of the town. They bore marks of toilsome efforts at translation, but the key-principle had apparently escaped detection.

Despite the picturesque imaginings of novelists and playwrights, it is safe to believe that a cipher despatch rarely, if ever, gets into the hands of the enemy in time of peace. They are always carried by special messengers, and nothing short of violence could bring about a transfer of a document from the carefully-guarded despatch-box to the wallet of the thief. It may be true that interception of telegraphic communications between foreign governments sometimes occurs; it is the easiest of tasks. But the recognition of the message is another matter, for the reason that, in cases of profound importance, telegraphic despatches generally travel by circuitous routes, and are not addressed directly to the person for whom they are intended. It is therefore possible for a representative in a foreign country to receive numerous communications from his chiefs without those on the lookout detecting a single message intended for him.

# SIMON SIMONIDES.

## CHAPTER II.

THE autumn passed, and winter, and still Talus waited for the sign which should bid him commence his work upon Mount Taygetos.

No word had come from Simon, but occasionally news drifted through to Mintos concerning him. Now he was in Athens, now in Patras and Corinth. And when men spoke of him it was with bated breath, a new light of hope dawning in their eyes.

'Ay,' said one, a gipsy, who earned his daily bread along the road he traversed, 'he is a great man is Simon, and he will be a greater one some day. The star beneath which he was born is Mars, and it is high in the sky.'

A silence had fallen upon the Morea, such a silence as fell upon the slopes of Mount Taygetos before a storm, when the clouds were gathering in the sky. The Turks had noticed it, and gradually light broke upon them, but it broke too late; when realisation dawned another steadier light had risen upon the land, a light which burned fiercely and unquenchingly, guiding her sons from victory to victory.

It was in the late spring. Talus lay curled up in the shade of a vine. It was midday, and he was resting after a heavy morning's work. His eyes were half-closed in sleep, the droning bees singing his slumber-song, when a voice awakened him.

'Talus, there is a man to see you. He waits at the outer gate, and will speak to no one but you.'

Talus rose, a hope in his heart that perhaps the messenger had come at last. He went to the gate. There stood a peasant man, tall and fair. The dust of a long journey was upon his clothes, a look of weariness on his face.

'You are Talus, son of Mintos?' asked the newcomer.

'I am,' answered Talus.

'I come from Simon.' He drew from amidst his clothes a sprig of brushwood. 'He bids you haste, for the hour is at hand.'

Talus took the sprig with eagerness. 'It shall be done at once,' he answered. Then, seeing the too apparent weariness of the man, 'You will come inside and rest. I will have food brought to you.'

The Greek smiled. 'I have other work to do.'

'At least you will stay for a flagon of wine, Demetri!' A servant appeared at his call. 'You will get two flagons of wine, and have them put in the veranda—our best wine, for this is a great day.' He turned to the messenger. 'Follow me,' he said, and led the way through a side garden to the veranda, a few paces distant.

When the wine was brought, he raised his flagon. 'To a free Greece!'

'May God help us!' responded the Greek reverently.

Within an hour Talus had started, bearing upon his shoulder a small cask of naphtha.

The afternoon was hot, the torrid sun beat down pitilessly upon the path which wound round and round the western slope of Mount Taygetos to the summit.

Though he was young and lithe, accustomed to a strenuous life in the open, and fired with the passion of enthusiasm, it took Talus the greater portion of two hours to reach his goal. There, taking off his fustanella, he commenced his task.

With a short dagger he cut a pile of brushwood, which he soaked with naphtha, adding the branches of some trees growing near by. Much of the fuel lay nearly a quarter of a mile away, for the summit of Mount Taygetos is barren, swept destitute of vegetation by the winds.

The hours sped quickly by, and with them the structure of the beacon grew. Talus lavished upon it unstinted care, for it was a labour of love—love towards the man he knew as Uncle Simon and revered as a demigod, and love towards the

thought which was constantly in his mind: to his care had been entrusted that which was to send the message of impending freedom throughout Greece.

Darkness had fallen before his work was finished. He regarded his hands. 'Bah!' he said, 'they are dirty.' To him, as to all Greeks, cleanliness was second nature.

Then, putting on his fustanella, he sat down to rest for a few minutes by the side of the unlighted beacon.

Already it was dusk, darkness was rolling upon him like a great shadow. In the distance, at the foot of the hill, shone the lights of two cottages. A steady wind had risen; altogether, thought Talus, it was an ideal night for a bonfire.

He had sat there some few minutes when he suddenly started. In the distance, he heard the laboured footsteps of some one climbing up the mountain.

Rising, he drew his knife and waited in the shadow of the bonfire, wondering who it could be. If a Turk—— He shuddered at the thought of shedding a man's blood; but the secret must be kept from such as they.

A few moments, and the figure appeared upon the summit, outlined against the darkness.

For a second Talus hesitated, looking around him; then he advanced. 'Uncle Simon!' he said.

Simonides advanced. ''Tis you, Talus; you have obeyed the message.'

Then he surveyed the beacon. 'You have done your work well. This should show in Megalopolis easily on such a night as this.'

From a pocket he drew flint and tinder.

The flint in his hand, he paused. 'Talus, the moment has come!' he said, a fierce exultation in his voice.

A few moments, and the beacon began to blaze. The wood crackled, and the flames, fanned by the wind, leapt skywards, illumining the faces of the two men with a ruddy glow.

'As soon as we see the answering lights from Megalopolis and Messeni we will leave this and hasten to your father's house. The message will have been sent, and by morning all Greece will know and be prepared.'

For an hour they waited; then from the west there came an answering glow, growing brighter with the minutes.

'See!' said Simon, laying his hands on Talus's shoulders, 'Messeni has seen. By now three thousand Greeks are ready, and by daylight the town will have fallen into our hands. 'Tis there the first blow is to be struck.'

For another hour they waited, Simon pacing anxiously to and fro, while Talus piled wood upon the flames.

'They should have seen it,' said the elder man, 'for the wind is blowing in that direction.'

A little later, in the distance, there shone a tiny speck of light, faint and flickering, disappearing one moment to reappear the next.

'At last!' said Simon. 'Now we will haste to your father's house, for Mount Taygetos has played its part.'

In silence they hurried down the slope and along the miles of open road which lay between them and the vineyard. Only once was it broken by Talus.

'You have seen father?' he asked.

'Yes,' answered Simon absent-mindedly. He was already a general upon the field. Far-seeing and thoughtful, he was arranging the plan of campaign as he walked along the country road.

At the vineyard they were met by nearly a hundred men, armed with guns and knives, ready for a long march.

'You are ready, my children!' he said. Then he turned to Mintos. 'And you have given me your first command,' he said.

'You are taking me, Uncle Simon?' said Talus.

'If you are not too tired,' answered Simonides. 'You have already played your part.'

'I will not stay behind,' answered Talus; 'but I will wash first. I am as dirty as a pig—or a Turk.'

In the vineyard, served on rude benches, stood flagons of wine. At a table by themselves, Mintos and Simon were sitting.

'Simon,' said Mintos, 'the blessed day has come. We may never meet again, for one knows not the future, and I am an old man; but if we do, I hope you can tell me my children have acted as I would have them act—as you yourself will act—a man without fear.'

'No one can tell how he will act until danger arises,' replied Simon; 'but I do not fear for your sons, Mintos.'

'And to-night you travel as far as'——

'There is a hill fifteen miles south of Megalopolis; its sides are wood-covered and dense. I could hide an army there. And to-morrow night we shall march on to Megalopolis itself, and, if the town has not already fallen, head a night-attack upon the citadel.'

A little while and the force marched away, for to Simon time was precious; each moment spelt to him a moment longer under the rule of the accursed Turks.

The men took with them six horses from Mintos's stable and a small train of mules to carry the food. One of the horses was ridden by Talus, for whom Simon feared the long march, and another by the Greek himself. The other four were left at the rear of the party with the mules.

The moon had risen. The beacon still blazed upon Mount Taygetos, and in the distance shone the answering one from the town to which they were bound.

Simon marched his men by easy stages, past fields where the corn already stood waist-high,

past slumbering villages, and dark, shadowy woods.

When the first ten miles had been covered he ordered a halt, and the men flung themselves down by the roadside to snatch a few moments' rest.

By early dawn they had reached the hill where he had elected to spend the hours of daylight and rest his men thoroughly in preparation for the night-march and attack upon the gates of Megalopolis.

The hill was only a few hundred feet high, but as densely wooded as the lower slopes of Mount Taygetos. In the distance, from the summit, the roofs of Megalopolis showed plainly; and, indefatigable, while his followers slumbered, Simon stood gazing upon them, wondering what was happening within the city walls.

The only rest he took was a few hours' sleep during the afternoon; the remainder of the time he spent poring over a roughly drawn map of Greece he had himself made during his travels.

Soon after sunset the march recommenced, and midnight saw them outside the town they had come to succour.

Taken by surprise during the early stages of the rebellion, the Turks lost many battles and many towns. When Simon drew his small force up outside the gates of Megalopolis, the Greek flag was flying from the citadel. Greek sentries stood upon the walls.

Within he was met by Demetrius, a man who in the months following proved himself one of the most capable officers in the Greek army. The losses had been slight.

'But there is still a blot upon our flag,' said Demetrius. 'Of the three thousand Turkish within the town, scarcely five hundred are in prison now.'

'The rest?' asked Simon.

'Massacred!' said Demetrius.

That was the first of the many massacres which made the Turco-Greek war one of the most terrible in the history of the world. Oppressed for nearly a century, their men degraded, their women victims to the lust of a sensual race, victory gave to the Greeks a passion which only the blood of their enemy could satisfy!

From Megalopolis, Simon added five hundred men to his force—that force which was ultimately to prove the deliverance of Greece.

Gradually, taking many months, he fought his way to the gates of Athens. During those months the battlefield opened out; and, afraid to meet the enemy on open ground, owing to their heavy cavalry, the Greeks carried on a guerilla warfare from the hills, which, while diminishing the Turkish forces, increased the strength of their own, gradually forcing town after town to surrender, slaying the inhabitants or holding them to ransom. The restrained passion of a century found vent in the months they drove the Turks from their beloved land.

It was on August 19 that Simon, beating down the walls of the city that in a few years was to become the capital of the New Greece, and killing the Turkish outposts, led his army into Athens.

The preceding months of fighting had left their marks upon his face; it had grown thinner and heavily lined, while the hair upon his forehead had turned white. But Talus, riding at his side, saw a deep look burning in his eyes—a look of inexpressible pleasure, the pleasure that comes to a brave man when he knows he shall meet his enemy face to face.

In a few hours Athens had fallen, and the flag of Greece floated from the battery which nearly a hundred years before the Turks had built from the ruins of the temple of Nike Apteros.

'Tis fitting,' said Simon, 'that we should plant it here, for were not those bricks the memorial to a great Athenian victory?'

Tired and hungry from their long march and from the subsequent fighting, for a while the leaders lost all control over the Greeks. With drawn swords they overran the town, satisfying their lust for blood. The streets ran crimson, while the shrieks of the women echoed from house to house. Mercy there was none.

From the hills, on a plateau where the Acropolis stands, Simon rested and watched the terrible scene below. Around him were gathered a few of the leaders, and men of the regiment he himself had raised; principal among them were the sons of Mintos. He was talking to one of his senior officers, Christo, a man who had left his vineyard at Mistra to bear arms like many another.

Suddenly he felt a touch upon his arm, and turning, saw Talus, with a flagon of wine in his hand.

'You are tired and thirsty, Uncle Simon,' he said.

Simon waved him away. 'I will not touch wine yet, little one. I have work to do, a long account to settle, and wine shall not pass my lips until the debt is paid.' He rose from the stone on which he had been sitting. 'I go down to Athens,' he said, 'to find one Abdul Melik.'

And a silence fell upon those around at his words, for there was not one who did not know the tale of Simon Simonides. And in silence they all followed him down the hill to the city of strife.

For an hour they sought for Abdul Melik in and out of the houses, calling upon him by name, searching through the bodies which lay piled one upon another in the streets—Greek and Turk side by side, their long feud forgotten in the silence of death.

The sun shone down upon the scene, with a crimson glare on the white houses, the corpse-strewn roads and byways, the streams of blood which ran turgidly down each street.

Here and there as they searched a body moved,

from somewhere a voice groaned out in anguish. Once a woman ran shrieking past them, the body of her dead child in her arms.

They came upon him at last, his back to the wall, fighting against three men of Laconia.

Instantly his eyes rested upon him, Simon recognised the man whom he had not seen for fifteen years. Pushing the Greeks aside, he faced Abdul Melik, a drawn sword in his hand.

The Turk was a brave man, who for twenty long minutes had defended his life against terrible odds; but his face blanched as he saw this man before him, and heard him speak in tones which bore to him his death-sentence.

'Abdul Melik,' said Simon, 'I am Simon Simonides. For over fifteen years we have not met. But now the hour has come.'

And so, face to face, with the stern-faced Greeks standing by, amidst the audience of dead lying around, these two men fought.

There could be only one end, and at least one of the two men knew it. Cool though he was, a terrible hatred filled Simon's heart. Before him he saw the image of his beloved Natalia. The hour of vengeance had come, and he exulted, gloried in it.

When it was over he cast his sword from him and bared his head. 'Natalia!' he said. 'Natalia!'

And then amid a great silence, a silence born of sympathy and love towards the man upon whom they looked as leader, he turned to Talus. 'Little one,' he said, 'you can get me a flagon of wine, for I am thirsty.'

THE END.

# THE PALIO OF SIENA.

By Basil Tozer.

Of all the towns of Italy, none, it may with confidence be said, has a history more interesting than Siena, nor a history more terrible.

Stories of love, of hatred and of vengeance, of superstition and of religious fanaticism, are closely interwoven in records which date from the period long before the centuries which constitute what Froude calls 'the splendid, stupid, glorious Middle Ages.' For in the Piazza del Campo alone, the large open space in the centre of the town, were enacted between the beginning of the thirteenth and the close of the sixteenth century scenes of horror that it is difficult now to dwell upon without a shudder. To this day in Siena, indeed, names of men of the stamp of Marignano the Spaniard who, when the armies of Charles and of Cosimo were gradually encompassing the doomed city, ordered his troops to commit acts so hideous in their brutality that the very soldiery refused to obey him, are seldom uttered by the populace without being prefixed by an execration or by an oath.

If history is to be trusted, however, the Campo witnessed scenes of carnage long after the close of the sixteenth century, for we read that 'on Friday, July 28th, 1799, in the name of the Blessed Virgin of Comfort, and to the cry of 'Viva Maria!' a howling mob of fanatics, drunk with wine and slaughter, burned in one vast fire in the Piazza del Campo nineteen Jews, men and woman together, using for their purpose the fragments of the Tree of Liberty which had been set up before the Fonte Gaia little more than three months previously.'

Of all the Latin races the people of Italy are perhaps the most remarkable for their excitability and for their emotional temperament; and though the ferocity that for many centuries made the Sienese dreaded by Florentines and others who attempted to subdue them has, with the passage of time, and with the increase of civilisation, become almost extinct, yet to this day the saturnalia known as the Palio of Siena, which takes place in August, gives us some idea of what the Sienese must have been like in those ages of long ago.

'What is the Palio of Siena?' The question is often asked, for though everybody has heard of the famous festival, a considerable proportion of men and women have but a vague idea of the way it is conducted, beyond knowing that it is a horserace of some sort or other, and that it takes place in the month of August. Baedeker, in his *Central Italy*, laconically observes that the Palio presents 'a very attractive spectacle.' The word *palio*, however, does not primarily signify horserace, or, for that matter, any kind of race. It is in all probability derived from the Latin *pallium*, meaning a mantle, for in early times the prize given to the hero of the Palio was a mantle, for which, later, a banner came to be substituted. Dante, in the fifteenth canto of his *Inferno*, talks about the Palio of Verona, which was a footrace; while at one period the famous bull-fights that were held in Siena, also the pitched battles with fists between a number of combatants, were all spoken of as *palii*, the battle being also termed the *pugna*.

Briefly, then, the Palio that is held in Siena on the 2nd of July, and also on August 16, is a struggle—it might well be termed a fight—between men on horseback just as much as it is a horserace. Each of the ten horses that competes represents one of ten out of the seventeen *contrade* or wards into which the *terzi*, or larger divisions of Siena, are cut up; for though in former times the seventeen *contrade* were all allowed to compete together, accidents became of such frequent occurrence when these large fields were permitted that about the year 1720 it was decided, in the face of considerable

opposition, to limit the total number of starters to ten only. These subdivisions of Siena are said to have existed since about the end of the fifteenth century, but not until about the middle of the sixteenth did the *contrade* begin seriously to interest themselves in the promotion of the public festivals. At precisely what date *palii* in which horses take part were inaugurated cannot be stated with certainty; but there is little doubt that not until the *bufalante*, or bull-fights, had been abandoned, about the year 1640, were *palii* organised on the lines which obtain at the present day. We have it on trustworthy authority, however, that 'the Palio was run in honour of Our Lady of August probably about the year 1238.'

The blessing of the horses by priests, before the race takes place, and the blessing of the winner directly the Palio has been run, is a custom which originated in Siena—'Civitas Virginis,' as the town is named—probably about the middle of the seventeenth century. For the Palio, let it not be forgotten, is, and ever has been, in some respects a religious ceremony, the banner presented to the *contrada* which wins it being adorned with representations of the Blessed Virgin, in whose honour, it may be added, the race is still said to be run.

Probably in no other part of the world is a horserace conducted under conditions so remarkable, in so extraordinary a manner, and run over so 'impossible' a course. For in truth the track around the Piazza del Campo is neither more nor less than a roadway paved with flagstones. Semicircular in shape, sloping downward considerably towards the Via di San Martino, and with a dangerous curve facing the famous Palazzo Piccolomini, the Piazza del Campo with its concave, brick-lined arena, is about as ill adapted to the requirements of a horserace as any site well could be. Upon this flagstoned road cartloads of sand are spread some days before the race is to be run, while immediately in front of the shops and palaces that surround the track tiers upon tiers of wooden benches are built up until the Piazza grows gradually to resemble nothing so much as a vast amphitheatre.

It would be natural to suppose, under the circumstances, that horses to take part in so important a contest would at least be put into training; but they are not. Hired, like so many pieces of machinery, they are entered first for a series of heats to decide which among them are best suited to compete, lots being then drawn for the ten animals to be selected to represent each of the ten competing *contrade*. In judging these heats the aim of the arbitrators is to secure ten horses as equal as possible in both stamina and speed, an exceptionally slow horse or an unusually fast one being equally rejected. Greater by far, however, than the excitement that is displayed when the horses are being chosen is the anxiety that is betrayed by the natives of the various *contrade* on the day the lots are drawn. To prevent any possibility of undue advantage being taken, these lots are drawn much in the same way as the numbers in a foreign lottery. The numbers one to ten having been inscribed upon slips of paper, these slips are first rolled up, then they are enclosed in small cylinders made of wood, and finally the cylinders are placed in one of two glass urns upon a table set inside the main entrance to the Palazzo, while in the other urn are put, in the same way, the names of the ten *contrade* intending to compete. Both urns being so arranged that they can be revolved each upon its axis by means of a handle, at a signal given by one of the captains of the *contrade*, the urn containing the numbers is revolved two or three times, from it being then withdrawn one of the little cylinders and the number inscribed upon the paper shown to everybody and also called out. Moments of supreme suspense follow while the second urn is revolving. Then once more a cylinder is withdrawn, the name of the *contrade* being now called out and shown, and every fresh name greeted with shouts of joy and of execration mingled.

This proceeding at an end, the attention of each *contrada* becomes centred upon the selection of a suitable jockey or *fantino*—in other words, upon the selection of the best whose services the *contrada* is in a position to command. In making this selection, however, the captain of the *contrada* is not influenced by thoughts of the rider's jockeyship; for should a jockey fall off and his horse chance to come in first, the *contrada* represented by the riderless animal would still be awarded the Palio. All that the captain thinks about, therefore—for that matter, all that the entire population think about—is the securing of a *fantino* whose skill with whip or club is known to be undeniable. But let it not be supposed that the horses suffer in consequence. On the contrary, often the jockey most adept with whip or club punishes his mount the least, for the reason that the riders, on the instant the signal to start is given, set to work with might and main to attack one another, while they fall back upon flogging their horses only when no human adversary is near enough to be hit.

The Feast of the Assumption—August 15—is over. In the morning high mass has been celebrated in the Duomo, where from many columns depended the multi-coloured banners of the *contrade* about to compete. Now darkness hangs over the town, but to-night the Sienese do not sleep, excitement at the thought of the morrow's fierce contest driving slumber far from them, so that instead the night is spent in merriment most riotous. At last day dawns, and then, as the sun begins to shine over the town, everywhere men and women may be seen clustering in groups, gesticulating, shouting at the top of their voices one to another, flinging gibes and insults at each other and not infrequently even engaging in fights with fists and sticks, for on this day every native is admittedly the hated enemy of all dwellers in *contrade* other than his own. It is all most interesting and strange. The sun has risen

high in the heavens when all at once the *campone*—the great bell in the Magia tower—roars forth its brazen summons which, echoing down the valleys and reverberating among the hills, 'reminds' all for miles around that to-day the famous Palio of Siena is once more to take place—as though any were likely to have forgotten it!

By noon the entire town is a swaying mass of human beings, the men as well as the women bedecked in colours of every hue but those of sombre tints, for almost since day dawned people from the towns and villages within a wide area of Siena have been pouring into the city in a ceaseless stream through its nine different gates. At about two o'clock the sound of the beating of drums comes from all the *contrade*. Presently armoured knights, pages in silk and velvet and with flowing locks, together with many more quaint and medieval figures, appear from all directions, forcing their way through the jostling crowd and laughing good-humouredly, as they exchange one with another amusing badinage.

But a solemn moment has arrived—the moment second only in importance to the instant when the rope now stretched taut across the track will be dropped to allow the barebacked horses, with their fighting, frenzied riders, to dash off upon their mad career. For every horse entered to run for the Palio is now on its way to the chapel or church in its own *contrada*, there to be solemnly blessed by the priest in waiting. The ceremony, though brief, certainly is impressive; also it exemplifies the superstition that to this day prevails amongst the Sienese. It is impressive, too, on account of the fervour with which all present pray to the Almighty and His saints that their horse about to compete may be enabled to outstrip its rivals. Meanwhile the priest, in surplice and stole and standing at the foot of the altar-steps, also prays devoutly, partly aloud though partly in spirit only, the congregation, made up chiefly of members of the *comparsa* in their gorgeous costumes of brilliant colours, forming a striking background.

A horse's footfalls are heard without, and at once the congregation becomes hushed. The animal is led into the chapel and brought close up to the altar-steps, his rider or *fantino*, elaborately attired and with his helmet on his head, walking alongside him. Of the prayers that are then recited in Latin the following constitute a portion only:

**Our help is in the name of the Lord,**
***Who made heaven and earth.***

**Lord, hear my prayer,**
***And let my cry come unto Thee.***

**The Lord be with you.**
***And with thy spirit.***

***Let us pray.***

**Almighty and everlasting God, who didst preserve thy glorious Saint Anthony, though tried by manifold temptations, unharmed amid the tempests of this world: grant, we beseech thee, that we, thy servants, may profit by his bright example, and, by his merits and intercession, may be saved from the dangers of this present life; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.***

. . . . . .

**Let this animal receive thy blessing, O Lord, whereby it may be preserved in body, and freed from every harm, by the intercession of the blessed Anthony; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.***

The blessing having also been recited in Latin by the priest, holy water is sprinkled over the animal, and forthwith it is led out of the church, the entire congregation flocking after it.

It might be supposed that the natives of the various *contrade* having prayed so earnestly to the Almighty for success would at least give their horses what is popularly termed a 'sporting chance' of winning on their merits only. That, however, is what they do not do, for direct from the churches the members of the *comparsa* march in procession to the Piazza di Giordano Bruno, the official meeting-place of the captains of the *contrade*, and there amid considerable uproar the race is to all intents sold to the highest bidder. Indeed, so great has the animosity between the different *contrade* grown by this time that it is not unusual for a *fantino* to be promised a sum of money for every blow that he shall succeed in administering to some other *fantino* while the race is being run!

And now the course has been cleared. The hour is close on seven, and as the *capitano* of each *contrada*, two *alfieri*, five pages, a drummer, the horse led by a *barbaresco* and with its *fantino* already on its back, parade slowly round the track, amid the vociferous cheering of the multi-coloured, surging throng with which the stands are packed from top to bottom, the scene presented is one that words cannot adequately describe. In all directions flags and banners flutter, for as the pageant progresses the *alfieri* begin all at once to perform many and strange antics and evolutions with these flags and banners, spinning them this way and that, tossing them high in the air and catching them again with remarkable dexterity, the sun meanwhile causing the crests and colours emblazoned upon the banners to flash and sparkle like myriad mammoth fireflies.

The procession is over at last, and the crowd, panting with excitement, watches with straining eyes the group of horses coming gradually into line. The *fantini* have by this time discarded their gaudy apparel and now wear only doublets of coarse canvas and trousers of somewhat the same material, while on their heads metal caps are fitted upon which in a moment blows will rain down in scores; for now grasped tightly in each rider's hand is a wooden club or *nerbo*.

As the rope falls the horses spring at once into their stride, the hail of blows delivered by their fighting and frenzied riders terrifying them beyond measure, and at the same instant there goes up to heaven from many thousand throats a scream so piercing that any one hearing it from afar might

wonder whether all the condemned souls in hell had not simultaneously been let loose upon earth. Women become hysterical, and men too. Imprecations and curses mingle with supplications to Saint Antonio and a dozen other saints to spur this or that horse on to victory and break the necks of all the rest and their riders' necks as well. In the frenzy of their hysteria spectators lose their voices and fling themselves about in their seats, mad with passion and despair. Though the rule that allowed riders to drag one another off their horses during the race was some years ago revoked, it is still not uncommon to see a *fantino* suddenly go tumbling to the ground in the middle of the race, half-stunned by a terrific blow delivered by some rival rider.

As the winner passes the post the report of a fired gun rings out, and within a minute the huge crowd is surging over the track in a wild endeavour to get as near as possible to the animal that has achieved victory. Within a few moments the luckless *fantino* is literally torn off the beast's back to be hoisted on to the shoulders of those about him and thus carried in triumph to the judge's stand, from which the silken *palio* that was so much coveted, together with the silver bowl surmounting it, is soon afterwards lowered into the hands of the turbulent multitude clamouring to receive it.

After that, and once more preceded by the *alfieri* still spinning and tossing aloft their flags and banners, also by the drummers and by many others, the horse is led in procession through the streets, this time to the church of Santa Maria di Provenzano, where amid renewed frantic exultation the Palio is placed upon the high altar and more prayers are poured out to the Almighty, to the Blessed Virgin, and to many saints. And again the horse is blessed, after which it is taken in procession to the church of the victorious *contrada* and blessed a third time.

Such is the Palio of Siena. For centuries it has been held in the historic Piazza del Campo, and probably for many centuries it will continue.

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# THE BRIDGE.

## A MYSTERY OF WAR.

### I.

'I CONSIDER your invention is very ingenious, Mr—er—Barr,' said the General with the air of one summing up; 'the steering by wireless is a most admirable—er—feature, and the embodiment of the —er—telescopic principle would certainly make it most—er—portable. I confess I am surprised that the Navy people haven't taken it up.' He advanced out of the shadow to the table, lit like a billiard-table by six deeply shaded lights, and gazed thoughtfully at the array of plans pinned out upon it. 'The point is,' he continued after a slight pause, 'that the thing is hardly in our line. It is quite conceivable, as you suggest, that occasions might arise when it might be—er—useful. But, as I have already pointed out, it is an established maxim in war that a river line is indefensible; that is a fact which history—er—bears out.'

'It is precisely that maxim which my invention would wipe out, or at any rate modify,' said the keen-faced man bending under the lamp-shades to look up at the speaker opposite. 'No bridge could be thrown across a river within a radius of ten miles of my machine; six of my machines could picket a hundred and twenty miles of river. I keep my model on an island in the river, and work it from the island for convenience' sake. But it wouldn't be necessary to go near the river; the machines might be hidden under water at different points, and operated from a distance. Then again, sir,' he continued eagerly, 'the thing is a secret, and would come as a surprise to an enemy. Even when they discovered what it was they would find it very difficult to guard against.'

'I quite agree,' replied the General, 'that in certain circumstances your invention might prove very—er—useful, but I am afraid I can hardly ask the War Office to buy it as—er—a speculation.' There was a suggestion of testiness and finality in the last words which warned the inventor that further pleading would be useless; nevertheless he made a last despairing appeal.

'May I at least ask you to send a representative down to the river to see my model work, sir?'

'I am afraid we can hardly do that,' said the General after a pause; 'judging from your plans, I think your invention is sound enough, but, as I say—er—really not in our line.'

The inventor leant over the brightly lit table and began pulling out the drawing-pins preparatory to rolling up his plans.

'Don't you trouble to do that. I'll ring for a clerk,' said the General, stepping hastily to an open, paper-strewn bureau and pressing an electric button on it.

'Please pack up these things for Mr—er—Barr,' he said to the clerk who appeared almost instantly; then, turning, he held out his hand to the inventor. 'Well, Mr Barr,' he said with a smile, 'I am sorry we have not been able to do any—er—business; but I must say I am surprised the Navy people haven't taken your machine on. I'm afraid I must get along now, or I sha'n't catch my last train home. I hope you'll come and see me again if I can do anything for you. Er—good-night.'

The clerk made the plans into one large roll, which he tied deftly round the middle with a piece of red tape. 'Shall I carry them down to the cab for you, sir?' he queried.

'No, thank you,' replied the inventor; 'I am walking.'

The clerk noticed, as he went out, that he was a cripple.

II.

The great bridge spanned the river at a point where the latter passed through an amphitheatre of hills. In spite of these natural ramparts, which rendered it easy of defence, the bridge had fallen into the hands of the invaders. What was worse still, it had fallen into their hands intact, and they had quickly converted it into a perfect arsenal—a very Gibraltar in a wide theatre of war. The encircling crests 'bristled' with outward-pointing guns; but, although a large number of these grim monsters were there, not a single ugly snout protruded above the skyline to proclaim the fact. From the great hill bastion to the north of the bridge, and also from that to the south, there flew a number of large war-kites. There, several thousand feet above *terra-firma*, a ring of lonely sentinels sat, each in a diminutive basket-work carrier which had sailed up the wire-rope drawn by a little satellite kite. The objects of these sentinels were two-fold—namely, to be the eyes of the bridge-garrison and to keep off airships; for the latter purpose they were armed with balloon-rifles firing an explosive and highly inflammatory bullet.

At night the amphitheatre of hills blazed with searchlights, which played continually upon the surrounding plains or swept with giant swords of light the under-side of cloud-land.

Above the bridge, that is to say upstream, two busy launches and a flotilla of boats kept constant watch for floating mines; but below, where there was no danger from this source, a single tiny launch patrolled lazily to and fro in the far distance.

The great bridge itself, the centre and object of all this care and guardianship, was day and night a scene of strenuous life, of apparent turmoil, but in reality of unceasing and well-ordered toil. It was, for the time being at least, the only channel through which the life-blood of the striking force of the invading army flowed; the only line of communication between that force and its base. All other bridges were strongly held by the Northlanders; but by a masterly stroke of strategy, aided by the immobility of the Northland armies, this, the most vital for the invaders, had been rushed. It was a railway bridge; but the Corps of Engineers had soon improvised chesses to fill in the gaps between the sleepers, and it was now being used as a road-bridge as well. The ends of the bridge were connected by telephone, and an officer was stationed at each end to control the traffic, which was allowed to flow first one way and then the other. Night and day a dull roar came from the bridge, the tramp of feet and hoofs and the grinding of wheels. These sounds would cease at intervals, only to give place to the slow thunder of a string of heavily laden troop and supply trains—reinforcements for the invaders' striking-force—or to the clatter of trains of empties returning from the front.

III.

About twenty miles north of the bridge the Commander-in-Chief of the Northland forces sat in the parlour of a farmhouse. Before him, carefully fitted together and pinned out on the large oak table, were a number of maps. Several officers, whose scarlet-and-gold gorget patches proclaimed them members of the headquarters-staff, stood round the table and stared gloomily at this large composite map, upon which the positions of the opposing forces were marked by a miniature forest of coloured paper flags.

The old Field-Marshal looked round the circle of bronzed and rather strained-looking faces with a little wry smile.

'Well, gentlemen,' he said, 'the position seems to be in a nutshell; our line of defence extends forty miles, and it is out of the question for us to reply to this very rapid concentration against our left flank in time. Our available reserves are insufficient; and, owing to lack of signalling communication, march discipline, and general organisation, it is, I think you will all agree, impossible to roll up and bring forward the two citizen divisions on our right within two days. To keep our left in position,' he continued, pointing to an irregular line of blue-paper flags on the map, 'would simply mean to have it enveloped and wiped out; with the natural rider that the other two immobile divisions would in turn be enfiladed and crushed. No, to keep our left in position is to ensure defeat in detail; there is, therefore, no course open but to withdraw it. This will unfortunately entail the temporary sacrifice of the capital, but there appears to be no alternative.' He looked round the circle again with the same mirthless smile, which looked almost ghastly in the yellow lamplight.

A stout colonel, wearing the uniform of the citizen army, addressed the General excitedly, 'But if you let the capital be taken we shall be irretrievably ruined, sir. Our credit as the leading merchants and bankers of the world will be gone for ever, even if we turn the enemy out of the capital afterwards.'

'Exactly,' replied the General testily; 'but at any rate we *shall* turn them out afterwards. If I give the army to them piecemeal first we sha'n't even be able to do that.'

'But the country, sir!' replied the citizen colonel, who was also a well-known politician; 'the whole country will be face to face with starvation, for with our credit goes our trade, which includes our food-supply. I hope you'll excuse me, sir,' he continued with intense earnestness and in a lower tone; 'but I speak as a civilian, and also as one who is perhaps more closely in touch with the citizen army than any

officer present. I know the keen spirit of the men, their physique is excellent, and I am absolutely certain they will march the distance in forty-eight hours if you ask them to do it.'

The General glanced round the semicircle of faces with an air of resignation; but when he replied his usually curt voice was almost kindly. He was able to pity, even at such a crisis, that combination of zeal, assurance, and ignorance which so often goes to make up the citizen soldier.

'It is not a question of spirit or of physique, sir,' he said; 'it is a question, as I have already pointed out, of organisation, of training, of march discipline; it is a question of assembling those divisions which are at present deployed, of bringing them here with at least a portion of their ammunition and supply trains, and of again deploying them for action. Have you any idea what that means? Do you know that those two divisions, with their trains, would occupy about thirty-five miles of roadway? I am afraid I can't spare the time to discuss this point with you now.'

The representative of the citizen army looked as if he was about to reply; but, catching a warning glance from the chief of staff who stood behind the General's chair, dropped his eyes and stared gloomily and somewhat sulkily at his boots.

The outlook, as all present recognised, with the exception of the stout colonel, was an almost hopeless one. The citizen army sprawled, like an unwieldy leviathan, over a large area of country; owing to a lack of training and the general breakdown of a previously untried organisation which had looked plausible enough on paper, it was quite unable to adapt its formations to those of a highly trained and mobile enemy. Northland was now learning the bitter lesson that the verdicts of history and of the great masters of the art of war may not lightly be set aside; that untrained troops cannot stand against trained troops; that in the sphere of war, as in all other spheres, organisation and discipline must win the day.

The question of the moment was one of time. Time, indeed, had been the governing factor throughout the short campaign, and the enemy's highly trained professional armies had easily secured a monopoly of this factor. The invaders had won each battle by a quick turning movement, or by gaining superiority of numbers at some weak point by means of a rapid concentration to which the citizen army could not conform in time. It was one of those rapid concentrations which was now in progress, and which threatened the envelopment and annihilation of the left flank and the capture of the capital. The only possible means of stopping this ominous concentration, since it could not be met, was by means of a counter-attack directed at the enemy's line of communications. Owing to considerations of time and space, this could only be done effectually at the bridge. Several desperate attempts had been made upon this, but it had proved impregnable.

The capture of the capital, entailing the most dire results to Northland, therefore appeared to be inevitable; but this fact in all its grim reality was not so tragic at the moment to the members of the general staff as the twisted smile on the grizzled face of the little old man in the chair. As soldiers they realised what retreat and failure meant to their chief, the man who had so often, in other parts of the Empire, saved the honour of Northland and led her armies to victory.

Several hours later the Field-Marshal and his chief of staff were still seated at the table in deep consultation, when an A.D.C. entered hurriedly and without knocking.

'May I speak to you for a moment, sir?' he said, addressing the chief. That officer looked up in surprise with a heavy frown, and was about to make a curt reply, when the intruder cut in with, 'It's very important and urgent, sir.'

The chief turned to the Field-Marshal; his glance was a query.

'Well, what is it?' said the latter, turning to the A.D.C.

'To put it shortly, sir, there is a man in the next room who says he has at Willow Island a wireless torpedo with which he can destroy the bridge.'

A look of incredulity passed over the two grizzled faces.

'Willow Island!' muttered the chief, leaning over and consulting the maps. 'Why, it's six miles from the bridge, sir,' he said, looking across at the Field-Marshal.

The latter turned with a frown to the young staff officer, 'Tell him to take his cock-and-bull story to—— No, stay,' he added; 'it's a straw. Bring him in.'

The A.D.C. disappeared precipitately, and next moment ushered in a young, keen-faced man, who walked with a marked limp.

Soon afterwards a high-power motor-car, one of several standing in the yard, slid out into the roadway and whirred off swiftly into the night.

## IV.

To the three occupants of the canoe, the river seemed a shadowy, Styx-like stream. To the east a number of great beams of light played untiringly, and several times a gigantic ray swept the tree-tops on a headland close by, leaving the canoe and part of the river in blackest shadow, while it lit up the landscape over which it passed with a weird, almost unearthly radiance.

'We shall be hidden by that headland except for the last two hundred yards,' whispered the figure who paddled at the stern of the frail little craft; 'but I doubt if they'll spot us at this distance.' As he spoke a vivid beam moved across the river, and for a moment a fairy-like island of silvery willows was revealed. Next instant darkness, abysmal by contrast, enveloped the canoe, while an ominous glare moved searchingly through the clouds far

overhead. Before the beam returned the canoe had glided beneath the overhanging willows of the island, where the steersman, who seemed to know his way in the dark, guided it into a small boat-house.

'This is the place, gentlemen,' he said in a low voice; 'it is quite hidden from view by the willows.' He turned on a small electric lamp as he spoke, which disclosed the fact that the other two wore uniform. All three stepped gingerly out of the canoe. 'Here is my invention,' continued the steersman, and directed the ray of the lamp on to a long, black, fish-like object floating in the water. 'It is really only a working model, but it is nearly two-thirds of the size I intended the original to be, and it is at present charged with nearly half a ton of gun-cotton.'

'Half a ton!' ejaculated one of the officers in an incredulous whisper.

The other also seemed inclined to be politely sceptical.

'I don't quite see how you are going to ensure hitting the bridge at this range,' he remarked. 'It is perfectly marvellous to me how a torpedo can be guided from the shore so as to strike a moving battleship out at sea; but at any rate you can see the battleship—your mark is visible all the time. Here your mark is invisible, and the pier of a bridge is a comparatively small object.'

'I will show you how it's done,' replied the inventor with a grim smile. 'You see, we don't aim straight at a pier. When the torpedo approaches the bridge it is guided towards one bank and then turned sharply towards the centre of the river, so as to strike obliquely at the line of piers; we don't mind very much which pier we hit. As to the bridge being invisible, I have a map here which for all practical purposes gives me as clear a view of it as a camera-obscura would. Will you hold this light, please?'

The round circle of light disclosed a keyboard on which were several wires and levers. Pinned out on the centre of the board was a large-scaled map, up the centre of which ran a broad, winding blue line denoting a river. The inventor touched a small lever, and in the darkness behind the three there was a faint gurgle, followed by an almost noiseless swirl. The two officers turned simultaneously, and saw that the strange, fish-like object had disappeared. They turned again to watch the inventor. He took from its slot in the keyboard a shining object which resembled a metal pencil, to which was attached a jointed metal arm and a wire which led off into the darkness under the keyboard-bench; he placed the point of the metal pencil on the centre of the river line on the map, and touched a switch. Instantly there was a faint whirring noise, and the pencil, guided by his hand, began to move almost imperceptibly down the line.

'She is off now,' he muttered grimly.

There was silence for several moments, broken only by the faint whirring sound, while, like the slow-moving minute-hand of a clock, the pencil point crept forward. The fascinated watchers leant over to get a closer view, and noticed for the first time that the river line along which the shining pencil point was creeping was covered with a network of gossamer-like lines, through which ran a single red line in shallow zig-zags. It was this red line which the pencil followed.

'By Jove!' muttered one of the officers under his breath, 'I see. The guiding is a question of scale.'

'Exactly—geometrical ratio,' replied the inventor without looking up. Then, after a pause, 'Seems slow work on the map, but out there in the water she is travelling at the rate of nearly eight hundred yards a minute.'

V.

The officer in command of the little alien launch which is monotonously patrolling the river about half-a-mile below the bridge, is seated with his second in command on what they facetiously term the quarterdeck. Now and then one or other of the great, tireless searchlights on the hilltops near the bridge directs its beam upon the river, and throws up the little craft in silhouette—a strange, fairy-like schooner in miniature, outlined against the black waters of the slumbering stream. The C.O., however, has no eye for the beautiful to-night; he is bored, frankly bored, and heartily sick of his pendulum-like patrol, of this incessant and monotonous journey to and fro.

'If there was any reason in it,' he grumbles to his long-suffering junior in a deep guttural voice, 'if it was in any way necessary, one could grin and bear it; but what does the Prince imagine is coming up stream to destroy his precious bridge—a submarine? Another three days and nights of this and I shall run amok.'

The junior makes no reply beyond a grunt, which is apparently meant to express sympathy.

They sit and puff at their cigars in silence, which is presently broken by a prolonged rumble from the bridge.

'Another batch of troop-trains,' says the junior laconically; 'they must have mended that last break in the line very quickly.'

A searchlight from the bridge sweeps suddenly upon the river and comes to rest there for several minutes.

'Curse those —— lights!' exclaims the C.O.; 'I shall go blind if I have very much more of this. It is like being in a perpetual thunderstorm, what with the searchlights and those infernal trains going over the bridge.' The junior grunts again in reply, then after a long pause slowly takes his cigar out of his mouth.

'Yes, it is too absurd of the Prince,' he says, speaking with a slight drawl. 'Nothing could approach the bridge unseen from this direction with those lights playing on the river. But cheer up, old horse; it won't be for long now. In another twenty-

four hours we shall have enough troops up there to mop up the Northlanders' mob of an army, and then for their capital, and a little unofficial loot—eh, what! I can understand the Prince being a little anxious though, because, of course, if anything happened to this bridge now it would spoil the whole show, cut off the field army's retreat, and leave them stranded without any food.'

'Yes, yes, of course I know all that,' replied the other testily; 'but there is a limit to everything, and when it comes to making one patrol a piece of water which is already swept by our searchlights and covered by about six batteries, I say that the limit is—well, it's too d——d silly for'——

'Great God! what's that?' exclaims the junior in a hoarse whisper, springing to the deck-rail and pointing to the river.

Less than twenty yards away is a swiftly moving furrow of water, as if a great fish just below the surface was dashing upstream after some finny prey. As they watch awestruck, they see the furrow veer off towards the left bank and then turn inwards as if to strike at the piers of the bridge obliquely. At this instant the searchlight flashes off. For a few moments, which seem like an eternity, the two officers stand rigidly gripping the deck-rail and straining into the darkness. A blinding pillar of flame leaps from the bosom of the river, and in its light they see the great, gray girders heave upwards, and a thousand massive blocks of masonry fly skywards; in the same instant there follows a cataclysm of sound which leaves them dazed and stupefied. While they stand thus, a wall of water like a tidal bore sweeps down upon their little craft, and turning it over as if it were a paper boat, hurls it into the darkness.

. . . . . .

Two searchlights swept round from the hilltops on to what had been a noble bridge. Its back was broken. One of the titanic centre piers had vanished, and on each side of the gap the twisted girders leant steeply downwards into the madly swirling waters.

Thousands of eyes strained at the scene from the darkness which hid the surrounding heights. As they gazed, and the water subsided, several huge box-like objects emerged from the river, their wet edges gleaming in the searchlight's glare — the remnants of a troop-train.

A hoarse murmur of dismay broke the death-like stillness and echoed round the invisible amphitheatre. The sound floated up to the startled, shivering sky-sentries far overhead, and it seemed to them as they peered down into the darkness that a great multitude moaned in the dim abyss below; then, as the sound swelled, they heard clearly the anguished cry of the defenders: 'The Bridge! The Bridge! O God, the Bridge!'

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## THE UTILISATION OF EXHAUST-STEAM FOR POWER.

AT various times the question of the slowly but steadily diminishing coal-supply of the world comes to the front, is keenly discussed at the meetings of the scientific and engineering societies, and then passes for a period again into the background. One of the chief causes of waste of thermal energy is the discharge into the atmosphere of the exhaust-steam from non-condensing steam-engines. Where coal is cheap, as at collieries and most iron and steel works, and where cooling water is not immediately available, it is the practice, after expanding the steam down to atmospheric pressure, to discharge it into the atmosphere, and the large amount of thermal energy stored in this steam is thus wasted.

The subject of the utilisation of exhaust-steam for the production of power has been carefully studied by Professor A. Rateau, of Paris, and it is to a large extent due to his ingenuity that the matter has been brought to an entirely successful issue both technically and commercially. The remarkable development of the steam-turbine within the last ten years has contributed largely to this result, and indeed has made it possible.

Briefly, the method consists in taking the exhaust-steam at or a little above atmospheric pressure, passing it through a regenerative heat-accumulator, and thence to a steam-turbine, where it does work in the course of its expansion down to a pressure which may be as low as within 10 per cent. of a perfect vacuum. The turbine drives a dynamo or rotary air-compressor, or whatever is required. The accumulator consists of an iron vessel containing a large quantity of water, through which the exhaust-steam passes in the shape of numerous small bubbles giving up *en route* some of its heat-energy to the water; the steam collects in the space above the water-level, and then passes on to the turbine. The function of the accumulator is to form a heat-reserve to tide over the short periods during which the steam supply may fail, as in the case of reversing engines for colliery winders or rolling-mills, by continuing to supply steam to the turbine, the energy for this purpose being provided by that stored up in the large volume of water. For the efficient operation of the turbine a good vacuum is necessary; and when an ample supply of cold water for condensing purposes is not available it pays to provide cooling-towers, so that the same cooling water may be used over and over again.

British colliery-owners and manufacturers have been quick to take advantage of this new system. Many collieries have installed such plants, and the exhaust-steam from their winding-engines provides

all the electrical power required for lighting, pumping, &c., in the pits. A large steel-works near Middlesborough has a plant which provides two thousand seven hundred horse-power of electrical energy, and two thousand six hundred horse-power in the shape of compressed air for its furnaces, and all the steam required for this is derived from the rolling-mill and auxiliary engines in their steel-mills.

Allowing for interest on capital outlay, depreciation, &c., the weekly saving amounts to hundreds of pounds. This firm is about to install a further seven thousand seven hundred horse-power, the steam supply for it being that which is at the present moment going to waste.

Where the supply of exhaust-steam is continuous, as in the case of non-condensing engines driving dynamos, the use of an accumulator is unnecessary, and the steam passes straight to the turbine. One of the foremost examples of such a plant is that at the Edinburgh Corporation Electric Lighting Works, where the steam exhausted from engines giving four thousand horse-power produces a further three thousand two hundred horse-power from exhaust-steam turbines.

This means that without any additional expenditure on boilers and other plant for generating steam, and without burning any more coal, the available output of the Corporation Electric Lighting Works has been increased by three thousand two hundred horse-power. The outlay required to obtain this is confined to that upon the turbines, dynamos, and condensing-plant. This scheme of the Edinburgh Corporation is of interest in another respect. There was no ordinary supply of cooling water available for condensing, and it was decided to make use of the city sewage, which passed through a culvert near at hand, for the purpose. The initial difficulties have been successfully overcome, and the plant is now in satisfactory operation.

The Rateau system for the utilisation of exhaust-steam is being taken up in Canada, and a large plant is now being installed by British firms at the Dominion Iron and Steel Company's works, where the exhaust-steam turbines will drive electrical generators and also centrifugal blowers for supplying air to the blast-furnaces at a pressure of twenty pounds to the square inch. A smaller plant is in process of construction for the Dominion Coal Company.

The same principle is being applied to the propulsion of steamships. Of course, all marine engines are worked condensing, because an ample supply of water is always at hand for the purpose; but it appears possible that better results may be obtained by expanding the steam first in the cylinders of an ordinary reciprocating engine, and then, when it has reached a low pressure, using the remaining energy in it to drive a steam-turbine. It remains to be seen whether the anticipated improvement in coal-consumption will be attained in practice. The White Star Company have thought the experiment worth trying; and in order to make as fair a comparison as is possible they have built two vessels, the *Megantic* and *Laurentic*, each of fifteen thousand tons, and are employing them on the same service. The former is equipped with ordinary reciprocating engines, and the latter has a combination of reciprocating engines with turbines; but otherwise the two ships are identical in construction. Careful records are being kept of the operation of each ship, and a comparison of the results will prove to be very interesting.

## YANG-TSE RIVER.

My hull is on leave in England, I lounge and take my ease;
But my heart's in a little white gunboat on the yellow China seas.
I walk on the dirty pavements, 'twixt lines of dingy walls;
But my mind stretches ever eastward, where the Yang-tse River calls.
The spell of the East is on me, and I see with my inner eye
The green of its fields, the brown of its flood, the blue of its sky.

In dreams of the prince of torrents, I mark at its rice-fringed edge
The sampans moored by the village, the water-snakes in the sedge;
And the gunboat works 'gainst the current, slowly, mile after mile,
To drop her anchor at evening by the Golden Pagoda's isle;
And the junks drift gently past us, and the dying sunlight burns
On the great mat sails, and the crazy masts, and the high carved sterns.

Born in Tibetan mountain-springs, 'mongst rocks and rapids free,
Three thousand miles of stately flood flow swiftly to the sea
By bamboo-groves, and green lush fields, and many a queer white town
Where noble tombs attest to long-dead Emperors' renown;
Red temple-roofs and fort-crowned hills the tide goes softly by,
To old Nanking, and Chin-kiang-fu, and to famous and rich Shanghai.

I am sick of the streets of England, the mud and the traffic's roar,
Give me a boat on the Yang-tse-kiang, and I'll not ask for more;
Let me watch the paddy-fields' colour change as the dusk grows in the sky,
Let me hear the little waves play on the sides as the current takes them by.
I am weary of English ports and docks, the factory smoke and the grime,
I hunger to leave them, to live again in the pleasant Eastern clime.

JULIAN TENISON.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

By W. E. CULE, Author of *Prince Adrian of Zell*, &c.

## CHAPTER I.—MISS VICARS.

THESE events of yesterday at Hexminster are still the focus of a local interest which refuses to be satiated; but so much of the current gossip is prejudiced that the stranger often finds it difficult to say whether he is listening to the details of a romance, a scandal, or a comedy. Under these circumstances there should be room for an authentic narrative, as notable for its impartiality as for its brevity, which will enable each reader to classify the story for himself. It can do no hurt to the innocent, and the others concerned will probably find truth much more generous than gossip.

It begins with Miss Vicars, who little dreamed at the time what was in store for her. In crossing the Green she had passed the Morgans' cottage, and old Mrs Morgan had called her in. The aged couple had obtained a copy of an Australian newspaper, and had found in it a long article dealing with Kingsland.

'I did hope you would be passing, Miss Alison,' said the old woman with tremulous eagerness. 'Indeed, I have been looking out for you all day. I know it's too bad of us to trouble you like this; but there's no one can explain things like you. Even the Rector don't seem to make them so clear.'

The flattery had its pathetic side. 'I shall be glad to read it for you,' said Miss Vicars, smiling. 'How is your husband to-day?'

'He's much about the same. He just moves between the bed and the arm-chair, with a little turn in the sun now and then. Come right in, do!'

Accordingly the young lady closed her sunshade and went in. Old Thomas Morgan looked up from his chair with a smile of greeting, and removed the spectacles through which he had been poring over the precious newspaper from the other side of the world. He was seventy-five, and very frail after a life of unremitting labour. His thin hair and beard were white, and some of his faculties were impaired. His difficulty in hearing was a constant problem to his old wife, for it was noticeable that he could generally hear well enough when a certain subject was under discussion. As with so many of the aged, it was not his hearing that had failed, but the faculty of attention, and as his whole mind was filled with one matter, he was always on the alert for a word in regard to it.

The story was a very simple one after all, and not in the least uncommon. These old people had an only son, who had gone to Australia more than twenty years before. He had proved a good son, however, and had made an effort to keep in touch with his parents. His letters had been ordinary enough always—Alison had seen several of them—but for some years now he had been making up for any lack of words by sending a steady supply of money. It began to come just as old Morgan had ceased to earn a fair living, and had lifted the simple couple far above all fear of want. Gradually the gifts had grown in value, so that the old people, if so disposed, might have enjoyed comparative luxury. Instead, they had clung to their lifelong simplicity of wants, and had laid the surplus aside for the absent son. But he was now much more than an ordinary son to them, and they only lived to think of him and to await his return. 'The folly of aged parents,' as Mrs Hellier once remarked, 'is one of the most pathetic of studies.'

Alison's aunt, Mrs Hellier, was their district visitor, but she had long since relegated this duty to her niece. She was not interested in Australia, and knew nothing whatever about its latest state, the colony of Kingsland; consequently the old folks had tired her. But Alison, being tender-hearted, had found a certain pleasure in them, and had spent many an hour seated at their round table, reading and explaining columns from old Australian newspapers. She might have found it difficult to give her reasons, but the enthusiasm and


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faith of these poor parents wakened her sympathy in a curious way, and she had become a little infected with their absurd expectations. The truth was, probably, that in her heart she liked the old couple for their self-delusion. The poor girl had been forced by degrees to abandon all her own romantic imaginings, and had come to see that life was extremely humdrum and matter of fact. All her environment was of this character; but in this simple cottage a very ordinary emigrant boy reigned in a golden halo. Besides, he was an unknown element, and so in time this cottage had come to represent romance to her, and a side of life which could never by any possibility find expression in her aunt's house. This state of mind was of course dangerous, and accounts for much that followed.

To-day it was with her usual sympathy that she answered the old man's greeting and took up the newspaper.

'It is quite an old one,' she said. 'But there seems to be a good deal of news in it.'

'Yes,' said the old man, with intense gratification. 'It 's all about the town they 've settled upon for the capital. And a fine place it 's going to be, by all accounts. But perhaps you 'll just look through first, miss, and see if you can see the name. Then we 'll hear about the city.'

That was the usual programme—to seek everywhere first for the name of David Morgan. This was always Alison's duty, for their tired eyes were only bewildered by the endless columns of small type. So she scanned the heavy pages rapidly, seeing several Morgans here and there—for the name is prominent enough in Australasia, and even the greatest statesman under the Southern Cross rejoiced in it—but no David Morgan until she had just finished her survey. Then she perceived it, in small type, at the very foot of a column.

Alison had learnt self-suppression, if not prudence, in her aunt's school. Here, too, her natural kindness and consideration came to her aid, and it took her but a moment to read the paragraph and to resolve that she would say nothing about it. It might even be possible, she thought, to cut it out before she left. What a hard world it was for those who cherished illusions! Then she smiled and shook her head, and turned back to the long article on the new capital.

'Has your son ever told you what business he is engaged in?' she asked casually. 'No? Isn't that strange?'

'No, miss, not a bit,' replied old Morgan with unexpected quickness and in instant defence. 'You see, he intended to tell us in one of his letters, but was so busy that he finished up without doing it. But ever afterwards he thought he had told us, and, not being given to talk about himself, never said another word about it. That 's how it was.'

'I 'm sure it was,' said Miss Vicars at once, and with real admiration. For in spite of her romantic leanings—or perhaps because of them—she was both intelligent and tactful where tender feelings were concerned. 'Now, shall I read about the new capital?'

So they settled down to listen, and for about forty minutes she held their attention with the story of New Tyre, that capital which was to be greater than Melbourne or Adelaide or Sydney, and greater even than that old-time Mistress of the Seas whose first records are lost in the mists of the ages. She had to explain much as she proceeded, but she did not attempt the impossible. They had never been more than ten miles outside their native district, and it was too late to correct their limited conceptions of the world. They had quaint ideas on other matters also.

'There is to be a Colonial Conference in London soon,' she said as she folded the paper. 'I suppose the Kingsland people will be sending their Premier to it.'

'I wonder whether he would know our David,' said the old lady earnestly.

'Most likely he would,' said her husband. 'Being Prime Minister, he 'd know everybody of any note. —What do you think, miss?'

'Of course it is quite possible,' said Alison cautiously. 'There would be no harm in asking him. I will try to find out something about it, and then you could easily write or get a letter written. I will'——

She had been about to promise an immediate inquiry, but paused abruptly as she heard a rough footfall. Some one had entered the little wooden gate, and was walking heavily up the neat flagstones towards the open door. In the sunny afternoon the Green was very quiet, and a sudden step was really a disturbing element. Looking up at Mrs Morgan, who had made some sudden movement, the young lady was astonished and alarmed at what she saw; for the old dame was pallid, and her knotted hands shook as they rested on the table. Poor old soul! She had been waiting and listening for that step for some twenty years.

Alison was afraid. 'Don't move!' she said quickly. 'I 'll go to the door for you.'

She reached it just as the visitor raised his hand to knock. He was a man with a Gladstone bag, and she had a vague idea that only colonials wore those wide-rimmed gray hats. He was a little startled by her appearance, and as she was daintily dressed and fresh of face, she must have looked pleasing at the first glance. In fact, we may take it that the gossips are right who declare that Morgan admired her as soon as he saw her. She had a little colour, too, from the excitement of a growing conviction.

The man was so plainly taken aback that for a moment he forgot his question. Then he asked abruptly, 'Does Thomas Morgan still live here?'

'Yes,' said Miss Vicars gently; and she turned to the old people, her face all aglow with joy—their joy. The visitor did not wait, but stepped at once into the room. He gazed at the two who had waited so long, and then he gave a little laugh.

'Well, mother! Well, father! Don't you know me?'

Then the old woman murmured, 'David!' rising to meet him with all her foolish emotion in her wrinkled countenance. The old man, too, half-dazed, had got to his feet, smiling feebly in his surprise, and supporting himself by the arm of his chair. And it was in just that way that the hero came home.

It was a pathetic little scene—such an incident could hardly pass without some pathos; and yet there is no doubt that it was a little disappointing—not, of course, to the parents, but to the young lady who was a spectator. It was so prosaic, you know. Here was the long-lost, perfect son simply shaking hands with his parents, dropping his bag in a corner of the room, and placing his hat upon the centre of the table. She was in every sense a girl of taste and refinement, and she noticed that he was badly dressed in a ready-made suit of a rather loud check-pattern. His arms were somehow too long for his sleeves, so that the wristbands of a coarse blue-flannel shirt were much in evidence. His boots were needlessly heavy and noisy, and she perceived that he had not shaved that day—that day of all days! His face was tanned and manly; but he was certainly coarse—yes, a little coarse.

She hastened to take her leave. It was interesting to be here at such a crisis, but the discomfort of intrusion was increased by the sense of disappointment. She could not escape, however, until an introduction had been made.

'This is our David, Miss Alison,' said old Mrs Morgan, her face working pathetically. 'He has come!—David, Miss Alison has been very kind to us. She came to-day to read us the newspaper. There's a lot about Kingsland in it.'

'Our David' was not quite at his ease. He glanced at the folded newspaper on the table—glanced at it, as Alison recollected later, with something of question or suspicion in his look. Then he faced her, and extended a hand backed by the blue-flannel wristbands.

'How d'you do, miss?' he asked bluffly; and poor Alison made a great effort to answer in suitable terms. Then she gave a general 'Good-afternoon' and escaped, to make her way home across the Green. And at this point we are bound to pause so that we may correct one of the statements made by current gossip. Miss Vicars had not 'taken to' the returned emigrant at first sight—not by any means. If she had any feeling at all, she disliked him because he had disappointed her.

When she reached the old house adjoining the Canonry, in the West Road, she imparted the news to her aunt. Mrs Hellier was engaged at the time with certain parochial accounts, and was only mildly interested.

'Young Morgan returned?' she said languidly. 'What is he like? I don't remember him in his early days.'

The girl was transparently truthful. She did not hesitate to sacrifice her last illusion.

'He is—he is—well, I was rather disappointed,' said she.

Mrs Hellier gave a chilly smile. 'You had believed the old people's talk, of course,' she said. 'Couldn't you have discounted it to some extent?'

'I believe I did. But still'——

'The reality is worse, I suppose. Is he a boor?'

That was a trifle harsh. 'I can hardly say that,' said Miss Vicars. 'But he certainly looks'——

'Common?'

'Well, yes.'

Mrs Hellier gave the same smile again without an effort, and returned to her accounts. It may be remembered that for some years she had managed with considerable ability the finances of the National Schools Shoe Club. In Cathedral circles she was a personage to be reckoned with, quite apart from the shoe club. Her husband had been solicitor to the diocese, and his death some years before had left her to magnify his office in solitary splendour. A little later a clergyman-brother of hers had also died, leaving his only daughter to her care with a modest fortune. This brother had taken pains that the girl's money should have a capable guardian, and had perhaps supposed that what was good for the money must also be good for the girl.

Alison had come to Mrs Hellier at the age of twenty-two from a secluded country parsonage, and during the five years of her stay—for she was now twenty-seven—had gradually been reshaped to the model which her aunt considered the only perfect one for a young lady. As we have seen, some touch of the romantic still lingered with her; but it was a faint survival that struggled against heavy odds. She lived and moved in a world where she scarcely ventured to express an opinion, and had almost forgotten how to form one. To put it briefly, what had once been a singularly sweet girl was now almost stripped of everything that had made her attractive. Instead of these things, she was being equipped with her aunt's views and standards, and would perhaps make, in time, a very creditable member of local society.

In the present case she saw that her aunt was again right. To herself there had been something beautiful in the way the old people on the Green had idealised their absent son, and she had cherished a faint hope of seeing some justification for it. He might have come without the halo, indeed, but equipped with every other advantage; and he had come at last in a ready-made suit of loud checks and a hideous flannel shirt. Common? Yes, that was the word. Her aunt was always right. She could not recall any redeeming feature about the man, except that his glance was open and honest. And those awful wristbands! Yet this was actually life. She must bring herself yet one more stage towards accepting things as they really were. She had once cherished vague dreams of a prince who would one day ride into Hexminster to find her,

adorned with all the graces she admired in man; but she had set a wrong and ridiculous standard, and must definitely abandon it. There was Mr Lewis Garland, a man in a good position, quite ready to admire her in earnest, and sufficiently wise to be able to make himself acceptable even to her aunt. She would take him her two thousand pounds, with Mrs Hellier's blessing, and they would have all that was essential to social happiness at Hexminster. And what more could be expected?

It was with this conclusion that she fell asleep, to have the night reflect in a fantastic fashion the confused impressions of the day. In the morning she was amused by the vague remembrance of a dream in which the long-wished-for prince had called to her from the other side of a garden wall. She had responded, and then he had tried to touch her over the dividing stone. But she had almost screamed with dismay to see this delivering hand adorned with wristbands of coarse blue flannel!

*(To be continued.)*

# INCOME-TAX AVOIDANCE.

WITH an income-tax at 1s. 2d. in time of peace, people are disposed to look well about them to see that they do not pay to the Exchequer more than, in Scots parlance, they are 'entitled' to do.

To avoid the tax is totally different from evading it. In the case of all taxes it is the constitutional and legal right of the subject to arrange his finances and order his transactions so as to keep out of the sweep of the taxing statutes if, and so far as, he can. This was emphasised by Lord Dunedin, speaking officially in his place in Parliament as then Lord Advocate. He ridiculed the notion that any suggestion of reproach could possibly be implied in saying that any one had done so, or that any lawyer had advised or aided it.

The tax can be avoided in only three ways, though some of these may take many forms. They consist in so arranging that the tax shall (1) not be payable, or (2) be returnable, or (3) be in effect paid by some one else. The question who pays any particular tax is notoriously difficult, and much money is lost by the tax-payer owing to a very natural confusion regarding

### DIVIDENDS PAYABLE 'FREE OF INCOME-TAX.'

Thus, a lady keeps a small shop. She has also £500 invested. This £500 is in ordinary shares of a sound concern paying 6 per cent. Her whole income is not over £160. She is not assessed on her business. She receives her dividend of £30 expressly 'free of income-tax'—and, in fact, no tax is deducted from the £30. Although a keen business woman, she has our sympathy if it do not occur to her that, *contrary to the statement in the dividend warrant*, she is paying income-tax on the £30, and is entitled to apply to the Inland Revenue for a return of £1, 15s.

### COMPANIES' UNDISTRIBUTED PROFITS.

But ought she to recover *only* £1, 15s.? Suppose the company have that year paid tax on a profit which could have yielded a 12 per cent. dividend, but they have carried to reserve as much as they have divided. The lady is allowed the £1, 15s. on the (true) theory that in effect and substance she has first, though indirectly, paid it to the Exchequer. Well, has not she just as much paid a share of the tax on the undistributed profits? When, then, is she to get back the additional £1, 15s.? In point of fact she never does so in very many cases, and to this extent it seems to us that injustice is suffered. Since this article was written a cognate question has been raised in the House of Commons in the form of a suggestion that companies should be assessed on the dividends paid and not on the income received or profits earned.

### SEQUESTRATIONS AND LIQUIDATIONS.

In the mass, quite a large amount of income-tax is paid by such estates. Who ever heard of any creditor or shareholder obtaining, directly or indirectly, a return from the Inland Revenue of his proportion of this tax? Why not? Why, for example, should a shareholder in a solvent company fare worse in this respect after than before the liquidation date? The grievance is accentuated if at that date the accounts include a large amount of undistributed profits.

In the cases dealt with in the two preceding paragraphs combination might secure justice.

### MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN.

Take the case of a widow and four children living in family and dependent on her liferent of the estate of the husband and father. Total income, £280; statutory abatement, £160; tax really paid on £120. Substantially the £280 is the income not of one person but of five. Now if, say, £30 a year be allocated to each child, this leaves the children far within the exemption; and as to the mother, her income is then £280 − £120 (£30 × 4) = £160, and so she also is tax-free. And so the household will then pay no tax at all. The Inland Revenue will allow some such arrangement as the above if (*a*) the will contains a clause burdening the mother with the maintenance of the children while remaining in family with her, or (*b*) the children are in a

position to claim their 'legal rights' under Scots law, or (*c*) the testator was legally liable to maintain them.

BANK INTEREST.

If I borrow £100 from an individual or an ordinary lending company, I pay my interest, less tax. If, on the other hand, I borrow from my banker, I pay the interest in gross. My proper course is then to apply to the Inland Revenue for return of the tax on this interest. The bank will give the necessary certificate. Many people fail to do this, and much money is lost in this way every year.

BUILDING SOCIETY LOAN INSTALMENTS.

These usually pay off the loan, principal and interest, in about thirteen and a half years. The instalments are fortnightly. The annual contributions remain uniform throughout. At the beginning each payment is almost wholly interest, and at the end each is almost wholly principal. If the member has paid tax on the rent or assessed value of the property, then he should annually insist on the society refunding to him tax on the interest paid by him during the year. The writer has not seen managers of such societies obtrusively persistent in pointing this out to the members.

CASUAL PROFITS.

The tax-payer should remember that profits from such casual sources as Stock Exchange dealings are not chargeable, and he should not rely on the officials correcting any error he may make in this respect. If he has any doubt on this point he should test it when he has been so unfortunate as to make a loss. Suppose he returns his professional income at £300, deducts a Stock Exchange loss of £150, and claims total exemption as being not over £160. He will be at once undeceived.

LIFE ASSURANCE.

Premiums not exceeding one-sixth of the income go free of tax. Thus, if my income is £1800, and I pay £300 for premiums on policies on my life, I pay tax on £1500. If my income is £300, premiums £50, I pay on £90 only, being £300 *minus* £160 statutory abatement, and *minus* £50 premiums. Here we touch the exemption of 'savings.' But the drawback is that it scarcely does to put everything into the form of life assurance, for if money is wanted a sacrifice must be faced. But then, again, there are policies and policies, and it is suggested that the insurance companies would find it well worth their while to give very special consideration to the question of how far they can go in the way of devising policies which will give the greatest possible benefit with the least risk, the factors being (1) the statutory rules, (2) sound finance, and (3) the possibility of the man requiring the money. Is there any great difficulty in a ten years' policy—that is, payable at the end of ten years, or at previous death, but with various extension options if the assured should be living at the end of the ten years? If ten years, why not five years? Undisguisedly the object here is to obtain the benefit of income-tax remission on life premiums for an ordinary short savings investment.

ACCUMULATING CAPITAL INCREMENT.

Suppose I have £100 to set aside and am on the lookout for an investment. I see advertised a policy on another person's life for £200, fully paid up (no premiums to pay), policy maturing on a given date, or that other person's earlier death, upset price £100. Now, if I buy it, then (subject to exemption or abatement in the case of small incomes) the position is: (1) My £100, being surplus income, has paid tax without relief; (2) at a future date I shall receive £200 (or £200 *plus* bonuses), and no part of this will be chargeable with income-tax; (3) the policy yield is no doubt lessened by the fact that the company pays tax, but that is a matter of price, and it is to be supposed that the price is (or it may be) adjusted so as to throw that burden on the seller in the shape of lessened price. The example of a life policy has been taken; but it is only one illustration, though it must be admitted that the favourable points concur in the above example in a way which it may be difficult to equal elsewhere. The point is that the increase is not taxable income, but capital increment, and thus the fruits of my £100 savings escape the tax.

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS.

This is the special point of the recent articles in the *Financial Review of Reviews*. One criticism we make upon these articles is, that they seem to represent the legal point as matter of opinion, whereas it is definitely decided law. It is clear beyond all question that if I am entitled to £100 of income from an investment in, say, Canada, and if I do not bring that income to the United Kingdom, it is not liable to income-tax. The points are that the income shall be (1) derived abroad, and (2) kept abroad. It need not be saved or reinvested; it may be spent. It need not be kept or spent where it is earned; it may be earned in Canada and spent in Switzerland. It would not do to pay your London tailor with a cheque on the foreign bank into which you pay your foreign income. It is essential to make certain that no foreign income-tax will be charged, for example, by the countries where the income is (1) earned or (2) banked. It may be admitted that the word 'foreign' has a suggestion of danger, and though we use it as including 'colonial,' still we should not be disposed to advise individuals to invest in, say, direct mortgages of Canadian farms. But debentures of Canadian mortgage companies are freely taken through agents in this country, and are excellent securities. It is not necessary that the debentures or coupons should be kept out of this country.

From these *data* we get results which may show in various forms, including the following:

Thus, suppose I hold £1000 Chinese bonds at 4 per cent. I pay the coupons into a bank in a Continental city, and I use the money abroad to pay for a Continental holiday. The tax is thus avoided, and so I save £2, 6s. 8d.

Again, suppose I invest £1000 in a debenture of a Canadian mortgage company at 4 per cent. at least, and I make the best arrangement I can with them for reinvesting the income automatically in Canada. This is my savings fund, and I live on what I make at home. No part of this Canadian income and its accumulations pays any income-tax.

Or again, suppose I am a capitalist to the extent of £25,000, which at 4 per cent. gives £1000 a year. Exemption of savings does not satisfy me. I do not wish to save. Neither do I wish to reduce my estate. I place it in Chinese, Japanese, and other high-class foreign investments. The coupons I never cash at home. I send them abroad for investment, in, say, Canada. My annually increasing Canadian income is also invested there. I thus make Canadian investments annually to the extent of at least £1000. But, of course, I must live on something; so I sell £1000 Japanese or Chinese bonds every year, and spend that. In this way I pay no income-tax at all, thus saving £58, 6s. 8d. a year. In time I shall have nothing but Canadian investments. If that time arrives I intend to reverse the process. There is, of course, the risk of selling at a loss; but that may occur under any system, and it may be equalised by an occasional gain; and, in any case, it is not essential that the investments should be fluctuating or Stock Exchange securities at all.

The point remains, when and how may the money be brought into this country with impunity and a strict observance of law, which is essential? Well, as to that generally, (1) holiday money for foreign trips is never meant to see this country; (2) foreign and colonial investments are so numerous and popular that, if accumulations are not required to be encroached upon, they need never be brought here, but may be transferred direct, if at all, from one foreign investment to another, and this even on death; (3) if the income be placed abroad into a bond or other investment, which is sent home, that is not receipt here of the money, for the money is obviously abroad; (4) a subsequent realisation of that investment and the receipt of the proceeds here will, we think, not be, at least it will not always be, sufficient to attract the tax; (5) the tax is not avoided by merely delaying the remittance home until after the expiry of the financial year in which the income accrued; but (6) that delay will have the effect of postponing the payment of the tax until the year of the actual receipt in this country, and there can be no claim by the authorities for interest as on an arrear of unpaid tax; so that, at the very lowest, this is equivalent to an interest gain, which of itself may in some cases be material; and (7) the year of receipt here will regulate the *rate* of tax; and if there is any prospect that the rate will ever fall, this of itself holds out the possibility of astute economy. As to No. 4, which undoubtedly in many cases may come to be the crux of the whole matter, much may depend on the particular circumstances of each case. It would, however, seem difficult for the authorities to maintain the doctrine—once income, always income. The converse of that would be—once capital, always capital; but that is a doctrine which is officially repudiated, as witness the case of capital sunk in the purchase of an annuity, when the full half-yearly payments of the annuity are subjected to income-tax.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

SIXTH STORY.

## THE DUKE OF PENTLAND.

I AM not sure whether, strictly speaking, the ring was sufficiently concerned in the affair of the Duke of Pentland to allow of that being referred to here. Still, the sight of it reminds me of him, and undoubtedly what he did helped me in the end to work out its history, so I will make no further apology for speaking of it.

When I started for Sallington by the early train one November morning, I anticipated a dull, cold journey, and a fortnight of ordinary Midland country practice.

I bought a morning paper and an *Athenæum*, found an empty third-class smoker, and settled down in a corner seat next the platform to watch the arrival of other passengers.

A wiry-looking, gray man, in hunting kit, came strolling down the platform, and rather to my surprise, after a careless glance into the compartment, stepped in.

I have an idiotic way of occasionally making quite unnecessary statements.

'This is a third,' I said.

The man turned and surveyed me in such a leisurely fashion that I had plenty of time to inspect him. He was of slight build, very upright, with very gray hair—almost white. He had a thin,

brown, keen, clean-shaven face, thick black eyebrows meeting over a narrow aquiline nose and overshadowing quick gray eyes. 'Well,' he said at last, 'do you want to be alone?'

'Not at all,' I replied hastily. 'It's a public carriage. I thought you had made a mistake.'

The man, still standing, surveyed me again in silence, his head a trifle to one side. 'Now, why the devil'—— he began, and at that moment the train started. He turned hastily to the window, shouting, 'Paper!'

But he was too late. The newsboy made a vain rush from the hinder part of the train, but was brought up in full chase by the ending of the platform; and the gray man dropped with a grunt into the corner opposite to me.

At first I was determined to say nothing more. I read my weekly, and the gray man lit a cigar. But he fidgeted so, and looked so often at the paper lying beside me, that I repented.

'I made you miss your paper,' I said. 'Oblige me by looking at mine;' and, handing it across, I dived into the *Athenæum* again, not wishing to make any conversation.

He thanked me with a smile that made his face much more attractive, but presently began frowning and grunting more than ever, and at last broke out into words. 'This Government is monstrous!' he said—'monstrous!'

I made no reply, having no great faith in the value of my opinion on politics, and he glared at me over the top of the paper.

'You agree, of course?' he said.

I wanted to read, and experience made me shy of airing political opinions; but he evidently meant to get some answer, and I gave it.

'Much the same as other Governments, I fancy,' I said; 'but I'm no politician.'

'D'you mean to say that you take no interest in your country's misfortunes?' he demanded.

'Yes,' I said; 'but I don't know a remedy. It doesn't lie in a change of Government, unless occasionally for some one particular question.'

'You're a Radical,' he decided; and I laughed.

'I might be,' I said, 'for I'm a poor man, and one's political opinions generally seem governed by one's income or calling.'

'Monstrously cynical,' he said; but I was not sure that he meant it.

'Well,' I debated, 'find me a few Conservative cobblers, and think whether you know many Radical gamekeepers, or parsons, or publicans, brewers, or distillers.'

'What's your trade?' he demanded.

'Medicine,' I said; and then, merely because I dislike letting inquisitive folk do all the questioning, I asked, 'What's yours?'

The man stared and seemed surprised, as inquisitive folk often are, and looked almost as if he resented my turning the tables. 'Oh, well, h'm! nothing so useful as yours, I'm afraid.' And then, 'And what are you doing here?'

It was my turn to stare, but he seemed quite unmoved, as though accustomed to ask direct questions and get straight answers.

'I'm acting for a fortnight at Sallington for a Dr Postles.'

'Ha, by Gad!—Postles! I know Postles. You'll find no dubiety about *his* political opinions. Conservative, sir, in mind, methods, medicines, and all. He saw, years ago, that that spelt prosperity in Sallington. Follow his example if you wish to grow as comfortably fat as he is. Seats on fences or between two stools are confoundedly uncomfortable in politics or anything else.'

'I should have thought a hunting man wouldn't put comfort first, and would always be ready for a fall,' I retorted.

'Yes, and can't always look before leaping,' he reminded me, and seemed ready to push the argument farther; but the express began to slacken, and presently drew up at a little station.

'I stop here. Good-luck to you with old Postles;' and, with a nod, he jumped out. At the station-gate I could see a groom holding two horses. My gray-haired acquaintance mounted a beautiful black mare with one white stocking, and I presently saw them fly a stiff bank on to stubble as the train moved out of the station.

I lounged back, and for a few minutes pictured myself with half-a-dozen thoroughbreds, and a season's hunting before me, and then returned with a shrug to my paper.

Well, I stayed more than a fortnight at Sallington, though against my will. I was unlucky enough to be personally distasteful to Dr Postles, as he was to me. I make no attempt at explaining this, still less at proving myself blameless. He seemed to think that the substitute for his assistant, who was ill, should not only carry out his wishes, but should have no opinion different from his own. His assistant, however, was laid up for some three months, and he found me, I believe, a hard-working and steady substitute. He was openly proud of his professional connection with most of the wealthy families about Sallington, but more than once showed a childish spite against the most prominent person in the county, the Duke of Pentland, whom I had never met. I have heard him accuse the Duke of want of common-sense, lack of dignity, inability to keep his position, besides absence of moral principle and looseness in political creeds. His grace apparently was not, and never had been, his patient.

At last there came a day when Dr Postles said with great frankness that he could no longer put up with my 'pretentious ways,' and openly lamented that a fortnight's notice was necessary.

Whereupon, being in that foolish mood known as quarrelling with one's bread and butter, I proposed that we should accommodate one another by parting in a week. He hastily agreed; and when he suggested, a couple of days later, that we should reconsider the affair, I declined; whereupon he gave me a round to do which should at least provide

time for meditating over my foolishness and make me very late for my dinner.

I was driven that day, and so had time to look about me. Hence, when on the main road I saw, some distance ahead, a man in a Norfolk suit walking briskly along with two Scotch terriers at his heels, I idly watched him until we went past.

Ruggles the groom touched his hat in passing, the man glanced at us as he returned the salute, and I recognised my gray, fox-hunting acquaintance at once.

He knew me too, for a sharp 'Hi!' made Ruggles take such a pull on the mare's mouth that she reared on end, and for a moment I expected to go out backwards.

'Still here, then?' the man said, coming up to my side of the trap.

'Going at the end of the week,' I said.

'Ah! No desperate hurry just now, I suppose? Get down and walk to the end of the road with me.'

I took this to be an invitation, though it sounded like an order; and, after considering my list for a moment, I jumped down, and we walked along the road together, the trap following.

'Ha!' said the gray man, 'heard you weren't likely to stay. Why are you going? No business of mine, of course.'

'Well, no, it isn't,' I agreed; 'still, there's no particular secret about it. I'm not to Dr Postles's liking. Indeed'—I remembered and grinned—'there's only one man he detests more, I fancy.'

'Who's that?'

'The Duke of Pentland,' I said.

The man merely ejaculated 'Ha!' again, and held out a hand at the corner of a cross lane.

'Who's that?' I asked Ruggles as we drove on.

'That's the Dook,' said Ruggles.

'*The* Duke! What Duke?' But of course I could guess.

'There's only one Dook hereabouts to *my* knowledge,' Ruggles grunted. 'The Dook o' Pentland.'

The next day I got a line saying that the Duke of Pentland would be obliged if I would send particulars of my places of study, qualifications, &c., together with copies of any testimonials I happened to have at hand.

A week later I was installed as the Duke of Pentland's private physician, with the care of his household and dependants generally.

On those rare occasions when one seriously considers one's own failings and failures, I have sometimes wondered whether easier circumstances would have made me a better-tempered man and a more likeable member of society. I suppose that all those of us who are not completely self-satisfied think we could devise different conditions under which we should improve. These conditions apparently did not exist for me with the Duke of Pentland, for the end of two months saw us parting over a mere trifle.

For the first fortnight I enjoyed the quiet leisure and a certain amount of luxury. I had a couple of good rooms for myself, besides quite sufficient freedom to come and go in other parts of the great house, the Duke being a confirmed bachelor. I had a man-servant practically to myself, and a horse to ride to such parts of the county as did not make a motor necessary.

In a fortnight I began to chafe at my comparative inaction, and to doubt whether I was earning my salary. I commenced a crusade against drains, ventilation, and water-supply. I started an ambulance class, which was attended only by those who needed a diversion. I took everything too seriously, myself included.

The climax, or anti-climax, came when the Duke caught a feverish cold, and was so rash as to consult me about it. I prescribed, and advised missing two days' hunting. He pooh-poohed that carelessly, and I became dogmatic. Before we had done he was suggesting pretty plainly that I was meddlesome, and I that he was ignorant.

'Pooh, man!' said he at last; 'you're here to advise, not to dictate.'

'If my advice is not worth your grace's attention,' I said stiffly, 'it can't be worth paying for.'

'Perhaps it isn't,' the Duke allowed; and I, naturally enough, I suppose, lost what little temper I still had in hand.

'Then, as in that case I'm useless here,' I said, rising from where I sat before the bedroom fire, 'perhaps your grace will accept my resignation, and find some one who is ready to be a mere hanger-on to your household.'

'Oh, I dare say I can manage that,' he said coolly, and so the matter was settled.

I started to make what was intended to be a dignified exit, but it was rather spoilt by my tripping over a pair of dirty top-boots which his man had not removed. I thought I heard a gasping chuckle as I stumbled, and I turned angrily directly I had recovered my footing. But his grace sat staring into the fire with sphinx-like gravity, and with as much dignity as one can expect from a man who sits with his feet in hot mustard-and-water, and with a steaming glass of toddy in his hand.

After this we parted for the night with considerable ceremony, and I hardly saw the Duke again until, the night before my intended departure, I sent to ask him for an interview. The fact is that I had been remembering many little courtesies on his part to a man who, after all, had no claim upon his consideration, and, our professional relations being at an end, I wished to say I was grateful.

His grace received me in a small room, half smoking-room, half gun-room, where he kept all sorts of sporting *et ceteras*, with forty or fifty favourite books, and where he generally sat after dinner when alone. I remember that as I went in it suddenly struck me that he was alone pretty much; but I suppose dukes can find companions for life or for the week-end if they show any desire for them. After all, dogs are very good company, and Snap and Snarleyyow, his two Scotch terriers,

were at his feet, and came to welcome me in a very friendly way.

The Duke was equally nice, telling me to take a chair on the opposite side of the fire, and nodding an invitation to me to help myself from a tantalus and a box of cigars. I lit a cigarette—it's a convenient thing to look at while you hunt for a word—and presently explained, more or less, that I knew I had a nasty temper, but that my intentions were good, and that I shouldn't forget his consideration shown at different times.

'Ha! So you go to-morrow?' he said.

'To-morrow afternoon,' I replied.

'And you won't let me keep myself alive in my own way?'

'Oh yes; but it makes my services superfluous,' I said, laughing.

'Punctilious devil!' said the Duke not unkindly. 'Are you booked to go anywhere at once?'

I said 'No,' having thought of doing a few weeks' hospital work, for I was getting woefully behind the times—as, indeed, you will see.

'Well, stay on as my guest for the week-end,' said the Duke. 'Dine with me to-morrow night, and I'll find you a couple of horses for Saturday's meet. I've no one coming here for the next week.'

I was surprised, and stammered my thanks; but said that, as for the hunting, his horses would run some risk, and I hadn't hunting togs.

All this he paid no attention to. 'My horses are meant to be ridden,' he said, 'and some of them have had worse riders than you. Timms will fit you up quite decently and comfortably. He's accustomed to that. See you to-morrow night at dinner.' And I left him.

I did not see the Duke again till we met in the hall just before dinner the following night. I was his only guest, and he treated me, as I have heard he treated any man who sat at his table, with the most charming hospitality.

As a young man he had been in the Guards, and before his accession to the title he had acted as military attaché at more than one British Embassy. He talked of foreign Courts and of sport in foreign lands, and I thought nothing of the time until he laughingly suggested that as a medical man perhaps I would advise a good night's rest before an early hunting-breakfast; and I laughed too, perhaps a bit shamefacedly, and reminded him that I no longer had any professional responsibilities.

The next morning, I remember, I was fidgety and gloomy. I could not explain it, and wondered whether, while listening to the Duke's chat, I had taken more wine than I intended, or whether I could possibly be nervous. Instead of breakfasting alone as usual, I was invited to join him, and found him in the high spirits always produced by a good hunting-day.

The meet was only some four miles off, and we hacked to it quickly. A motor-car at a meet was a monstrosity which made him ready to strike the owner off his list of acquaintances.

As we jogged along a narrow lane one whizzed up behind us, and tooted blatantly in the rear for some time, until my companion, who had suddenly become deaf, thought fit to draw aside.

The two men in the car bowed with considerable *empressement*, and got one lifted finger in return.

'Keep clear of these two fellows when hounds are going,' my cicerone said none too softly. 'Both snobs and both thrusters at gaps. They'll jump into your pocket if you give them a good lead.'

'I sha'n't do that for any one,' I laughed. 'I don't know the country, and I'm going to follow Sultana'—his first mount—'as long as I am able. But I'll keep my distance.'

I remembered this a couple of hours later.

With the first eager whimper of a hound in covert I found that Black Care cannot sit easily behind the rider to hounds. Presently my companion silently pointed out the fox stealing away along the hedge, and I found it as difficult as my mount did to keep still until the Duke's lifted cap brought huntsman and pack crashing out. Thence onward I can't remember much until the last, except that I sat down in the saddle, watched the Duke and Sultana take hedge after hedge, and did my best to keep my mount a fair distance from his stable companion.

The end for us came all too soon. The hounds were running mute; the field had scattered and tailed of; there were only ten or a dozen men and two ladies before me. A high, thickly hedged bank lay across ploughed land; but there was a convenient gap, and my guide made it his point directly he dropped into the field.

Within a hundred yards or so two men riding side by side started across for the gap, and a collision threatened. They were the two who had motored past us, and when the Duke found them pressing in on his near side he turned Sultana from the gap and put her at the unbroken hedge. Sultana rose gallantly at the bank; but the take-off was bad, and the run had been a quick one. She fell backwards and rolled over in the ditch, pinning the Duke beneath her. When I reached his side he and the mare were both lying quiet; but their contorted positions were ominous, and he had fainted.

Half-a-dozen stragglers rode into the field, and by the time we had the Duke out from under the mare and laid on a gate he was conscious.

'Sultana's back's broken,' he said to me coolly; 'so's mine. Get the nearest gun.'

'Yes, it shall be done at once,' I said, and gave directions for lifting him; but he stiffly countermanded my orders, and lay where he was until he had seen the mare put out of her misery.

'As for me, I suppose I must wait a little,' he said grimly to me. 'Now, take me home.' And home we accordingly went.

That night, after sitting a while by the fire in my room staring at my half-packed trunks and other paraphernalia, I went back to where the

Duke lay on his bed, staring in silence at the ceiling. I asked his leave to send down the nurse and his man, and to sit with him myself for a time.

'Charmed!' he said.—'Fraser, bring a comfortable chair here for the doctor. Now, go down and get supper. See that nurse has what she wants. We will ring when you're wanted.'

I had injected morphia, and he was comparatively easy. He spoke of one or two incidents in the day's run, hoped my horse had carried me well, and then referred to the telegraphic arrangements made for two town surgeons to see him the next morning.

'If you think it would be useful for you to meet them,' he said, 'pray do, unless you are tired.'

'I have a favour to ask of your grace,' I said formally at last. 'I should like to re-enter your grace's service, unless that would affect any arrangements already made. If you have appointed my successor I should be grateful if I might stay here until he comes.'

There was silence. The Duke glanced at me, and then again at the ceiling.

'On what terms?' he said at last.

'On any terms that your grace chooses,' I said.

'In fact,' he remarked, 'you wish to see the last of me?'

'I take no exception to the words used,' I said, 'if I get what I want.'

'Wise man!' said his grace. 'Your very humble petition is granted;' and my hand happening to rest on the bed near his, he groped and touched it for a moment. That was all.

Well, the Duke lingered nearly three weeks, and I learned from him how a gentleman should die. He showed a quaint humour often, and always a quiet, matter-of-fact courage.

In the dismal days and nights which preceded his death I was very much with him, and incidentally it is of those times that I am reminded by the ring. On one occasion the night-nurse was not well, and I sent her to her room and took her place. That night the Duke could not sleep, but refused to have any further drugging, saying grimly that no doubt he would make up arrears later on.

I sat at his bedside reading to him, and doing all I could to lighten the weight of those monotonous hours. Hence, when he casually noticed the ring as I held a book to the light, and asked me about its history, I yarned away at length. I remember my delight when he chuckled over certain points in the adventures of the Exciseman and the Vanishing Dog. He thought, he said, that Schnapps would be a worthy companion for Snap and Snarleyyow, who could hardly be induced to leave him, and who were even then lying with their noses on the fender, staring into the fire.

A day or two after that he asked me to lend him the ring, and was much amused at my mystification, saying that he agreed with Miss Raimes, whose story I had told him, about my not knowing the power of the ring, and that I must not expect to see it again.

Some three days later he returned it without any comment, and his condition was by that time so bad that I did not trouble to wonder why he had wanted it.

A week or so before the end he gave me a key and asked me to search a certain drawer and bring to him a miniature that I should find there. It was the head of a very beautiful girl with a bright, sweet face. After that it was always under his pillow or in his hand; but he never spoke of it, and to this day I do not know, and have not tried to know, who it was. I saw, however, that he died with it in his hand, and that it lay on his breast in the coffin.

I was invited by his successor to stay for the funeral, and was glad to do so.

Immediately after, I was getting ready for the train, when one of the servants brought me word that the Duke's lawyer would like to see me in the library. I went there, and found a man whom I had seen once during the Duke's illness, and again at the grave-side.

'My late client,' he said, 'asked me to see you as soon after the funeral as possible and settle your fees. Kindly tell me the amount due to you, and I will give you a cheque and get you to sign a receipt.'

'It is about ten weeks' salary due,' I said after consideration, 'and my salary was'—— and I named the sum per annum.

'Up to to-night?' the lawyer asked.

I was a trifle nettled. 'Since his grace's death,' I said, 'I have understood myself to be a guest here.'

'True, true,' he nodded; 'but to his death—counting from the day of his accident—I think it is nearly eleven weeks.'

'As you like,' I said, and sat silent, reminded of the dead man by everything about me.

The lawyer filled in a cheque, and I signed a receipt he had ready, and turned to go.

'One moment,' he said. 'There's a message for you. His grace instructed me, the last time I saw him, to tell you that a service of silver plate is being made for you by his orders, as a souvenir of these last few weeks. He hoped that you would use it frequently.'

I was touched at his thought of such a thing at such a time, and I said so briefly. One cannot sentimentalise with a lawyer and a stranger.

'Further,' he said, 'I have to read to you this codicil in the late Duke's will: "I also will and bequeath to my faithful servant and medical attendant, Richard Carvell, the sum of one thousand guineas, free of duty, for his patient and dutiful attentions during my last illness."'

There was a pause of a few minutes, during which the lawyer rubbed his eyeglasses with a large white silk handkerchief, and rearranged his papers.

Then I spoke, having had time to get my tongue under control. 'There's some misapprehension,' I said at last. 'This legacy is not for me.'

'No misapprehension, I assure you. I added it

in his grace's presence myself, and attested his signature.'

'Nevertheless, it is wrong,' I insisted, feeling my temper rise. 'I had, I still have, the kindliest feelings toward the late Duke; but never in my life was I his "faithful servant" or he the recipient of any "dutiful attentions." You see, therefore, that I have no claim to the money—and I sha'n't take it.'

I was conscious of seeming an ass, like a good many other men who speak hastily more from feeling than common-sense, and I made for the door, without looking to see what his grace's man of business thought of such foolery.

But he implored me to return, saying that this was not all. 'I am only a channel of communication,' he pointed out. 'Pray remember that. Besides, although the codicil was dictated as I have read it, and my strict instructions were to let you hear the *ipissima verba*, his grace made certain alterations with his own hand. I must beg you to look at them.'

Still fuming, angry with every one, including myself, I crossed to the table on which the will lay, and looked where the lawyer's finger pointed. 'Faithful servant' was crossed out, and 'dear friend' written shakily in its place, while 'dutiful attentions' was altered to 'loving kindness.'

'His grace,' said the lawyer, 'was always eccentric and fond of a dry joke. He said, curiously enough, that he "wanted to see" how you would take the first wording, and that, having had his joke, he empowered me to convey his apology, as from one gentleman to another. He asked me to say, too, that he once borrowed your ring for a night that the crest might be copied to put on the silver.'

Then there was silence, while the man of law diligently sought out a clean piece of blotting-paper and dried a wet spot upon the will.

*(To be continued.)*

# MRS GASKELL AND 'CRANFORD.'

By Helen Melville.

THE custom of celebrating the centenary of a famous author has become almost universal, and it is certain that the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Mrs Gaskell will not be allowed to pass unnoticed, for her place in the minds—and in the hearts—of her readers is exceedingly high. It would be difficult, perhaps, to prophesy with any degree of accuracy what will be Mrs Gaskell's ultimate position in the world of letters; but during the forty-five years which have elapsed since her death her fame has been steadily rising, and her popularity is assuredly greater than when she was alive. At the same time, it must be admitted that the basis on which that popularity rests is not so wide as it was, and it seems probable that to future generations *Cranford* alone will remain as an enduring monument to her fame.

Elizabeth Cleghorn Stevenson, now known as Mrs Gaskell, was born in Chelsea on September 29, 1810. Her father was William Stevenson, who had been a Unitarian minister until he resigned his living, believing it wrong to be 'a hired teacher of religion.' It was from him that his daughter subsequently drew, in part at least, the Mr Hale of *North and South*. Her mother was a daughter of Mr Holland of Sandlebridge in Cheshire—the Heathbridge of *Cousin Phillis*—who was the prototype of Dr Gibson in *Wives and Daughters*. Mrs Stevenson died a few weeks after the birth of her child, and the little girl was sent to her maternal aunt, Mrs Lumb, at Knutsford, which country town has since been immortalised as *Cranford*.

Knutsford was henceforth Elizabeth Stevenson's home, though she spent two years at school at Stratford-on-Avon, and paid long visits to friends at Edinburgh and to her father, now married again, in London. Little is known of her—save that she was unusually handsom—euntil, at the age of twenty-two (to be precise, on August 30, 1832), she married the Rev. William Gaskell, minister of the Cross Street Unitarian Chapel, Manchester, to which city she went with her husband, and lived there for the remainder of her life. Mr Gaskell was keenly interested in all attempts to better the condition of the working poor, and he was actively connected, either as founder or helper, with most of the philanthropic institutions that existed in that city. His wife was intensely sympathetic with this desire to help the overworked and underpaid factory-hands, and out of this sympathy arose *Mary Barton*, her first long work. Those parts of this novel that treat of the working-classes are admirably done. The picture she draws of the homes of the Bartons and the Wilsons is excellent, and the plight of the workers during the strike is brought before us in all its hopelessness and sordid misery. One character in this book stands out, perhaps, above all others, that of Alice Wilson, a pathetic figure of child-like faith and simple resignation.

'I sometimes think the Lord is against planning' (she says to Mary Barton). 'Whene'er I plan overmuch, He is sure to mar all my plans, as if He would ha' me put the future into His hands. Afore Christmas-time I was as full as full could be of going home for good and all; yo' have heard how I've wished it this terrible long time. And a young lass from behind Burton came into place in Manchester last Martinmas; so after a while she had a Sunday out, and she comes to me and tells me some cousins o' mine bid her find me out, and say how glad they should be to ha' me to bide wi' 'em, and

look after th' childer, for the'n getten' a big farm, and she's a deal to do among th' cows. So many a winter's night did I lie awake and think that, please God, come summer, I'd bid George and his wife good-bye and go home at last. Little did I think how God Almighty would balk me, for not leaving my days in His hands, who had led me through the wilderness hitherto. Here's George out o' work, and more cast down than ever I see'd him; wanting every chip o' comfort he can get, e'en afore this last heavy stroke; and now I'm thinking the Lord's finger points very clear to my fit abiding-place; and I'm sure if George and Jane can say, "His will be done," it's no more than what I'm beholden to do.'

It is undeniable, however, that as *Mary Barton* progresses the interest undoubtedly flags, and we drift more and more into the conventional story of the smaller novelists. This being so, one can only assume that the praise lavished upon the book was due to the chapters depicting the working-classes at home; and it is more than probable that such a man as Carlyle was attracted less by the story than by the author's attempt to depict the struggle between Capital and Labour. Amongst those who received *Mary Barton* with the greatest enthusiasm were Walter Savage Landor and Charles Dickens. Walter Savage Landor, indeed, carried his enthusiasm so far as to address a panegyric in verse to the author, a few lines of which may be appropriately quoted here:

> A few have borne me honour in my day,
> Whether for thinking as themselves have thought
> Or for what else I know not nor enquire.
> Among them some there are whose names will live
> Not in the memories but the hearts of men,
> Because those hearts they comforted and cheer'd
> And, where they saw God's images cast down,
> Lifted them up again, and blew the dust
> From the worn feature and disfigured limb.
> Such art thou, pure and mighty! Such art thou,
> Paraclete of the Bartons!

Charles Dickens's admiration found more practical vent. When, shortly afterwards, he was preparing to launch *Household Words*, he sought to secure the support of Mrs Gaskell. His overtures were cordially received, and in the pages of *Household Words* appeared *North and South*, many short stories, and *Cranford*. In *North and South*, though the scene opens in a rural rectory, Mrs Gaskell wrote again of the struggle between the masters and the workmen; and in *Ruth* she dealt with a grave social evil in what was at that time a very courageous manner, though the story is told with all possible delicacy and restraint. Chevalier Bunsen said about *Ruth*: 'I admire the courage as much as the genius of the noble-minded authoress. She has looked the tragedy of life straight in the face.' Other admirers of Mrs Gaskell's work were F. D. Maurice, Hallam, and Lord Houghton, to which last George Sand said, 'Mrs Gaskell has done what neither I nor any female writer in France can accomplish; she has written novels which excite the deepest interest in men of the world, and yet which every girl will be the better for reading.'

Consciously or unconsciously, in her early years Mrs Gaskell was under the influence of Dickens; but later she released herself from the sway of this master of literature, and studied, with noticeable result, her other great contemporary, Thackeray. *Wives and Daughters*, which appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, contains traces of both writers; but though the opening scenes are agreeable in their quiet manner, and with their pictures of life in a country town, with occasional glimpses of the great house on its confines, yet the tale meanders through innumerable chapters with little of incident or striking character-drawing to sustain the interest. Once only Mrs Gaskell departed from her usual methods, and showed, in *Sylvia's Lovers*, a distinct sense of drama. This novel is full of incident and stirring scenes, and its characterisation is vigorous and broad.

It was only when Mrs Gaskell contented herself with brief sketches that she did work that will long survive; and from these *Cranford* stands out—far above even *Cousin Phillis*, that charming prose idyll—by virtue of its simplicity, its gentle humour, and, in a rather different sense from the one in which we are accustomed to use the word to-day, its realism. The atmosphere of that little country town is brought vividly before us in the very first page of the book:

'Cranford is in possession of the Amazons; all the holders of houses above a certain rent are women. If a married couple come to settle in the town, somehow the gentleman disappears; he is either fairly frightened to death by being the only man in the Cranford evening parties, or he is accounted for by being with his regiment, his ship, or closely engaged in business all the week in the great neighbouring commercial town of Drumble, distant only twenty miles on a railroad. In short, whatever does become of the gentlemen, they are not at Cranford. What could they do if they were there? The surgeon has his round of thirty miles, and sleeps at Cranford; but every man cannot be a surgeon. For keeping the trim gardens full of choice flowers without a weed to speck them; for frightening away little boys who look wistfully at the said flowers through the railings; for rushing out at the geese that occasionally venture into the gardens if the gates are left open; for deciding all questions of literature and politics without troubling themselves with unnecessary reasons or arguments; for obtaining clear and correct knowledge of everybody's affairs in the parish; for keeping their neat maid-servants in admirable order; for kindness (somewhat dictatorial) to the poor, and real tender good offices to each other whenever they are in distress, the ladies of Cranford are quite sufficient. "A man," as one of them observed to me once, "is *so* in the way in the house."'

We are at once in touch with the life of the place, the gentle orderliness of the existence of these

people, their earnest regard and observance of the rules and conventions of the little community; it is narrow of course, but very gracious, very soothing. As we read we feel that we are brought into actual contact with this group of women, and when we put down the book their memory remains with us as a memory of human beings we have known, not merely puppets whose dallying we have seen.

In a day when the plan of the novelist is to set before us some problem which will stimulate our brains or play upon our emotions, such a book as *Cranford*—as truly a piece of life as any soul-stirring tragedy of modern unrest—is a refreshment as well as a delight, and may even help us to a clearer sense of proportion and teach us not to despise the day of little things.

Mrs Gaskell's insight into character is subtle as well as keen; above all, it is pitiful. These things she has shown us in her other books, but in *Cranford* she develops a vein of humour which we do not find elsewhere. In *Mary Barton*, for instance, the humour, when it is to be found at all, is of a distinctly elementary kind; but here are mingled smiles and tears, a gentle mirthfulness, with sympathy and understanding for the little foibles of others always at the back of it. Could any one but Mrs Gaskell have made us love Eliza Jenkyns, with her rigid propriety, her grandiloquent Johnsonian phrases, and her pretensions (based on 'a number of manuscript sermons and a pretty good library of divinity') to literary judgment? But she emerges from all this a fine, strong, and essentially tender-hearted woman, at whom we may laugh but can never sneer.

Mary Smith, who has the task of bringing the inhabitants of Cranford before us, and revealing herself in doing so, is perhaps the most artistically sketched character in the book. The restraint which Mrs Gaskell exercises in this most difficult work of telling a story 'in the first person' is wholly admirable. Although Mary Smith is never obtrusive and always subordinate to those whose history she is relating, her personality is vivid, and her keen intelligence and quiet humour clearly outlined. We chuckle (if the word is not too violent!) *with* her at the Honourable Mrs Jamieson, Miss Jenkyns, and Miss Pole. It is impossible to speak of each of the characters, but they will rise in the minds of all who have once met them.

Miss Matty is the gem of this gallery of women. If the term 'old maid' was one of derision a hundred years ago, surely Miss Matty must have done much to remove that stigma. Her history is intensely pathetic, almost tragic in its very incompleteness. Her life was marred and stunted almost at the beginning; her nature, so rich in possibilities, checked at the outset of her womanhood. A gentle, gracious, not very intelligent old maid — so she appears at the first blush; but what stores of affection, almost of passion, she reveals as her story is unfolded! Her devotion to her mother, her love and pity for the outcast brother Peter—these are *strong* things, not the merely sentimental emotion that family affection so often is. And the quiet dignity she displays on more than one occasion is not the outcome of a weak nature. When Miss Matty meets again her old lover, from whom she has been parted because her father and sister 'did not like her to marry below her rank,' he is an old man of seventy. He shows a hearty friendliness; but his first words, 'Miss Matilda . . . God bless my soul, I should not have known you!' proved that to him the old romance is indeed a thing of the past, outlived, almost forgotten. But Miss Matty remembers; it is *her* life that has been empty, her nature undeveloped all those years, and the sense of loss is with her always, a constant ache, though she herself could not define it so. But we see it in many little touches, and especially in the solemn way in which she gives leave to her servant Martha to have a 'follower' to see her. 'God forbid,' said she in a low voice, 'that I should grieve any young hearts.'

In all Mrs Gaskell's works there is much, even for the most critical, to admire and respect; but *Cranford* calls for higher tribute still: it is a book to love.

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# ENGLISH BEET-SUGAR.

By Sigmund Stein.

THE question of sugar-beet growing in England has been for a considerable time past engaging the attention of many classes of the community; in the first place the British farmers, who have been casting about for a new form of industry and new crops which would be of a more remunerative character than the present ones; secondly, those engaged in the different classes of trades who have lately learned what a great advantage it would be if the gigantic beet-sugar industry were introduced into our islands.

Great Britain is the greatest sugar-consuming country in the world. She consumes per annum about one million eight hundred thousand tons of sugar. Of these, one million five hundred thousand tons is beet-sugar, and only two hundred and ninety thousand tons cane-sugar. All the sugar we consume is imported; we do not produce a single ounce of sugar ourselves. I can safely say that nearly all the sugar we see in England is beet-sugar, imported from the Continent. Not even all cane-sugar comes from British possessions, some being imported from foreign colonies. John Bull

has preferred, and still prefers, to send abroad year by year twenty million pounds for his sugar, which vast sum of money we should be retaining in this country.

### BEET AND CANE SUGAR.

'What is the difference between them?' I have been asked so often. There is none. I have been engaged for thirty years in sugar manufacture, and cannot distinguish between beet-sugar and cane-sugar in the refined state; and I challenge any one to distinguish between sugar made from beet and sugar made from cane. Both sugars have the same sweetness and the same qualities. The statements made so often by unscrupulous people that cane-sugar is sweeter than beet-sugar, and that cane-sugar is the only sugar which can be used for preserve and jam making, have been rejected and sent into the kingdom of fables.

### WHY IS NOT BEET-SUGAR GROWN AND MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM?

The reasons are many, and if they are properly scrutinised it will be quickly seen that John Bull has been making great mistakes which he is now trying to correct. We attempted to make sugar here before, and small factories were started many years ago in Ireland and in Suffolk. These attempts turned out a failure for many technical reasons, and also through the introduction of the sugar bounties on the Continent, which have been given by foreign Governments to sugar-beet growers and beet-sugar manufacturers on the exportation of their sugars into England. These bounties amounted from two pounds to five pounds per ton of sugar. Of course so long as foreign Governments preferred to tax their home consumers very heavily to support one single industry, no one in England could dream of growing sugar-beet and manufacturing sugar therefrom.

### BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.

The British Government forced the Continental countries to abolish these bounties and to enter into an agreement which is named the Brussels Sugar Convention. This agreement came into force on the 1st of September 1903, and was for a term of five years; it was again renewed in the year 1908 for another term of five years.

### SUNSHINE FABLE.

Another reason why we have hitherto hesitated to make our own sugar is the sunshine fable. There still exists in England the old school of 'sun-admirers' who worship the sun and adore the sunshine theory. They believe, and it is a fetich to them, that our islands are so dull and the sunbeams so ineffective and rare that sugar-beet cannot be grown in this country. It is not sunshine alone which makes the sugar in the root. If abundant sunshine was the desideratum for the growing of rich sugar-beet, then sunny countries like Spain, Italy, and the Azores, where the sun is hot and brilliant, should be the best. What do we find? The beet-roots in these countries are very much worse than the roots grown in 'dull' countries like Denmark, Holland, Russia, &c. We can have a little too much sunshine. It is the sun and superabundant sunshine which creates sugar failures. Take two typical years, 1904 and 1909. Both of these years were blessed with an abnormal quantity of sunshine, but at the same time with a great scarcity of water. In both years we had sugar failures and sugar went to famine prices. In the year 1904 the European beet-crop came out one million two hundred thousand tons of sugar under the normal, and in the year 1909 the shortage was four hundred thousand tons of sugar. The worshippers of the sun forget that we are the greatest mangel-growers. Mangel is a plant which requires sun, and sugar-beet belongs to the same family. Where mangels can be grown, sugar-beet will thrive as well.

The opponents of a British beet-sugar industry, who still number a great many, forget that sugar-beet was grown in England as far back as the year 1835, and from that date experiments have been made by many institutions. I have for the last twenty years carried out sugar-beet growing experiments in every county in England, Scotland, Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands, &c., and have myself conducted four thousand experiments, the result of which has been an average yield of sugar-beet with leaves of thirty-nine tons per acre. The yield of beetroots without leaves was seventeen tons sixteen hundredweight per acre. Compare these results with those of the oldest and best beet-sugar country in the world—namely, Germany. The yield of roots per acre in Germany is only twelve tons; therefore we produce in this country about 40 per cent. more roots per acre.

In the disastrous years 1904 and 1909, when the 'sunny' countries on the Continent had a beet-sugar failure, I grew successfully sugar-beetroots in the different counties in the United Kingdom. If a few experiments are made the sceptics still say that it is difficult to judge and impossible to draw conclusions from the results of small plots. My experiments have been carried out by many landowners and farmers for twenty consecutive years on a scale from which decisive conclusions can be drawn.

That the 'British sun' produces richer beets than the Continental sun is again proved by my four thousand experiments, which show 17·65 per cent. of sugar in the roots and 19·15 per cent. of sugar in the juice. Several samples which I have analysed showed 21 per cent. of sugar—surely figures of which the sunniest country in the world might be proud.

### SUGAR-BEET CULTIVATION.

There is no great art in cultivating sugar-beet. British farmers have grown sugar-beet for many years with great success. Firstly, I advised my farmer friends to grow sugar-beet as they grow

mangels. Later on I issued broadcast all over the country my planting instructions, giving advice about soil, preparation of soil, manuring, sowing, hoeing, thinning, and harvesting. Sugar-beet grows on any kind of soil, and can be grown for several consecutive years on the same land. Soil containing chalk or lime, of clayey or loamy character, with a proportion of sand, is an ideal sugar-beet soil.

The seed is planted as a rule about six inches apart. The distance between the rows should be fourteen to fifteen inches. Two kinds of manure are employed — farmyard manure and artificial manure. For general purposes farmyard manure is desirable; it should be applied in the autumn, before the ground is ploughed. The quantity per acre depends, of course, on the fertility of the soil. Of artificial manures three classes are employed, containing respectively nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash. In some instances these three elements are found combined in the same commercial fertiliser.

As soon as the beetroots appear on the surface of the soil and the rows are visible it is necessary that they should be hoed. When the roots are about a quarter of an inch thick and the plant shows two pairs of leaves, the roots must be thinned and separated.

The time of vegetation in England, Scotland, and Ireland has been proved by my experiments to be between a hundred and forty and a hundred and fifty days, supposing the seed were sown at the right time. At the end of September the sugar-beets are taken out of the soil. This is done on the Continent with a long, narrow spade which has a rest for the foot. The roots so loosened are taken by the leaves and thrown in a heap, where the head is separated from the root with a knife.

### COST OF BEET CULTIVATION.

To ascertain the cost of sugar-beet growing in England I issued to my farmer friends all over the country forms to be filled up with the data of their own experience. I received answers and forms filled up from about five hundred farmers and experimenters. These data have been properly tabulated and averaged. On the basis of the information so received I issued fourteen years ago my detailed statement about the cost of growing sugar-beet per acre. It worked out at nine pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence per acre, including two pounds for rent and taxes, cost of manure, ploughing, cultivation, sowing, seed, hoeing, thinning, harvesting, and carting.

### PROFIT FOR THE BEET-GROWING FARMER.

Going very much under the average, and calculating a clear crop of fifteen tons of beet per acre, the farmer will receive a net profit of six pounds ten shillings per acre. He will receive for his fifteen tons of roots, at eighteen shillings per ton, thirteen pounds ten shillings; for leaves and heads, one pound five shillings; beet-pulp free from the factory as feeding material, one pound ten shillings; value of nitrogenous lime free from the factory, five shillings—a total sum of sixteen pounds ten shillings. The above-stated profit of six pounds ten shillings to the farmer will certainly not be exceeded by any other crop. It must not be forgotten that the pulp which the farmer receives free from the factory is an excellent feeding material, and that the free manure contains practically all ingredients of a normal beet-manure.

### COST OF A BEET-SUGAR FACTORY.

The capital required to build, equip, and work a beet-sugar factory need not exceed seventy thousand pounds. All the statements in the press and elsewhere that a beet-sugar factory must have a capital of one hundred and thirty thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds are wrong. It is dangerous to overcapitalise a factory for a new industry, as the consequences will be felt as long as the factory exists. The bigger the capital, the smaller will be the dividend. I allocate for the cost of the building fifteen thousand pounds, machinery thirty-five thousand to forty thousand pounds, and fifteen thousand to twenty thousand pounds working capital. The site of a factory could be rented on a long lease. The roads must be already there, and a railway siding at hand.

### SIZE OF THE FACTORY.

The factory must be large enough to compete with existing Continental factories, and should be able to work three hundred tons of beetroot in twenty-four hours, or thirty thousand tons of beet in the season (October to January). The factory works only four months in the year, and stands idle for the rest. It could, however, be arranged to employ the permanent staff in manufacturing jams, preserves, and feeding materials in the summer months.

### HOW BEET-SUGAR IS MADE.

The process of beet-sugar making is very simple. It takes exactly twenty-four hours to transform the sugar-beet into the finest granulated sugar without animal charcoal. The beetroots, which are stored in sheds, are put through a washing-machine to free them from all adhering earth and dirt. After being washed they are cut into bits about one and a half inches long, like vermicelli. The sugar contents are extracted from them in cylindrical vessels. Then ensues a clarification with lime-milk to precipitate the organic impurities. The precipitate is separated through filter-presses, and the carbonate of lime from these presses is used as manure. The pulp of the beetroot (slices) are freed from the greater part of the water they contain, and thus made ready for conversion into cattle-food. The juice is bleached with sulphurous acid; the resulting water-clear liquor is evaporated in a series of vacuum-pans, and is boiled to crystals, which are separated from the liquor by centrifugal machines, in which they are washed with water or steam. The sugar drops to cool, and is white,

bright, and ready for consumption. There are different processes, simple in their character, for making sugar into cubes.

ADVANTAGES OF THE BRITISH BEET-SUGAR FACTORY.

British beet would be ready to hand and of better quality than the foreign productions. Coal is very much cheaper here—about half the price that it costs in Germany—and better. Limestone is cheaper. Labour is about the same price here as on the Continent. Further, if we manufacture sugar here we save freight, as it will be consumed in the country where it is produced.

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

The question of the support of the British beet-sugar industry as an infant industry by the Government was discussed lately in both Houses of Parliament and in the British press. It was stated that the beet-sugar industry could not be started without receiving from the Government certain grants, advantages, and preference in taxation. The tax on sugar at present amounts to one shilling and tenpence per hundredweight of refined sugar. It was suggested that British-grown sugar should be free of taxation, whereas imported sugar should pay the tax. This would give to the home manufactured article a preference of one shilling and tenpence per hundredweight.

Apart from politics—and it is a pity that the question of this gigantic industry should be considered from a political standpoint and a party point of view—as above mentioned, the bounties have gone. Although the Continental sugar countries have on paper a protective duty of two shillings and sixpence per hundredweight of refined sugar, they in fact have by the keen competition between the sugar manufacturers in the home market not a single penny of protection and advantage.

There is a danger that if our Government grants to home-grown beet-sugar a preference against foreign imports, the Brussels Convention will be denounced and the old state of things be reverted to. For forty years we have fought against sugar bounties; we have forced the Continental Governments to abolish them; and now, should we be the means of giving and introducing bounties? It would be a fight of bounties against bounties, an unhealthy state of things, a battle in which the new British beet-sugar industry would succumb. I would, however, not take any objection, and no Continental country could do so in the face of the Brussels Convention, if the new industry received a grant from the Development Fund.

German factories paid last year, when sugar was at ten shillings per hundredweight (against fourteen shillings and ninepence to-day), 20 per cent. to 30 per cent. dividend. I do not see why we should not pay the same. A British beet-sugar factory should not have any 'infancy.' It must work on the first day as on the last day; the new, complete, and perfect machinery would act like clockwork. Our men, inexperienced in beet-sugar making, would be taught by a few imported foremen in the first season all they have to do. After the first season was over our men would be independent, and could work and make sugar without any further foreign help. Without any help from Government a British beet-sugar industry should and must pay its way, and it should prove a remunerative business for the investor and the farmer. The British beet-sugar industry is of great national importance, and should be supported by every citizen of the country.

## DAWN.

AN AUSTRALIAN SPRING IDYLL.

She is coming over the Ranges in a glory of wondrous splendour,
And is reaching 'God's Watchers'—the stars—from her roseate golden height;
She is paling the waning moon though the Southern Cross lingers to greet her,
As Nature wakens to welcome save the night things which creep out of sight.

She is stooping over the gum-trees,* for she's humble—this Queen of the Morning—
And bending to whisper a greeting to grass-orchids born in the night;
While she's smiling on angels' tear-drops where fern-leaves salute her new dawning,
Though a timid old musk-rat hastens away to hide from her light.

She is wooing the earth-scents upwards, till zephyrs smell sweet of the clover,
Where the grasshoppers hasten to chirrup, though the locusts as steadily wait,
For some black cockatoos go screeching away near a jack-snipe—ever a rover—
While a frightened magpie flutters below to find her mate.

She is meeting the night wind gently, for she revels in balmy weather,
She is gliding on waters of swamp, where the wild-fowl are stirring to life;
While a gay little dragon-fly hurries away to press her first kiss on wild heather,
And a pompous bullfrog disappears with a splash in search of a wife.

With fairy fingers she's turning the wattles† to a tremulous golden shower,
Tho' she pauses to solace a moonbeam, dying hard in the heart of a rose,
Or to linger beside two 'blue tits'—dainty lovers—swaying over a flower,
Ere she summons a sun to brighten a world till day shall close.

Oh mystical Goddess of Morning! Oh Queen of the East and the West!
You are reaching the gloom of the forest, where a wood-pigeon coos to a dove,
With God's 'forget-me-nots' fading in heavens, and the moon sinking slowly to rest,
As you stir the sap of the living till the world whispers everywhere 'Love!'

MRS EDWARD STARKEY.

* Gum-trees, eucalyptus. † Mimosa.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

BY this time the holiday period of the year is a thing of the past for most of the people. With the end of September comes a noticeable shortening of the days and a sensible chilling of the atmosphere, and, rested and refreshed, the mind is quickened again to action. It is no doubt the case that most men and women find that they can think and study and work best of all in the period between the beginning of October and the end of the year. All the circumstances impel them to serious work, and according to their tastes and dispositions they have, as they think, fitted themselves best for it during the holiday-time. To the workers, then, this holiday-time is a preparation rather than a relaxation, and it is a matter of high consequence that the greatest good should be obtained from it. It may seem at first to be an odd reflection; but if you will think upon the point you may come to the conclusion, reviewing past experiences, that more holidays have been a little disappointing than otherwise. From each experience we may and do draw lessons and morals, and decide that we will or will not take certain courses in the future. But in this way it may happen that the individual is some far way advanced in life before he comes by an exact understanding as to what is best for himself in this matter. This holiday-making is really something of a science, and it needs to be treated as such. For the most part holidays are not taken quietly enough. Surely there never was a time when a period of the most complete rest was more needed in each year than now, but the tendency is for the holiday to be made more strenuous than ever. Tired men and women, with exhausted brains and trembling nerves, will spend a fair proportion of their three weeks or month in making long journeys upon the continent of Europe, or in climbing mountains, or in tramping eight or ten miles every day over a golf-links. They think that this is a wise and good thing to do; but is it so? Once upon a time I was discussing the matter with one of the most famous doctors of the day—perhaps there is no reason why I should not say it was Sir Francis Laking—and he deprecated the Continental scamper by the worn-out City clerk or small business man who had to sit in an office for three hundred days of the year, declaring that it would be better for such that he should seek some quiet place, and there, taking a few light and acceptable books with him, should go to bed for three weeks or for as much of the time as he could by his most considerable effort endure. This would be change at its best, and it would induce happy forgetfulness. Change is the first essential of a good and satisfactory holiday, but the idea of proper change is too often misinterpreted or not fairly realised. People too often think of change of scene, and do not understand that change of habit is of more importance. They will not cut themselves loose from their regular environments. Many wise men have said that it is a good thing, and greatly conducive to the best domestic felicity, that husbands and wives should not take the holiday-time together, even though they should desire so to do. Then why do so many, when they depart for a season from their home towns or villages, have their regular newspapers sent on to them from day to day, or otherwise see to it that such papers are supplied to them every morning of their holiday-time? The newspaper habit—for it is merely a habit after all—is sometimes a vexatious thing. It is not at all necessary, nor even desirable, that these people should always prime themselves with the news of what is happening every day in America and Germany, or that they should closely follow the details of the current murder mystery, or consider the development of the political situation. Such constant reading and such close study of the unessential act strongly against the benefits of change. Besides, it should be remembered that news in general, as indicated by the headlines in the middle pages of newspapers in these days, is not always bright and cheery news. The chief features of a news page will often be found to be the

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gruesome tale of a murder, an account of a railway accident or aeroplane disaster, a column of fault-finding with a Government, a miserable tale of domestic unhappiness and breakdown, and so on. So the papers are not conducive to the perfect repose of the mind in the holiday; they do not contribute to the establishment of a placidity of mood. Their adverse effect may be but a trifle, but it is an addition to a sum of minor and unconsidered irritations. And, again, there is frequently an uneasiness caused by making a self-imposed task at the beginning in the way of taking away a number of serious books for reading. Year after year a man will pack in his bag the volumes of Carlyle's *French Revolution* or some of Ruskin's works, which he hopes to read before he dies, and then day by day when he has taken them and left them still unopened he suffers somewhat from a sense of neglected duty. This also is a trifle, but it counts with the others to make up something more.

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A traveller lately came home from eastern parts who has much to say that is of uncommon interest and importance. The fault we have most frequently to find with the traveller is that his mind and thought are a little too conservative, and his imagination too feeble and restrained. The one who has lately come back to England and who has created some stir in important places is Mr Bernard Temple, who has shown himself to be possessed of unique qualities of observation, thought, and deduction; and after probing down for many years into the heart of causes and movements in the East, particularly in India and in Persia, he has come home to make some statements that are of prime interest and importance in the highest politics—world-politics. For some years he occupied the responsible office of assistant-editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* at Lahore, and while he did so took pains in the making of a complete study of the Mohammedan histories and character, movements and tendencies. Two or three years since he felt the necessity, as he perceived it, of his making a close examination of things in Persia, and then he was next heard of there, where for a long time he watched, questioned, and studied. There have been few men so well fitted to come home and tell of things and record impressions which are of such importance. The average person, the scope of whose consideration of affairs extends beyond the doings of a county council, knows much less of Persia than he should. To him it is generally merely one of the smaller countries of Asia, chiefly celebrated for its shahs and for Omar Khayyám, and being a country which for some more or less mysterious reason we must needs keep friendly with; a presumption being established, but counting for rather less now than it did a few years back, that Russian influence in those parts of the world is a most insidious and dangerous thing. The real fact is, as it is recognised by those who do really study and understand these matters, that Persia is politically quite one of the most important places on the globe at the present time, and the problem of its future and the effect it may have upon the world is intensely interesting, and affords an absorbing field for study.

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Within the present space one cannot pretend to offer more than a slight summary of what Mr Temple is telling to some learned societies, and may very likely tell in greater detail in a volume of writing. But an argument that he made in close reason indicates the paramount place that Persia has in the great scheme of world-politics that is on hand. There is to be a great advance in the power and influence of Mohammedanism, which, always a great force in the world, may, if regenerated, revitalised, reorganised, adapted to modern needs, and given a new strength, exert greater power than ever before. Various authorities have in recent seasons pointed to the signs of the times, and urged upon us the importance of considering carefully this evident reawakening of Islam. What, asks our traveller, is its destiny? And he answers the question generally, and particularly as regards Persia. He says that it is declared that the destiny of the Moslems is to revive the glories of their past. Why did their medieval glories fade? Because the organised strength of Islam was only spiritual, not at all temporal. The Moslem genius, by its fire and ferocity, could conquer the world, and could found an inter-continental empire, but it could not acquire the tame arts of peace. Industrial discipline, scientific culture, political progress—these the Moslem spirit did not inculcate. So, with a view to making ultimately great combinations, alliances, the Moslems are to strengthen and qualify themselves. A master endeavour is to be made. Every Islamic country must be regenerated. Through every Mohammedan land must reach great religious, social, and economic reforms. Turkey and Persia lately inaugurated successful political revolutions, but such were only the first means to a distant end. Each Mohammedan country having independently made itself efficient, a union or coalition of Mohammedan states will follow. This confederacy will then have at its command for all the purposes of world-politics the massed influence, power, and resource of the Islamic universe. Then what is Persia's place in this vast scheme? Mr Temple explains. The Mohammedan world, it is argued, is geographically continuous, stretching almost from the Atlantic to the Pacific. If Mohammedan aspirations are in due season to be realised, this territorial adhesion must be preserved. Persia is the most precious pearl in the long necklace, being at once the geographical, political, intellectual, and strategical centre of Islam, and it promises also to become in the not distant future its religious centre. It lies in the exact

centre of the Mohammedan area, and indeed in some senses it is also the centre of the earth. Its claim to political ascendency in the proposed Mohammedan confederation is grounded firmly in history. Its claim to intellectual as distinct from political supremacy starts with the pretension that it has Aryanised the Mohammedan religion. Outside religion it claims intellectual superiority on account of its language, which is the richest, the most expressive, and the most musical in modern Asia; and on account of its literature, which stands alone in appealing with almost equal charm to the East and to the West. The Persian was the Court language of the Mogul Emperors at Delhi, and subsequently it was the official language of India under British rule; while it is still, more than any other, the polite, the ceremonial, and the diplomatic language of the Mohammedan world. Mr Temple found when he was in northern India that he could not pay a more delicate or graceful compliment to his friends in the ancient Mohammedan aristocracy than to address them in Persian. Then he says that Persia's claim to strategical pre-eminence among Mohammedan states has both a political and an economical aspect. It is considered that were Persia to fall into the hands of a non-Mohammedan power there would be an instant end of the Moslem dream of political resurrection. The proposed federation of Islamic kingdoms, which it is hoped may combine and vivify the disparate elements of modern Mohammedanism, would sink into the limbo of abandoned projects. Such a disaster, in Mohammedan estimation, would only be comparable in Christendom to a non-Christian power (say Turkey) taking possession of Austria and Germany, or at any rate of a broad belt of land across central Europe extending from Hamburg to Venice. Then, as our traveller tells us in the piling up of his argument, from Alexander to Napoleon great militants have acknowledged Persia's strategical importance in Asia, and at the present time there are soldiers and statesmen who think it possible that the Indian Empire, the Turkish Empire, the Russian Empire, and even to some extent the Chinese Empire may shape their destinies, or may have their destinies shaped for them, on the plateau of Iran. 'Economically,' we are told, 'there is the consideration that history seems to move in cycles and to repeat itself; that Persia was the commercial highway of the antique world; . . . that every great scheme or dream of railway exploitation in western Asia is concerned either immediately or ultimately with the practicableness of girdling Persia with broad-gauge lines; that whether the future railway system of Persia assume in the main a north-and-south trend or an east-and-west trend, or both, they will affect materially, and even profoundly, the commercial fortunes of many lands besides Persia. So, in the view of the political leaders of one hundred and seventy-five million Mohammedans, world-politics are resolved into a struggle which will not necessarily be bloody, but still intense and vital, for place and power between the three great divisions of mankind, and the Mohammedan mind is deeply stirred by the prospect. Each Mohammedan country is in communication with all others, directly by means of special emissaries, pilgrims, travellers, traders, and postal exchanges; indirectly by means of Mohammedan newspapers, books, pamphlets, leaflets, and periodicals. Mr Temple urges some pregnant points as to the practical outcome of all these considerations—practical from the purely British point of view. Here we have this great new movement in Mohammedanism, which may alter the whole character of the world, begun and going forward rapidly, and Persia as the natural centre of it. Now, of the one hundred and seventy-five million Mohammedans in the world no fewer than one hundred and forty-two millions, or four-fifths of the whole, are under non-Mohammedan sovereignty, control, or protection. Of these one hundred and forty-two millions, one hundred and twelve millions, or five-sixths, are in Christian keeping, and thirty millions, or one-sixth, are in pagan keeping. The great Mohammedan powers of the world are seven in number, of whom only three profess Mohammedanism. Britain in the extent of its control over Mohammedans easily comes first, exercising government over seventy-eight millions of them, or about half of the total Mohammedan population of the world. Now, the total population of the United Kingdom is forty-one millions, and the total Christian population of the whole of the British Empire is sixty-two millions, so that Britain's Mohammedan peoples outnumber her Christian peoples by sixteen millions. This is a very simple fact, in which there is nothing new; but it is too seldom and too insufficiently realised. 'If we could imagine ourselves here,' said Mr Temple, 'as knowing nothing of the circumstances of the British Empire except what these bare statistics disclose, we should still feel that we were on safe ground in opining that Mohammedan goodwill is an important factor of Britain's stability as an Empire.'

* * *

And then he argues that at the beginning of this vast crisis, this great forward and combined movement of Mohammedanism, Britain is losing the sympathy of the Mohammedan peoples. Only a few years ago she was regarded by the Persians with feelings of friendliness, admiration, and trustfulness. Mr Temple, in the course of a year's tour of Persia, found everywhere, from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, that the feelings with which Britain is now regarded by the Persians are those of suspicion, dislike, and apprehension. He set himself to study the causes and the consequences of this surprising revulsion of sentiment. He gained with difficulty, and after tireless persistence, the cautious confidence of Persians of almost all classes, discussed Persian politics and Mohammedan politics with at least three hundred representative men, and was an extensive reader of the now compara-

tively ably edited and cleanly printed Persian newspapers. With what result? That almost unanimously Persians heaped upon him the opinion that Russia is the irreconcilable and eternal enemy of Persia, and that Britain, by going over to Russia since 1907, has broken with immemorial Anglo-Indian traditions, and has betrayed Persia. Under the heel of Russian intervention, Persia has in her extremity appealed in vain to Britain for succour; and Britain's reply throughout, as Persia understands it, has been to endorse, actively or tacitly, Russia's every proceeding. So Persia's invocations are now being transferred to the Mohammedan nations, and particularly to Turkey and India. This is her last effort and her last hope. These are some of the things which the Persians are saying among themselves in Persia, and which Mr Temple repeats to us on his home-coming. The ideas, the views expressed, are sufficiently startling.

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Specialisation by journalists in London assumes some curious forms, although the need for each of them becomes clear on a very little consideration. There is one gentleman who, anonymously, has probably done more by his writings in interesting the general public, the readers of all classes, more regularly and for a longer period than any other; and one has only to say that he is the senior reporter in the Divorce Court, and has been there day by day, when the Court has been sitting, for thirty-five years, reporting at considerable length the cases heard, to justify the suggestion just made on his behalf. This is Mr H. E. Fenn, who has written and published a book under the title of *Thirty-five Years in the Divorce Courts*, and mightily entertaining do we find it to be, and a strictly proper book withal; while, when the author here and there does find a good opportunity for obtruding his own views, we discover him in high opposition to any light treatment of the marriage bond. He is indeed a great champion of the sanctity of marriage, and after listening to the most sordid tales regarding it for thirty-five years, and seeing the tie broken in the most matter-of-fact and coldly legal manner almost every day, that is a very creditable state of mind to have achieved. Nor will any one overlook the charming fancy which led him to dedicate his book to his wife. As we expected, it is a book full of good stories of judges and counsel and witnesses. He tells us that Sir James Hannen (afterwards Lord Hannen), who was the chief builder of our divorce laws, and was for over twenty years the presiding genius of the Court, had not his equal on the Bench for dignity, learning, and common-sense, the latter quality being a very desirable acquisition in treating of the seamy side of life, the saddest of all, where married couples have made shipwreck of their happiness. He had a reputation for his courtesy and kindness to the junior branch of the Bar. One time at a call-night, referring to what he did with his first brief, he told the newly fledged barristers that they would do well to act as he did in similar circumstances. 'Read it carefully,' he said, 'then forget all about it as quickly as you can, for it's sure to be all wrong. Tell the Court a plain, straightforward story, and when you've lost your case go back to your client and tell him it was all the fault of that old fool.' Once, when replying at a banquet at Trinity House, he, in his threefold capacity as President of the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division, observed that it was a hard matter to do justice between man and man, harder still between ship and ship, and hardest of all between man and woman. There is a pretty story told of the hoaxing of his lordship on one occasion by a juryman. This juryman came to the Court attired in deep mourning, and was very downcast in expression. He stood up and claimed exemption from service on that day because, as he told the official, he was deeply interested in the funeral of a certain gentleman, at which he desired to be present. 'Oh, certainly,' was the courteous reply of the judge, and so the sad, melancholic-looking man left the court. As soon as he had gone Mr C. J. Widdicombe, Clerk of the Rules and Orders, leaned towards the judge and quietly asked him, 'My lord, do you know who that man is that you exempted?' and on his lordship answering inquiringly in the negative, Mr Widdicombe observed, 'He is an undertaker.' Probably the most famous of Divorce Court judges of modern times was Lord St Helier, who will be better remembered by most people as Sir Francis Jeune. A legal friend once reproached him for joining in prayers at the Archbishop's Court when they had gone there in a certain case to impugn its competency. 'But I prayed without prejudice,' was the happy retort. Sir Francis did a long period of great service in the Divorce Court; but Lord Mersey, better known as Sir John Bigham, who was only president for one year, during that time, we are told, 'fluttered' the legal dovecots of the Divorce Court, made things generally 'hum' all round, battered against old, crusted traditions of the Court, woke up staid officials and got on their nerves, and made managing solicitors' clerks regard the changes in practice with amazement. In his early days he had a large practice at Judges' Chambers, and on these occasions he frequently met and had long fights with Mr Justice Field, a most able judge, who late in life became very deaf, and this conduced to occasional displays of bad temper. One morning, when not in one of his best humours, he exclaimed angrily to Mr Bigham, who, he thought, was sticking to him rather too tightly, 'Mr Bigham, Mr Bigham, you are not at all yourself this morning!' Mr Bigham's courageous answer was, 'Unfortunately, my lord, you are yourself this morning!' And there are many good stories told also of the famous counsel who appeared from time to time in the Divorce Court in these days, and one of the best concerns the

brilliant cross-examiner, Sir Rufus Isaacs. Not long ago a surgeon whom he was cross-examining said in the witness-box, 'I dreamed about you last night, Mr Isaacs; you have been a nightmare to me. I have hardly slept since you let me out of the box on Friday. I dreamed you had examined me, and I seemed to have nothing on except bones!'

# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

## CHAPTER II.—THE MAN FROM KINGSLAND.

DAVID MORGAN'S return supplied Hexminster with a pleasant sensation, and the cottage on the Green became a place of pilgrimage. All the intimate friends of the old people went to congratulate them and to study their son, and many others went out of curiosity. The general impression was a favourable one—probably, reflected Alison, because people had not expected too much. The colonist was bluff and hearty, displaying a fair memory for old faces and a due sense of gratitude for kindnesses shown to his parents. He intimated that he was doing well in Kingsland, and would return very shortly.

The Rector was one of his earliest visitors, and his experience was a gratifying one. He found Morgan sitting in the limited garden of the cottage, reading a newspaper.

'He was in his shirt-sleeves, it appears,' said Mrs Hellier, who related the incident at the tea-table, 'and probably without a collar. A man of that class never wears a collar if he can help it. And he told the Rector that he wished to give twenty guineas to the National Schools Fund as an acknowledgment of the debt he owed them for his education.'

'That was very good, don't you think?' ventured Alison.

'The poor Rector is so easily pleased,' said Mrs Hellier, 'that almost any one may be tempted to please him.'

At her first coming to Hexminster, Miss Vicars had decided that the Rector was a member of the Kingdom of Heaven. At that time her own generous instincts had been the arbitrators, but her aunt had pointed out to her later that he was only a well-meaning simpleton. Mistakes of this kind had been less frequent for the last year or two.

'And the poor man,' said Mrs Hellier grimly, 'did a very absurd thing. He actually invited this Morgan to visit the schools and talk to the boys. He will probably do it, too; it is just the kind of function such a person would delight in. But I hope the Rector won't expect us to be present on that occasion.'

Mrs Hellier would have been amazed at the suggestion that she had any animus against the Morgans; but, as a matter of fact, the old people's independence of her parish doles had always been a little trouble to her. Besides, Alison had favoured them; and every fancy of that kind on the girl's part was open to grave suspicion. With a constant weeding out of absurd views and imaginations, she felt that in time her niece would be worthy of her guardianship.

To Alison the subject presented no field for argument, and in any case her aunt was a difficult person to argue with. She was possessed of a certain chilly dignity, the product of long years of petty rule and unchecked tyranny. You may remember that she was portly in person and tall, with large, harsh features and prominent eyes; and there were few in the parish who did not fear her, while there were none who liked her. The girl abandoned the topic, therefore, and in a few minutes forgot it altogether.

Half-an-hour later, however, when she was dropping a couple of letters into the pillar-box at the corner of the street, she was startled by a touch on the shoulder from some one who had come up behind her; and a loud voice said blandly:

'Excuse me, miss!'

It was David Morgan himself, with the noticeable colonial headgear and a friendly smile. Apparently he failed to observe any trace of dismay in her surprise.

'Did I startle you?' he asked in the same tone. 'I'm sure I didn't mean to. But you're the very one I wanted to see. Are you going this way? I'll come along, if you don't mind.'

She had turned, unwittingly, towards the Mill Lane, considerably embarrassed and not at all gratified. She had caught sight of the blue-flannel wristbands, and they distressed her. But Morgan, walking at her side, began to explain his business. To know when you are not wanted is a faculty not given to all.

'I wanted to tell you, miss, how grateful I am for your kindness to my old folks. They are full of it—and so am I.'

'There is nothing to thank me for,' said Alison quickly. 'They are on my aunt's list, and I called on her account.'

'I know that, of course. But the calling wasn't everything. 'Tisn't many would have read newspapers to them and listened to their talk. It couldn't have been a light matter.'

'I am afraid you make too much of it,' she said briefly.

'That's impossible. I'm sure no one else would have listened as you did to their praise of their absent son, much less taking an interest in his doings.'

'Heavens!' thought Miss Vicars, 'I hope he is not taking that interest as a compliment to him-

self!' And aloud she answered, still more coldly (for at that moment she was fresh from the influence of Mrs Hellier, and his appearance reminded her of the talk at the tea-table), 'My interest, I am afraid, was altogether in the old people, Mr Morgan. . . . But I must not take you farther out of your way.'

She paused at the entrance to the lane, resolving to dismiss him here; but, to her dismay, he refused to be dismissed or to notice her rebuke.

'Are you going towards the Mill?' he asked quickly. 'Then, if you don't mind, I will walk with you. I haven't been there since I came home—and it used to be a favourite walk of mine.'

'A favourite walk of yours?' said the girl, surprised.

'I should rather say so. I'll tell you all about it presently. Why, I know every inch of it by heart.'

Because her attention was diverted thus—for it was her favourite walk too—she failed to dismiss him, and in a moment discovered, with a bad grace, that the memorable journey had actually begun. And yet we may suspect that she was not so distressed as might have been expected, for in spite of his lack of culture there was certainly something agreeable in the man's voice and manner. After the first few moments his company almost ceased to be offensive, though she hoped fervently that they would meet none of the people she knew. The shadow of the scandal was, in fact, already upon her mental horizon.

So they went on together—she silent and dignified, he keeping up a rambling conversation full of reminiscences. The frankness of his tone and the sincerity of his glance were at any rate enjoyable, the poor girl decided mentally. The Mill Lane, he remarked, was in better condition now than in the old days, when every shower of rain had turned it into a quagmire; but of course there was now a Parish Council to attend to these matters; . . . and, in spite of a certain lack of sentiment, these iron swing-gates, too, were better than the tall wooden stiles of twenty years ago. Then they reached the first of the Mill Fields, with the glistening windows of the Bishop's Palace on its farther side catching the golden beams of the western sun. As a boy he had played cricket and football in that field, with the rudest of appliances, but with the purest of enjoyment and the most intense seriousness. It had been one of the greatest events of his early life when, on one Saturday afternoon, the second footman at the Palace, finding the Palace team only nine strong against a junior eleven of the Cathedral School, had invited him to make the tenth.

'The second footman was captain of the Palace eleven,' he said, 'and, for the first time, in authority over the butler. I remember well the airs he carried. They were his ruin, for the Palace eleven never turned out again. But I was very proud of the invitation to play for them—footmen and butlers were very great personages to me in those days. Some one said that the Bishop himself was watching the game from his study window. I don't believe it now, but I certainly did believe it then. It helped me to do tremendous execution upon the schoolboys' bowling. I had a dim fancy that after the game his lordship would stride down into the field and pat me on the head in public.'

For the first time Alison laughed. She had once met the late Bishop of Hexminster, a prelate whose whole aspect had suggested personal meanness and ecclesiastical disdain. She would have thought him the most unlikely person in the world to watch the Palace servants play cricket. Morgan laughed also, with an almost boyish heartiness, if a trifle too loudly. She noticed now that, in spite of his carelessness with regard to the razor, there was nothing objectionable in his face. It might have been called a good face, and it was distinctly a forceful one. The frankness and openness, too, were redeeming qualities.

'Those were good days,' he said. 'Much as we enjoyed them, we could not guess how good they were. Well, I have been inquiring about some of the fellows who played with me; and if you'll come this way, perhaps I can show you something. Please do!'

He was turning out of the public path—they were in the second field now—and leading the way across the grass towards the Mill stream, whose course was marked by a line of old trees—horse-chestnuts and sycamores. To her surprise, she found herself following passively, perhaps because he had taken her consent for granted. There was a narrow ditch to cross, and he turned to help her over. She avoided his hand; but, as she saw afterwards, the amazing thing was that she had followed him at all. In a moment he had marked out, with the very slightest hesitation, a straight, tall sycamore, which flung its branches far over the stream.

'Look!' he said; 'the bark of the tree is almost covered with names and initials. It was our habit in those days to make our mark in this way. Can you see mine?'

That tree-stem might have formed a study for a whole afternoon. As the tree had grown it had twisted many of the marks into illegibility, while it had given others a rugged strength and clearness which the original craftsmen had never anticipated. But after a brief examination Miss Vicars saw, well above all the other marks, a bold, deep-cut 'D. M.' set in a circle of imposing proportions.

'It took me a good two hours one day,' said the author meditatively. 'I felt a desire to set my mark above all the others, and to cut it deep. In those days I was full of dreams; but there was no dream that did not include a return to this spot some day to see what had become of my mark and to compare the actual achievement with the ideal. And that part, at least, comes true this evening.'

Alison found it difficult to comprehend all this; not what the man said—for that was clear enough—but the fact that he was saying it after only half-an-

hour's acquaintance, and to her, and that such a man should say such things at all. This breezy revelation of thought and sentiment was absolutely new to her experience, and entirely foreign to the element in which she lived her daily life. But there was something in herself, alas! that was not foreign to it, and that began to respond with a growing sense of kindliness. His speech was uncultivated, no doubt; but perhaps the spirit was more than the expression. She listened with pleasure for more, and the more took a somewhat surprising form.

'Some of the old names are hard to read and harder to remember now,' said Morgan. 'That little "T. S." is for Theo Smith; he keeps the little grocer's shop on the Green, as his father did before him. That "C. B. B." is for Charlie Bates, my particular chum. We were bosom friends for three years, and then the family left the place. We never wrote to each other—we boys would never have shown such sentiment, and would have scorned the suggestion—and I have never seen him since; but more than once, in the Bush, I have found myself suddenly awake at night with my thoughts full of him and the longing to see him again. Queer how the heart turns over its old treasure-chest sometimes in the lonely places of the earth. . . . And there's another name—Lewis Garland's.' Alison started guiltily, but he did not seem to notice. 'You'll observe that in cutting his initials he chose a place which was not big enough, and cut through another fellow's name which had been there before. I thought it very mean of him at the time, and wanted to fight him for it; and after I had done my own up there, I warned him solemnly that if it was ever tampered with I would hold him responsible and punch him without asking a question. No; Garland and I never seemed to hit it off together. They say he is doing very well now at Westhampton Docks; and he was always an able fellow, at least.'

With a certain constraint, which she tried to conceal, Miss Vicars turned away from the tree. And he pursued his train of thoughts with the same engaging freedom.

'There was no end to our dreams,' he said. 'My favourite one would be rather bad to beat. I was to go to South America, and, by sheer military and administrative genius, build up all those states into a magnificent empire—Brazil and Peru, Chili and Argentine, and all the smaller fry—into one great world-power, with myself on the throne. Mayne Reid, I may say, was one of my favourite authors then. And when I had firmly established myself as emperor I would make a tour of the world, visiting first my native city of Hexminster. My yacht, with a cruiser squadron in attendance, would steam into Westhampton Harbour one fine summer morning, and I would land at the pier-head, to make my progress through the town on a white horse with a long tail, like Napoleon's charger—a pure Arab, of course. On Sunday I would attend service in state at the Cathedral, with my father and mother on my right and left; and after the service I would interview the Rector in the vestry, and present him with a cheque for ten thousand pounds, to end all his numerous small parish worries for the rest of his life.'

'That would be quite impossible,' said Alison; and for the second time she laughed.

'I am afraid so. I understand him better now. He would not be happy if he were not bearing some one else's distress.'

'Then you like the Rector?' she asked quickly.

'Ah, yes! He is one of the elect. Soon after I went to Australia I felt impelled to write and tell him how sorry I was for some boyish trick by which I had given him trouble. He answered on the day my letter reached him, and I have that answer still. . . . One of the things that came out to me recently was a picture post-card bearing his portrait. I was astonished and shocked to see how white he had grown, and I should not like to say how much that picture helped to hasten my return to England. Yes, he is one of the elect among men.'

She was intensely pleased, though she said nothing. From that moment this man, vulgar or not vulgar, had a distinct bond of sympathy with her; and though she could not have respected his opinion—how was such a thing possible?—her old view of the Rector rose in her mind clear and strong, never again to be wholly defaced.

'It is not comforting to compare the achievement with the dream,' he went on easily. 'But it is always improving to one's character' [unfortunately he pronounced it 'karrater']. 'But that's life all over. If a man finds, in twenty-five years, that he has exchanged five thousand golden dreams for five thousand golden sovereigns in the bank, should he not be satisfied?'

'So few do so much as that.'

'True.'

The South American emperor appearing as an unshaven colonist with a Gladstone bag, the Rector's gift of ten thousand pounds reduced to twenty guineas, and the vision of a prince of all the graces finding its only realisation at last in Mr Lewis Garland! Miss Vicars smiled and sighed at the same time.

She had no time to wonder what magic atmosphere this man was casting around her, for just then they reached the Mill. In front of the Mill the stream passes under the roadway, gushing out from the arch of the bridge with terrific noise and force as the great wheel drives it. The stream is protected and screened by a stout stone wall, which, however, is only breast-high; and it was to this wall that Morgan led the way. She followed him meekly now, and entirely without surprise. She had somehow known that he would turn to this spot, that he would be aware of the secret connected with it.

'Lean on the wall,' he said a little more loudly,

so that he could be heard above the churning of the wheel, 'and look down into the water. After looking hard for a little while, you will begin to think that the water is almost stationary and that it is the bridge that moves, with you upon it. What! you have tried this before?'

'Oh yes,' said Alison; 'long ago.'

Morgan laughed, but did not look up. 'I knew you had,' he said, to her astonishment. And then he went on without explaining. 'This is the ship on which I sailed to South America; this is the yacht on which I returned to visit the old town. I am afraid I spent many stolen hours on this ship of mine. Such a ship, too—one that would take any form or any direction I pleased, regardless of wind, weather, and circumstances, and with no fellow-passengers to disturb the illusion!'

Miss Vicars was looking into the water, but suddenly tore her gaze away with a sense of shock. The ship had begun to move indeed, but in that moment she remembered that she was not alone in the illusion this time. They were a party of two on this ship of dreams, and the other passenger was a man—and *this* man! Almost with a gasp she looked up. He did the same, questioningly. It was necessary to say something.

'When do you return to Kingsland?' she asked breathlessly.

He shook himself clear of the ship of dreams. 'To Kingsland?' he repeated. 'In a month or two, I suppose. I have a few commissions to do in London for some of my mates. Yes, in a month or two.'

'And do you like the idea of going back?'

It was a stupidly conventional question, and she was a little ashamed of it. But her companion treated it with a certain respect, at least. He answered conventionally.

'Ah,' he said, 'it is a great land—a great land!'

Another moment or two, and the extraordinary creature was telling her about it. He took a pencil and began to draw a rude map upon the smooth, white stone upon which they leaned. This map showed the outlines of the older states, and he described how the newest government had become necessary and how it had been formed. A small cross on the sea-board marked the site of the capital, where already a great city was rising to be the centre of life and commerce. He showed how it opened its gates to the trade-routes of the Southern seas, so that the wealth of a hemisphere might flow into it under the shadow of the old flag. Kingsland and New Tyre—these were names that he uttered without any traces of a vulgar intonation. And then he passed on to speak of even wider visions—of the possibilities of the balance of the world's life and business, pomp and circumstance, shifting some day to the lands under the Southern Cross, and resting there as it had hitherto rested in the Northern worlds. And when that day came Kingsland would be perhaps a world-power, and the New Tyre greater than the old.

Afterwards, when the scandal was discovered, Alison was forced to believe that all this was a farrago of nonsense, parrot-echoes of the blatant talk of vulgar newspapers in that raw, red land, little bits stolen from the public speeches of that great orator who was now Premier of Kingsland. As she listened, however, she had no suspicion of this, and only wondered that this man should entertain or utter such views. She had a vague impression that they were all of a piece with his previous communications, and that she had somehow come into contact with a nature quaintly romantic. Under this impression, her dislike vanished for ever. No; she could never really dislike the man again—never. With all his vulgarity, he was yet a kindred spirit. So in that glamour she listened, almost breathlessly at times, until he paused. Then she raised her eyes from the map, and he slipped the pencil back into his pocket.

'There!' he said. 'What a talker I am! I have done little else since I came upon you this evening. I suppose it is because I have not met a chum for some time.'

His frankness was surely outrageous. At that word she started and looked up; and he seemed to misunderstand the look.

'Oh yes,' he said confidently; 'I knew you were one just as soon as I set eyes on you.'

She should have been displeased, and wondered afterwards that her surprise contained no such element. To conceal her embarrassment, she prepared to move away; and he acquiesced in the movement. They went straight back along the road, but instead of entering the fields again, took the other way homeward. In a few minutes they had left the Mill road, and were on the broad and dusty thoroughfare that enters Hexminster from the direction of Westhampton.

Morgan had less to say afterwards, and seemed a little subdued at the recollection of his own communicativeness. He talked, indeed, but without the confidential enthusiasm of the previous hour. As they went she sometimes stole a look at him, and wondered how old he was. She believed he was about thirty-eight, and decided that for a man of that age he was singularly boyish. That romantic and enthusiastic attitude towards existence—that ever-present sense of the unexhausted possibilities of the future—was not that the secret of perpetual youth? In the Hellier and Hexminster atmosphere she had almost lost it—at twenty-seven.

Then she looked at him again, and wondered where her first distaste for him had gone. This was a question she could not answer then; but she answered it later, when there was no one else near—answered it, of course, by the romantic standards which his easy talk had restored to her. She believed that for some reason or other—perhaps because he had divined the existence of some mysterious sympathy, only waiting to be awakened—he had opened his heart to her; and she had found

it full of generous sympathy, rich in pleasant memories. Apparently in twenty years he had forgotten nothing that was good to remember, retained nothing that was contemptible. Vaguely she knew that this was a true man, and the first she had met since her father had died; and the contact stirred in her a thousand sentimental impulses which had become dormant.

But as they walked he, too, sometimes stole a secret look at her, and decided that she was good to gaze upon. She pleased him even more than she had done when he had met her first on the threshold of his mother's cottage, and when her presence had rendered him so ill at ease. Strange that such a girl should have been left for him to woo! But then he remembered her environment, the little Cathedral city, where all was old and still, and where a stagnant society moved in an existence full of trifling conventions unshaken by the breath of the outside world. New faces seldom came into it, and the stream of life passed it by, a sleepy backwater. Besides, there was the aunt, that formidable dragon who kept such jealous watch over the poor girl and her little treasure. It would want a man of strong heart indeed to face such an inquisition as that.

Presently a rumble of wheels and creaking of harness behind, and the omnibus from Westhampton passed them. On the top sat several passengers, most of them men who were in business at Westhampton, but resided at Hexminster for various reasons. Had there been a train-service the old city could not have retained its atmosphere of cloistered quiet; but this red-and-yellow omnibus was the only mode of conveyance. One of those who rode on it, a dark, short-bearded man of gentlemanly appearance, raised his hat as he passed, and smiled in salute.

Apparently Morgan was not aware that it was within his province to acknowledge the courtesy. He simply stared, and almost immediately asked a question. He was a rude man.

'Who was that?'

'That,' said Alison, 'was Mr Lewis Garland.'

There was a pause.

'Do you know him, then?' asked Morgan doubtfully. 'I never thought of that.'

'He sometimes calls,' she explained. 'He is on one or two of my aunt's parochial committees.'

It was in that way that Garland saw them together. He watched them until a tall hedge intervened, and gave no indication that the incident had affected him in any way. But two men who knew him were on the same omnibus, and afterwards left it at the 'Black Lion' to walk up the road together.

'I wonder,' said one in a reflective way, 'whether there is anything in those rumours about Garland and Miss Vicars.'

'If there is,' replied the other with conviction, 'our friend from Australia may look out for squalls!'

*(To be continued.)*

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# MY FRIEND 'TIMOTHY.'

By Eleanor M. Horsbrugh.

Of all household pets, I think it would be difficult to find one more fascinating than a South African meerkat. There are three different species: two with rough, furry coats; the other with a smooth coat, the one I refer to being of the latter description. He is about the size of a large rat, and, to look at, reminds one of a miniature kangaroo, with his long, pointed head, light-brown coat, and fat, tapering tail. By nature he is a creature of the veldt, where he lives a happy and strenuous life catching insects, digging up succulent bulbs and roots with his long black claws, and sun-worshipping in his leisure time. He is often to be seen standing on his hind-legs on the top of an ant-heap surveying the world as if the whole of creation belonged to him. His home, however, is not above the earth at all, but in a deep underground burrow. If caught young, a meerkat can be quite easily tamed, and becomes a most companionable little pet.

I remember the morning Timothy appeared in our house in Bloemfontein. He just 'blew in.' Nobody knew where he came from, or why he decided to adopt us; but there was evidently no shadow of doubt in his own mind about the matter. He made straight for the kitchen, stood on his hind-legs and warmed his waistcoat at the fire, then turned himself round and warmed his little back, taking stock of us the while with his beady, twinkling eyes. Apparently he came to the conclusion that we should suit him, and forthwith proceeded to make himself quite at home by bullying everybody and everything. There was no question about it that, wherever he hailed from, he had been accustomed to 'rule the roast,' and must have been brought up in human society from his earliest babyhood. A small leather collar was round his neck, but it did not lead to his identification; and although we made inquiries, we never found out to whom he belonged. Not that we wanted to, as he was much too attractive a creature to be anything but a *persona grata*.

But he certainly was a tyrant, though, like most tyrants, a coward at heart. We soon became used to his bluffing, overbearing methods, but just at first they were rather alarming. He would show a fine ebullition of temper if made to desist from tearing the satin linings out of one's best shoes, or from scratching the cover off a favourite book! Wrink-

ling up his long nose and showing his teeth, he would give vent to his feelings in a series of *kac-kac-kac-kac-kac-kac-kac-kac*, which, judging by the sound, must have been meerkat-language of a very low order. Sometimes he would try to frighten one into leaving him inside the shoe (or whatever it might be) by pretending he was going to bite; but he would never have dreamt of really closing his sharp little teeth, and his bite was the gentlest thing imaginable.

At the same time he was undeniably of a very imperious and domineering disposition, and the only way to manage him was just to turn the tables and be imperious and domineering too. One really couldn't stand too much of his high-handed impudence. Noises of any kind he could not bear; and, no matter how independent of us he pretended to be, he was never above rushing to the shelter of a skirt, or hiding himself, trembling with fear, within a protecting arm, if any one dropped a tin tray or put coals on the fire. The gramophone scared the wits out of him, and he simply could not bear it.

We noticed that he did not care much about the other animals in the house—three dogs and a cat—and kept them very much in their places. This rather surprised the retriever, as he had been accustomed to play for hours with a former meerkat we possessed called Growly, who was very devoted to him, but had little or no use for *our* society. Timothy, on the other hand, took a vast interest in those queer beings called humans, despite the fact that they sometimes sorely taxed his patience by snatching him up just when he was terribly busy turning out a work-basket or emptying a box of cigarettes.

I do not know whether Timothy was his baptismal name or not, but he refused to answer to any other. We tried every appellation we could lay tongue to, but none elicited any answer until some one chanced on Timothy. 'H'm!' he responded, and turned his head as much as to say, 'Did anybody call me?' So Timothy he remained, and he never failed to reply 'H'm!' when so addressed.

One of his chief joys in life was to clean out a pipe. He would put his long nails into the bowl and scratch away at it until satisfied there was no speck of anything remaining that could possibly be got out. Visitors used to be rather surprised at being questioned as to whether they had a pipe in their pockets. 'Why?' they would ask. 'Oh, only because Timothy would like to clean it for you.' Out would come the pipe, Timothy scarcely able to contain his impatience to begin operations upon it. He would work with lightning rapidity until it was absolutely clean, greatly to the delight of its owner, who usually declared that he could not have done it half so well himself with the ordinary appliances.

There is a saying to the effect that 'curiosity killed the cat.' It certainly killed Growly, for he came to an untimely end by disappearing down a well in his efforts to find out what was at the bottom of that dark abyss. It was a wonder that Timothy did not also fall a victim to curiosity, for there was nothing that escaped his attention. More than once he came near to being roasted alive in the oven, and we often thought that he really required more looking after than a baby. There was not a crack in the floor or a hole in the furniture but he must thrust down it a tentative paw, and his investigations only ceased when he was too tired to investigate any more.

My brother had a soldier-servant called B——, whom Timothy loved dearly, and he always insisted on sleeping with him. Timothy was not very enthusiastic about early rising, especially in winter-time, and was much annoyed if it happened that B—— had to turn out for an early parade. A long nose and a pair of resentful beady eyes would appear from among the bedclothes, and he would look at B—— as much as to say, 'Well, I *do* call this a stupid sort of trick to play on a fellow!'

Left to himself, he became extremely bored, and there was nothing he disliked more than being tied up. He would not sleep; neither would he amuse himself in any way, but would just run round and round the length of his chain until some one released him. A walk was a great pleasure, and he followed like a dog. Every now and then he would stop to have a look round, standing up on his hind-legs and balancing himself with his tail. That tail was a wonderful piece of mechanism, and as useful to him as an extra leg. So flexible was it, and yet so firm and wiry, that he could almost turn his little body right round without losing his balance. The only time it *did* play him false was when he tried to stand up on the polished floor of the drawing-room. Legs and tail *would* slide in opposite directions, and down he would come, which was very wounding to his dignity.

Last March he bade farewell for ever to South Africa and set sail for England. He greatly enjoyed the voyage, and got dreadfully spoilt on board ship, as people were continually asking if they could have him to nurse or to play with; and as for his appetite, it was so fastidious that nothing less dainty than duck or pheasant was good enough for him. His boon-companion was an old man with a patriarchal beard. Timothy loved that beard; he combed it daily, and it was a source of never-failing interest to him.

London did not appeal to his fancy very much, and he nearly went mad with fright when he was put into a motor. We were obliged to keep him tied up during part of the day in a small back garden, and it was most amusing to watch the cats from the neighbouring houses congregated on the top of the wall to look at him. Sometimes as many as seven or eight would be staring down on him at one time, their eyes like green saucers. They evidently thought at first that he was a sort of superior rat, but soon found out their mistake and learnt to treat him with due respect. The cat belonging to the house was determined to force her

friendship upon him, and he occasionally accepted a bone from her or condescendingly allowed her to smell the tip of his nose; but human society was what he craved for, and her feline attentions in reality only bored him.

He has now found a home in the country, and has quite settled down in his adopted land. He doesn't think much of the climate, and says that the sun is not to be compared to the sun he left behind him, but on the whole he is happy and well content, and has become quite a naturalised Englishman.

## THE WOOING OF THE CONQUEROR.

DUKE WILLIAM of Normandy has long been known in our land as the Conqueror. How he came by that surname is a familiar story to every schoolchild. But in the days before he became King of England he made another greater conquest of which little is heard—to wit, the conquest of a woman's heart. This was by no means so easy a task as it might seem, and the valiant duke found that the winning of a battle or the taking of a town was as naught compared with it.

'Duke William of Normandy,' says an ancient chronicler, 'having learnt that Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, had a daughter named Matilda, very beautiful in person and of generous disposition, sent deputies, by the advice of his peers, to ask her of her father in marriage.'

The Princess Matilda was indeed a very desirable match. Her father, who was related to most of the royal houses in Europe—an important factor in an alliance—was also rich and powerful, skilled in war, and a wise and politic ruler over the wealthy and prosperous state of Flanders. Moreover, the princess herself was well fitted to adorn a Court. 'She was a singular mirror of prudence and the perfection of virtue,' says William of Malmesbury, 'and was very fair and graceful.' She was no less celebrated for her learning than for her beauty, and was famed for her skill in needlework, the most important accomplishment a lady of rank could possess in those days. A specimen of her famous stitchery is still in existence, for the Bayeux Tapestry remains as one of the most wonderful achievements ever executed in the gentle art of needlework.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the ambitious Duke of Normandy was desirous of gaining the hand of so renowned and talented a princess. This, however, he found to be a more difficult matter than the subsequent conquest of England; and seven long years of storm and stress were to elapse ere he could prove himself the victor.

The Earl of Flanders gladly gave his consent to Duke William's proposed alliance, and promised a rich dowry with his daughter. This was but the beginning of the difficulties. The duke found he had to contend against the opposition of the powerful Courts of France and Burgundy, and against the intrigues of his kinsmen. The Church refused her consent on the ground that the union was within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity; while all the neighbouring princes pressed their claim as rival suitors for the hand of the fair maiden. But the most formidable opposition came from the lady herself, who declined the duke's offer with scornful disdain. 'She would not have a bastard for a husband,' she replied to the earl, her father, when he told her of the proposed alliance, and no entreaties on his part could induce her to change her mind.

If the truth were told, the stigma on her wooer's birth had less to do with the refusal of the princess than the fact that her affections were already engaged. At this time Matilda was wasting her virginal charms in an unrequited passion for a young Saxon nobleman, Brihtric, surnamed Meaw or Snow, so called from the fairness of his complexion, who was an envoy at her father's Court. Brihtric, having doubtless pledged his faith to a fair countrywoman in green England, remained insensible of her regard, and for this indifference he was destined to suffer heavily in later days—a terrible instance of a woman's bitter, brooding resentment over the memory of a slight offered to her fascinations.

The duke's messengers were therefore forced to return to their master and inform him of the rejection of his suit. Earl Baldwin had taken the precaution to soften the words of his daughter's objection and excuse her as best he might. But Duke William was filled with indignation at the unfavourable report brought by his envoys, and when he came to hear of the words that the princess had actually used regarding him, his anger knew no bounds.

The subject of his birth was one on which the duke would brook no insult, and no one ever taunted him with it without a swift retribution. Regardless either of the high rank or the gentle sex of the offender, he mounted his horse in a transport of rage, and, followed by a few attendants, rode fast and furious to Lille, where the Court of Flanders then lay. Arriving at the palace, he strode into the presence-hall alone, and boldly passing through it, he made his way unchallenged to the state apartments of the earl. Bursting into a chamber, he found the countess seated at her embroidery, surrounded by her daughters and her ladies. Seizing the Princess Matilda by her long hair, he dragged her round and round the chamber, while

she struggled vainly to escape from his cruel grasp. Finally, after striking her repeatedly, he flung her on the ground at the feet of her terrified mother, who was too much overcome at the suddenness of the attack to sound an alarm, and left the apartment as swiftly as he had entered it. Having avenged the insulting words of the princess in a manner that she was not likely to forget, he made his way to the spot where his squire held his horse in readiness. Springing to the saddle, he rode off at full speed to the safety of his own domains, outdistancing all pursuit.

The chroniclers of the period, although they differ somewhat as to the place where the duke offered this personal assault on the fair princess, all agree that he felled her to the ground in his violence. One historian tells us that 'Duke William was so infuriated by the scorn with which Matilda treated him that he waylaid her in the streets of Bruges as she was returning with her ladies from Mass, beat her, rolled her in the mud, spoiled her rich attire, and then rode off.' Whatever the exact details of the attack may be, the fact remains that the duke's wooing was rough even for those turbulent times.

When Earl Baldwin heard of the outrage that had been perpetrated on his daughter even within the walls of his own palace he was naturally very wroth, and determined to avenge it. Accordingly he set forth to harry the territory of the duke, and did much damage. Duke William, however, was not the man to receive punishment without retaliation, and a long, aggressive campaign took place, in which both sides suffered heavily. At last the warriors were weary of their warfare, and were counselled to seek peace. An armistice was agreed upon, and a meeting took place for the ratification of a treaty. To the surprise of every one, and not a little to their discomfiture, Duke William again made an offer for the hand of the Princess Matilda. The Earl trembled for his new-found hope of peace; but when the princess was apprised of the duke's renewed suit, to the utter astonishment of all concerned she meekly bowed her haughty head and replied that 'it pleased her well.' Earl Baldwin, delighted that the matter should be so amicably settled, lost no time in concluding the matrimonial treaty with his formidable foe, and bestowed on his daughter a magnificent dowry in lands, money, jewels, and rich array.

The castle of Augi, which in our day is known as the Château d'Eu, the family residence of Louis Philippe, King of the French, was chosen as a suitable place for the solemnisation of the marriage, being on the extreme frontier of the duke's domains.

The year 1050 found the castle in all readiness for the nuptials. Duke William, attended by his gallant men, awaited the advent of the haughty bride, whom in all probability he had not seen since the day he dragged her by her hair round her mother's chamber.

Perhaps we may wonder how the valiant duke ever ventured again into the presence of the princess; but Duke William evidently knew how to subdue a woman's heart as well as conquer a kingdom, and was as successful as he was to be in later days when he crossed the Channel.

The princess arrived in great state, accompanied by her parents and a splendid retinue of nobles and ladies. The marriage took place in the Cathedral of Notre Dame d'Eu, in the presence of both Courts. Thus was the stormy courtship accomplished and all obstacles swept away. The Pope granted a dispensation on payment of the usual fines, and on condition that the bride and bridegroom would each erect and endow an abbey at Caen. This led to the founding of the sister abbeys of St Stephen and the Holy Trinity. The wedding ceremony was followed by much feasting and merrymaking. In the midst of the rejoicings Earl Baldwin asked his daughter how she came to consent to a union which she at first refused with scorn. 'Because,' replied Matilda proudly, 'I did not know the duke so well as I do now; for he must be a man of great courage and high daring who would venture to come and beat me in my own father's palace.'

The answer of the young duchess won her the applause of her new lord and master and his peers. For it showed that he had not only gained her hand but had conquered her proud heart by the strength of his passion and the determination of his will, and that his violent and ruffianly behaviour was admired rather than resented by his bride.

Has the heart of a woman much changed since those far-off days? Does not courage and daring still win the day in the wooing of a lady though many centuries have elapsed since the Conqueror won his bride? And Matilda of Flanders had never reason to regret her capitulation. Throughout her life her lord treated her with the most tender affection, consideration, and courtesy, and 'wept exceedingly for many days after her decease.'

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### DIRECTIVE WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

THE advantages of wireless telegraphy for vessels in distress have been fully demonstrated during the last few years; but, although invaluable for summoning assistance after an accident has occurred, the ordinary system is of little use for indicating the approach of danger. This disability has lately been overcome by the Bellini-Tosi wireless compass equipment, which gives the direction from which signals are being received. At present two vessels may be communicating with each other by 'wireless' in a fog without either of them knowing the other's relative position; hence no steps can be taken to avoid a collision. With the directive system each vessel will know in which direction the other is situated, and can steer a safe course accordingly. Another advantage of the new method is that, once the required signals have been picked up, the directive equipment shuts out stray messages from other directions, thus avoiding interruption. The new wireless station at Boulogne is being fitted with this apparatus, as well as several French steamships.

### AN INTELLIGENT SCHOOL.

The President of the Board of Education has called Seamon's Moss School, near Altrincham, a suburb of Manchester, 'an intelligent school.' Its development is mainly due to the originality and insight of Mr Johnson, a former headmaster, and his successor, Mr Litherland. It is an endowed school under a scheme of the Charity Commissioners, and aims at turning out the complete boy. There all his faculties, intellect, and skill of hand and eye are harmoniously developed, so that, whether as an artisan or farmer, he may succeed. Nature-study has been part of the curriculum for many years; and the school has a collection of all the flora and fauna to be obtained for six miles round, gathered by the boys themselves. Time is given out of doors with the teacher to learn to know trees; in spring the buds are watched, and the progress of leaf to flower and fruit to seed. Wild flowers come next, and common weeds; and the boys are taught to distinguish the agricultural grasses and their value. All this is done out of doors, with their eye on the object. Next comes seed-testing under the microscope, which shows the weed, seeds, and rubbish amongst them. In the garden there is one plot for two boys, where they learn the value of manure and are taught to bud and graft fruit-trees and roses. For boys who may be artisans, training begins at eleven with cardboard models; they are allowed to make whatever they please, ideas and not mere mechanical skill being fostered. A working model of a windmill pump was a great success; models of aeroplanes are also tried. With all this, the usual elementary instruction is given in arithmetic, geography, and history. The boys are able, besides, to hold their own in any games.

### THE BORSTAL SYSTEM.

In bodily disease, as in criminology, prevention is better than cure. The soundness of the Borstal system of treating criminals has been abundantly proved. The Prevention of Crime Act, which came into effect in 1909, established State reformatories under the name of Borstal institutions, adopting the methods of work done for some years past at Borstal prisons near Rochester, at Lincoln, and elsewhere. The system for girls at Aylesbury dates from last August. In Borstal institutions, 'young offenders, whilst detained, may be given such industrial training and other instruction, and be subjected to such discipline of moral influences, as may conduce to their reformation and the prevention of crime.' Lads over sixteen and under twenty-three who have committed crimes severe enough to warrant a sentence of penal servitude may be sent and detained for not less than one year and not more than three years. There is no oakum-picking or stone-breaking, save as a punishment. The lads, according to their various bents, are trained in useful trades, such as carpentry, building, blacksmithing, baking, market-gardening, and agricultural work generally. For the illiterate there is a system of evening classes similar to those in elementary schools. Consequently youths and girls who might have sunk in depravity, shame, and crime get their chance. They are delivered from the sordid and brutalising associations of those older in crime; they are sent out, accustomed to hard work, active, alert, capable, to take their place as honest men and women and capable workers in the labour-market. The Borstal Association, of 15 Buckingham Street, Strand, London, does its best for the youths and girls after their period of detention by placing them in the labour-market, and has made an appeal for help in money and personal assistance to continue the good work so well begun.

### CARE OF THE TEETH.

There is evidence that laymen and experts alike are becoming more alive to the necessity for the care of the teeth. The medical officer of London County Council has reported, as a result of examinations made at the open-air schools, that out of two hundred and forty children attending only fourteen were noted as possessing a perfectly healthy set of teeth; two hundred and fifteen had teeth in need of either extraction or stopping, of which sixty-nine cases were in a condition described as urgent. What are known as Tooth-Brush Clubs established in certain schools have stimulated the care of the teeth amongst

the young. Dr J. E. Young, at the conference of the British Dental Association at Liverpool, strongly advocated preventive dentistry, and pointed out that those who neglected the care of the teeth swallowed millions of unhealthy organisms. At a meeting of the British Medical Association, Professor Sim Wallace, dealing with the effect of various foodstuffs in preventing dental caries, said that to indicate the types of meals for children which prevented and caused dental caries the following might be taken as illustrations. The meals which did not produce this disease of the teeth were as follows: Breakfast—fish, bacon, toast-and-butter, coffee, and tea. Lunch—meat or poultry, potatoes, salad, well-baked milk-pudding, fresh fruits, and water. Supper—rusks, toast or bread, rolls-and-butter, chicken or fish, water or milk-and-water or tea, and fresh fruit. On the other hand, the meals which induced diseased teeth were as follows: Breakfast—milk, porridge and milk, and bread-and-marmalade; followed by a supplementary breakfast, perhaps a few hours after, consisting of a glass of milk and a sweet biscuit. Luncheon—mashed potatoes and gravy, milk, and milk-pudding. Supper—bread soaked in milk, or bread-and-jam, cocoa and cake; followed by a supplementary supper, taken on going to bed, consisting of a glass of milk and biscuit, or a tiny piece of chocolate. The first-mentioned exercise the teeth, require mastication, are more or less self-cleansing, and cause little or no acid fermentation; the second class are just the opposite in effect. Dr H. Campbell said the condition of the teeth of the inhabitants of these islands was an absolute disgrace.

### THE HUMPHREY GAS-PUMP.

It has hitherto been necessary, if we wished to pump water by means of power derived from gas or oil, to employ both an engine and a pump, each having a number of moving and wearing parts. This indirect method of applying the power to the water has already been overcome in the case of steam, although the apparatus is not very economical. In the Humphrey pump the explosion of gas or oil vapour acts directly upon the water to be pumped, in the following manner: A U pipe forms the principal part of the apparatus, one leg being led into the delivery-tank, whilst the other terminates in an explosion-chamber. We will suppose a mixture of gas and air to be already compressed in the latter, and to be exploded as in a gas or oil engine. The effect is to blow the water along the U pipe and up into the delivery-tank; but water is like a flywheel in that, when you start it, it will go on after the explosion has ceased to act. The result is that the gases in the explosion-chamber are drawn out by the receding water until they are below the air-pressure outside. At this moment certain valves are opened and more water is sucked in, as would be the case in an ordinary pump. The water then begins to swing back, and after blowing out the exhaust gases it is stopped by compressing the air in the top of the explosion-chamber. This air acts like a spring and starts the water off on another suction stroke, which draws in a new charge of explosive mixture to be compressed and exploded on the return of the water. The action of the pump is exactly similar to that of a gas or oil engine, excepting that the piston is formed of water. Once started, the pump goes on by itself, repeating the operations described above; moreover, it uses less gas or oil than would be the case with an ordinary engine and pump.

### FRICTIONLESS ELECTRICAL WORM-GEAR.

If a rotating screw be held against a cog-wheel so that the screw-threads drop in between the teeth of the wheel, the latter will turn slowly and we have what is known as a worm-gear. Of course the screw-threads rub against the teeth; hence a good deal of power is lost in friction. We are most of us familiar with the horseshoe-magnet, which has a piece of iron, called an armature, held across the ends by magnetic force. If this armature be moved slightly away from the ends of the horseshoe it is still strongly attracted and will tend to follow any motion of the magnet. Electrical worm-gear is based upon this principle, the cog-wheel being the magnet, whilst the screw is the armature. Owing to magnetic force, either part will follow the motion of the other without touching it; consequently we have a frictionless worm-gear.

### CATERPILLARS AND EYE-DISEASES.

After something like twenty-five years' study of the eye-affection known as *ophthalmia nodosa*, a celebrated Berlin oculist has discovered that it is caused by the presence of caterpillar-hairs in the eye. On these hairs are microscopic thorns and brushes which set up inflammation, attended by great swelling of the lid. As the presence of this foreign matter causes a copious flow of tears, the source of the trouble is very difficult of detection. If these hairs are not immediately removed they gradually become embedded in the inner part of the eye by the friction of the lid, and form small knots under the conjunctiva. From here they work their way into the rainbow skin and the lower layers in the apple of the eye, when the inflammation becomes so acute that it may even entirely destroy the apple of the eye itself. These dangerous caterpillars are known by the sufficiently formidable names of *Bombyx* and *Cnethocampa processionea*. It is also said that the poisonous matter contained in the hair of these insects is dangerous to the skin if permitted to come into contact with it, causing inflammation that may even lead to nettle-rash. Hence it may be gathered that the antipathy of people living in the country to handle these creatures is founded on something more than mere superstition. Their observation has evidently preceded science; and, since these insects may be even more dangerous to human beings than they are to plants, those who have anything to do with them can-

not be too careful. As the poisonous hairs are sometimes shed by the caterpillars and float in the air, it is advisable that drastic measures should be adopted for their destruction immediately they make their appearance in garden or shrubbery.

### BRITISH RADIUM AND RADIO-ACTIVE WATERS.

Readers of the story, 'Wheal Catherine of Trencrom,' by Mr Alfred Colbeck, in our issue of last Christmas, may remember how the fortunes of characters in the story were resuscitated by the discovery at a disused Cornish mine of pitch-blende, from which radium is derived. Also that it was suggested that a sanatorium might arise there founded on the curative properties of its radio-active water, which the healing waters of Bath, Buxton, and other places are likewise believed to possess. This is but the story of what has been happening at the Trenwith Mine, near St Ives, belonging to the British Radium Corporation, where radium is being extracted from the pitch-blende, and the springs may form the nucleus of a spa. The beautiful scenery of the adjacent neighbourhood would add greatly to its attractiveness. According to Mr C. G. Harper, in his *Cornish Coast* (North), the demand for radium has given the St Ives Consols mines a fresh lease of life. Pitch-blende, the rock from which uranium and radium are derived, is plentiful in Trenwith. From eight tons of exhausted uranium, however, only fifteen grains of radium are extracted. A ton of refuse yields only about the hundred and twentieth part of an ounce, the value of which, however, is several thousand times that of gold.

### COWS PUMPING THEIR OWN DRINKING-WATER.

In the moat outside Wells Cathedral there is an arrangement whereby the swans when hungry may ring a bell, and be supplied with food by the caretaker at the bishop's palace. An inventor in Kansas has hit upon the ingenious scheme of making cattle do their own pumping when they wish a drink of water. The path that leads up to the watering-trough terminates in a treadmill, which is connected by suitable gearing to the pump. As the treadmill offers the only means of access to the trough, the animal is obliged to operate the pump while it is taking a drink. One of the advantages of this system is that each animal is assured of having fresh water to drink. A valve is provided which discharges the water automatically when the animal leaves the treadmill.

### A FIELD COOKING-WAGON.

The United States War Department has had a wagon built with facilities for roasting, boiling, and stewing for at least four hundred and fifty men. According to the *Scientific American*, this wagon carries a stove and a hot-water boiler. The stove has a boiling capacity of eighty gallons and a roasting capacity of one hundred pounds, sufficient for two companies. In addition to this equipment, there are two sets of fireless cookers placed in the rear of the wagon, both of which have a capacity of fifty pounds for roasting and forty gallons for boiling. Each company has two kettles for boiling and one for roasting. When the food is cooked the commanding officer sends a detail of men to the wagon to get the company kettles and roaster, thus doing away with the objection to a battalion mess. A new soft bread has been prepared by the subsistence officers which promises eventually to do away with the old style 'hard-tack.' It will keep in good condition for more than four months. The commissary-general has been so confident that the new bread will prove a success that he has taken up the matter of the form of loaf or biscuit to be adopted. It is expected that these experiments in the army will develop a new bread which will be suitable for use by trappers, miners, yachtsmen, and others who, by reason of long distances from base of supplies and lack of facilities for baking, must rely on the supply carried.

### A NOVEL SHOE.

A German inventor has just patented a novel shoe which at the toe portion is provided with partitions which pass between the toes of the foot. These partitions terminate in soft pads designed to bear against the foot at the base of the toes, so that the thrust will be taken at this point and not at the end of the toe. By this arrangement he seeks to prevent the feet from becoming deformed, which now is very common, due to the jamming of the toes of the foot into the toe of the shoe. The shoe is thus virtually converted into a sandal, in which the foot is entirely concealed.

### THE VANISHING BUSHMEN.

Mr F. W. Fitzsimmons, director of Port Elizabeth Museum, has contributed some curious and interesting notes to the *South African Railway Magazine* regarding the kopje and cave dwelling Bushmen, the original possessors of South African soil, who are now threatened with extinction. Some implements of the Bushmen, such as their ring-stones, must have entailed an enormous amount of labour in their preparation. They are made of round, waterworn pebbles of hard, flinty rock. With the aid of chipped flakes of flinty stone, sand, and water, a hole was bored right through the stone. The hole was always made half through from the one side, and half from the other. These were generally used as weights for digging-sticks with which the Bushmen dug up bulbs, roots, and insects. The end of the stick was thrust through the hole in the stone and wedged tightly, and it thus acted as a weight to drive the fire-hardened point of the stick into the ground. They could also be used as missiles. The kopje-dwelling Bushmen covered the rocks with their carvings; the cave-dwellers decorated their caves with paintings of battle or hunting scenes and animals in a variety of natural colours. The result Mr Fitzsimmons pronounces wonderful, and he pleads for the preservation of examples wherever found. The

colours commonly used were ochres found in a hollow nodule of ironstone, and sometimes blood or carbon. There are fac-similes of the cave-paintings in Port Elizabeth Museum. In lying down to sleep each Bushman had a separate sleeping-place, consisting of a slight hollow like a saucer, lined with soft grass, moss, or the skins of animals. Here each individual would coil up, exactly like a dog when it lies down. Their arrow-heads of flinty stone or bone were dipped in a poison prepared from the venom of snakes, spiders, and scorpions, and the juices of poisonous plants. Bushmen ate everything digestible and non-poisonous, including snakes (when decapitated), scorpions, and honey. In another half-century the pure-bred Bushmen may have disappeared.

### A NEW SYSTEM OF FOUNDATIONS.

There are various methods in use for constructing the necessary foundations of buildings, bridges, &c. in unstable ground; and to these is to be added another, which has been recently introduced into this country under the name of 'Compressol.' The manner of procedure consists in the compression of the soil and the formation in the ground of piers of concrete supported on and by the mechanically compressed soil. These piers can be constructed of practically any dimensions, and consequently beams and arches can be built upon them for the support of any required structures. The sinking of a well for the concrete piers is performed by a conical mass of steel known as the 'Perforator,' thirty-three and a half inches in diameter at the base and weighing about forty-three hundredweight. This perforator is suspended with the base uppermost, elevated by a machine similiar to the ordinary pile-driver, and, when it reaches the predetermined height, automatically released. The momentum obtained during its fall is sufficient to enable it to penetrate the soil, the amount of penetration varying with the character of the soil. In forming the hole in the ground the perforator necessarily thoroughly rams the surrounding soil, thus obviating any timbering or shoring of the sides. By repeated applications the well is sunk. The perforator is then superseded by the 'Rammer,' an ogival-shaped piece of metal thirty inches in diameter at the base and weighing about forty hundredweight, which has two uses—namely, to consolidate the ground at the bottom of the well, and to form the concrete pier. Concrete is deposited in layers about a foot thick, and then, by repeated applications of the rammer, compressed and forced laterally into the surrounding soil. As the nature of the soil affects the amount of penetration of the concrete, a pier of corrugated outline is formed, which naturally adds to its bearing capacity. The Compressol system possesses distinct advantages over the ordinary methods of foundation-work, among which may be mentioned rapidity of construction and the obviation of danger to workmen. The first is evidenced by the fact that foundation-wells can be sunk at the rate of about four to five feet per hour; and as to the latter, the men, being always employed at surface-level, are not exposed to deleterious gases, as they are when at the bottom of deep pits, or to the danger due to the caving in of the earth. The system has been used with marked success on the Continent for the French War Office and Admiralty, the Municipal Council of Paris, and many important public authorities. It was strongly advocated by the Congrés des Travaux Publics in 1900.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### THE BOY SCOUTS' SONG.

CHEER, boys, cheer! for Country and for King;
And cheer again, my gallant hearts,
We'll make the welkin ring!
And ever as we cheer, my lads,
We'll pray, 'God save the King.'

Cheer and cheer again! Wherever we may roam,
O'er mountain, fen, and forest,
And leagues of ocean foam,
Our hearts are still with England,
Our fatherland and home.

Cheer and cheer again! for the Empire and for peace;
We'll turn our enemies to friends,
And give the slave release,
And help along the glorious time
When feuds and wars shall cease.

Cheer and cheer again! We do not want to fight,
But if we have to face a foe
We will with all our might;
And ever as we strive we'll pray,
'May God defend the right.'

Cheer and cheer again! Though we may not strike a blow,
We'll carry England's name and fame
Wherever we may go;
And may no mother's son of us
E'er lay her honour low.

M. LOWSLEY STEVENSON.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# PETER, PAYING GUEST.

By Helen Porter.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'TO think that in half-an-hour he will be here! Oh mother, don't you feel excited?'

'Excited! "Humiliated" would be a better word, Biddy. The idea of becoming a hotelkeeper is not a pleasant one to a Daly of Dunlaughlin.' Mrs Blake drew herself up; and her daughter sighed, knowing so well the recital of past glories, which there was no stopping when once started. 'Indeed, it's a constant surprise to me,' continued the other, 'to see how little pride my children have. My poor, dear father would have turned in his grave if he thought that his grandchildren were taking in lodgers.'

'Lodgers, mother! But you must not call Major Carpiers a lodger. He is, at any rate, a very superior class of lodger, and we may safeguard our pride in calling him a paying guest.'

'Well, what is that but the same thing? Isn't the man paying for his board?'

'Yes; and a good sum, too—enough to tide us over the next few months and pay some of our bills; so do try to put up with him, mother dear, for all our sakes. After all, you will have none of the trouble. I have promised to see this plan of Terry's and mine safely through.'

'Your brother was mad to suggest such a thing! Where did he pick the creature up?' Mrs Blake spoke as if the expected inmate was a disgusting insect of some sort.

'Oh, in Dublin—at the Shelbourne. They got talking together of the fishing, and then it was settled between them—all except the terms, which were left to me. I wrote and asked pretty stiff ones, I can tell you that. If he is to have the fishes, the loaves are all for us.' Bridget laughed unconcernedly. 'After all, where's the harm? It is only an experiment, and if we don't like it he can go.'

'Think of the disgrace before the neighbours!'

'Is it the neighbours? Sure, mother, you need not mind them. They're all so busy themselves trying to make a shilling do the work of a pound that they won't have time to be bothering about us. I wonder his Satanic Majesty ever sets foot in Ireland; the tail must be pulled out of him by now. Faith, if the tenants are docking the cattle, the gentry are equally busy with the devil!' Again Bridget laughed.

'Shame, girl, to talk so! You make a joke of everything; but this is no jesting matter. Here we are, over head and ears in debt, dressed like beggars, and the house and land mortgaged. It only needed this lodger to put the finishing touch to our ruin.'

'On the contrary, mother, he may retrieve the fortunes of the family.'

'A likely story!' with a sniff. 'More probably he'll go off without paying a penny, and leave us out of pocket for his keep.'

'I have his cheque—a month's payment in advance. You can't say I'm not a good business woman.'

'What did you do with the money, Biddy?'

'Paid the butcher and the grocer, and a little on account to Mike Muldoon—a sort of bonus to stave off the evil day. Then I sent the rest to Honor to buy a new ball-gown; she's going to a big dance, and wrote saying she hadn't a rag to wear.'

Her mother's face softened. 'That was right, child. My beautiful Honor! She is a credit to the family, anyhow; I've always got her to be proud of.'

Bridget winced; and the quick retort that if they were all like Honor there would be no family left to be proud of—at least, no family place—came to her lips, but did not pass them. In her heart she delighted in her sister's beauty and her social successes, she rejoiced at her popularity; and yet sometimes it was just a little hard not to feel envious.

'She will be making a great match some day,' said Mrs Blake complacently. 'Lady Markham

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wrote me she loved taking her about, she was so universally admired.'

'I wish she'd hurry up, then,' answered Biddy, 'for her dance-frocks cost a pretty penny. Terry had to sell two pigs to pay for the last. He made a great joke of it. You remember Lady Markham is always writing about her cousin, Captain Bacon. He said if he turned the pigs into bacon, maybe the dress would do the same for Honor!' She burst into a laugh.

'Very bad taste, I'm sure. Terry shouldn't talk so of his sister.'

'Well, he gave her the frock, poor boy! and he could ill afford it. I'm sure she looked lovely in it—white satin, trimmed with pearls. Most appropriate, I call it; only it reversed the order of the proverb, and the swine came first.'

'Biddy, you are positively vulgar!'

'That's the worst of living on a farm—one gets too commercial, and knows too well the value of everything. The skirt I've on, bad and all as it looks, cost me two turkeys last autumn. It's the only new thing I've had for a year. Sometimes I get very tired of poverty. I'd like to have money to spend or to throw away, like other girls. Anyhow, thanks to the "lodger," we'll start this quarter nearly free from debt; and even that is something, mother. It's not long he'll stay here, I'm afraid; so we'll have to make hay while the sun shines.'

'As far as I can see, Biddy, it will cost so much to keep him, there will be small advantage having him at all; and as to hay'—— Mrs Blake paused and shrugged her shoulders.

'Being an Englishman, he's bound to be as green as grass with regard to everything Irish; and if there's grass, trust me to make hay.' Bridget smiled.

'But I don't see how.'

'He might give a good price for some of the young horses, or he might find an opening for Terry somewhere. You never can tell. I might even marry him. It's quite immaterial. In fact, I think the latter quite a good suggestion. What do you think of my chances, Honor being away?'

'No man would look at you twice, Biddy. You are what they all dislike—a woman of independent manner and sharp tongue.'

'If you'd said I'd too red a head I might agree with you,' laughed the girl, running her fingers through her ruddy curls. 'I could suppress my manner and muzzle my tongue in a good cause.'

'Child, you are hopeless!'

'That's just it—the hopeless have nothing to lose; they are emptier than Pandora's box. Perhaps the Major may admire me. Between ourselves, he has the bad taste if he does; still, you never can tell what an Englishman may do. If he takes the Irish mania, as so many of them do, and becomes more Irish than we are ourselves, he may feel attracted by my brogue; and I've got the hair of my country, to say nothing of the eyes. But whatever he may do, I've quite made up my mind about it: I shall marry Major Carpiers if wit of woman can do it. It's the chance of a lifetime; trust me not to lose it.'

Then she looked up, and in the sudden pause which fell after her impulsive speech met the surprised and disgusted eyes of the Major himself. He had entered at the heels of his host by the French window just behind Biddy.

What she saw in her first affrighted glance was a tall, thin man, whose dark hair was touched with gray, and on whose face was clearly written the most fastidious contempt mingled with a slight amusement.

What he saw was an untidy, red-headed, and freckled girl, the picture of awkward embarrassment.

Terry shot a scathing look at his sister as he effected an introduction. 'Mother, this is Major Carpiers.'

Then they all sat down stiffly on the marone rep chairs and 'made' conversation in the way our well-bred but insular nation alone can do. The discourse rambled from the Major's journey to the weather, from that to the scenery, thence to the prospects of fishing, and so back to the weather once more. There was not one break in the social cloud, nor one gleam of sunshine to illumine the scene.

Then Mrs Blake began to speak of the Dalys of Dunlaughlin, and to recount the state they formerly kept up. It was all done to impress the stranger, who had difficulty in hiding his boredom. Was it always to be like this? Already he regretted his sudden decision to spend a fishing holiday in the west of Ireland. He began to frame excuses in his own mind, and wonder how soon he could get away. The old mother was bad enough, but the girl was unspeakable. Common little minx, she seemed quite unconcerned that he should have overheard her calm decision to set her cap at him! Anyway, he knew now how the land lay, and could safeguard himself. Not that there was the slightest danger, and at the bare idea he laughed aloud.

Now, precisely at that moment, though he did not know it, Mrs Blake was giving a full and particular account of her father's death and parting words. She had just taken off her glasses to wipe them, having finished her sentence: 'Children dear, I have nothing to leave you but the most ancient pedigree in the West and the pride of an Irish gentleman,' when the Major's abrupt laugh cut her short.

There was a fearful pause, broken by a subdued giggle from Terry, as Mrs Blake rose majestically, all the pride of her ancestors in her backbone, and left the room.

'I say, I seem to have put my foot in it. Your mother is annoyed. What did I say, old chap?'

'Oh, you said nothing; you laughed in the wrong place, that's all. Never mind the mater; she'll get over it. If she will relate the dying agonies of her relatives she must take what comes, even if it is laughter.'

'Oh, I say, mayn't I go and make my apologies?

I had not an idea of what Mrs Blake was saying at the time.'

'Never mind, Major Carpiers; I will make your peace with mother.' Biddy spoke for the first time. 'There are some things better left alone. Neither excuses nor apologies seem to fit the occasion.'

There was another stiff pause, broken by Terry. 'Let us go down to the lake before lunch, or would you rather see your room first?'

'No, I'd rather go out.' The Major jumped at the suggestion—anything to get out of doors again. He rose awkwardly, angry at himself for feeling so uncomfortable, and with a feeling that that confounded girl was laughing at him.

Terry followed him, but turned to shake a reproving finger at his sister before leaving the room.

Poor Bridget! No sooner had they gone than she fled upstairs and indulged in a good cry. What a fool she had been to speak so! And what must the man think of her? Well, fortunately it did not matter. The thought held consolation. She went to the glass and arranged her tossed hair and tried to remove all traces of tears. She had been overheard in a vulgar speech, not a word of which she had really meant; it was all chaff, and probably the Major took it for deadly earnest. A gleam of mirth quivered in her shamed eyes. 'Being an Englishman, he'll take it all for gospel; the possibility of its being a jest will never even occur to him. Well, I must just bear it, as long as it doesn't frighten him out of the place.'

She sat on the edge of the bed, nursing her knees and wondering what she ought to do. 'If I'm civil to the creature he'll think I'm carrying out the plan he overheard; if I'm not civil to him he will feel the house unpleasant. After all, he has done nothing; it is not in the least his fault, only he need not have looked so very disgusted. Perhaps, after all, poor mother was right, and we made a mistake taking in a paying guest. If the family pride is the only possession left us—well, here goes yours, Bridget Blake. I've taken the man's money, and, no matter what he thinks of me, I must make him welcome and comfortable while he is in the house. If I don't no one else will, that's certain. It will be a lesson to me to be more careful what I say in future, and to remember that for the next two months the house is an hotel. I must try and cultivate a pleasing but not over-familiar manner; but I hate you, Major Carpiers! I hate you!' she broke off suddenly and shook her fist. 'I hate your fine, superior manners, your neat check suit, and your tan boots; I hate the way you look at me, as if I were a toad. But I can never, never pay you out, because I can't afford it, my dear; so I've just got to make the best of a bad bargain.' This explosion brought relief, and, whistling gaily, she flew downstairs to see that the lunch-table was properly prepared and to make the salad-dressing. The meals were a great trouble; for the stranger was likely to be fastidious, and the resources of the household were small, requiring almost constant supervision.

When the gong rang the girl felt one more return of shyness, but she need not have dreaded the ordeal. The Major had caught a salmon. He came in brimming with delight and good-nature, full of praise for everything at Ballyboy: the convenience of the lake, the beauty of its surroundings, the geniality of his boatman. His manner to Mrs Blake was politely deferential, and she unbent and condescended to chat quite affably on ordinary topics. He said nothing to Biddy, who sat at the end of the table. But he praised the mutton and asked for a second helping, saying that the mountain air had given him an appetite; and the girl, conscious that it might possibly be more than a little tough, felt reassured and drew a long breath of relief. He was not difficult about his food, so the greatest weight of all was off her mind.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE HUMOURS OF A HOSTELER.

LOOKING in an up-to-date dictionary the other evening, I found the word 'hostel' contemptuously dismissed as obsolete. So, for that matter, is 'inn' fallen into desuetude. Where nowadays can a tired traveller take his ease at his inn? Alas! hostels and inns are no more; whilst as for the jovial, rubicund host of the story-books, round-bellied and hearty, he is as extinct as the dodo. One vaguely regrets the fact; there is a certain satisfaction in the old-fashioned terms, a lingering flavour of romance which dwells lovingly upon the jaded palate, smacking of a picturesque, credulous medievalism, of times 'when knights were bold.' Nevertheless it is to be doubted if the reality would equal expectations; it so seldom does. We have become accustomed to an entirely new order of things; and I fear me we should hardly reconcile our luxurious, pleasure-seeking selves to the coarse though plenteous provender, the deep draughts of canary-sack, mead, and humming old ale, aqua-vitæ of surpassing strength, crusted old port (robust-bodied, in cob-webby bottles), such as our forefathers, strong of limb, stronger still of head, loved and copiously imbibed at a cost ridiculous-seeming to us in these regenerate times.

There is scarcely an inn worthy the name left to-day on the old coaching roads, where the merry horn no longer brings the slow, smiling rustic to his cottage door to mark, wide-eyed, the four free-stepping steeds whirl us Londonwards in a choking cloud of dust. No longer does the guard-attendant —shrewd custodian of boot and bell-lipped blunder-

buss—quip and jest with the moon-faced maiden who ministers to his perennial thirst. No more does the jolly Jehu, proud of his prancing bays, prouder still of his own consummate skill in the handling of the leathern ribbons, flick the teasing fly from the off-side leader's ear, and with deftly raised elbow solemnly salute his brother of the box, who, outward bound, is intent upon making up that lost five minutes which an untoward chance decreed last stage but two. The king's highway was their world—no bad one either—in summer-time, when the fields of sun-browned grain slowly ripened to harvest; in mellow autumn season, when the leafy orchards, all russet-and-gold, yielded their bounteous store, and in green, shadowy hop-gardens the bronzed toilers stood at gaze and waved a greeting as the coach swung by to the gay lilt of the horn; in spring, too, when all the earth was young and the blossom of fruitful apple-tree and plum bourgeoned forth pink-and-white, when the shy orchis and sweet-scented violet peered from tangled hedge-covert and the pale primrose thick-carpeted the bird-haunted woods. But in winter's snows and frosts! I am sure I, for one, should never have had resolution sufficient to quit the cosy ingle-nook what time the red flames leapt and were so rosily reflected in the leaden-hued cheeks of each well-burnished pewter, and smiled so warmly upon the plump, long-necked bottles and squat, full-lipped flagons which garnished, pyramid-wise, the broad shelves of the secluded snuggery.

There are still a few of the old inns left to-day on those ancient, historic highways; but the exigencies of modern traffic have altered them almost out of recognition, as if some aged, withered spinster dame had donned the abbreviated skirts and coquettish gauds of early girlhood. I remember one such, a hostelry of old, where I was ever a welcome guest, its wide wooden galleries running three sides of a big quadrangle, aforetime loud with the cheery bustle and business of an important stage, situated in the centre of a red-roofed country town, embosomed in leafy orchards and quaint, rambling gardens bordered with immemorial elms. There had been a nunnery near by years back; and the old crumbling wall facing due south, sheltered from cold winds and freely exposed to the sun's genial rays, was renowned for its peaches. A paradise, too, of fine old-fashioned flowers; no well-ordered parterres there, but instead a sweet pot-pourri of cloying scents and exquisitely blending hues—the haunt of innumerable bees and gay, flaunting butterflies. In ripe autumn the mossy-boughed apple-trees, all unpruned and untended, bent beneath their store of sun-flushed fruit. I never saw them in spring; doubtless the billowy blossom creamed, like the waves of a wind-swept sea, and showered countless petals down on the dainty heads of the buttercups and ox-eye daisies that starred the lush, neglected lawns.

Mine host and hostess were valued friends of long standing; honoured and full of years, they have, alack! long since passed away into the limbo of the unknown. I visited the old place a twelvemonth after their demise, and found one in charge that knew not Joseph. He was hospitable and exceedingly obliging, but I missed my old friends; the house was the same, yet not the same. Just prior to my departure Boniface drew me aside; his countenance was suffused with an enthusiasm which modesty would not allow me to attribute to the prompt liquidation of my own 'little bill.' 'Next time you come down, sir,' he said—and there was intense ardour in his tones—'all this will have been altered.' He swept a contemptuous hand in the direction of the time-stained, worm-eaten galleries and crooked, inconvenient staircases. 'The house is to be thoroughly renovated and restored by an eminent London firm, Messrs —— & Co. I can promise you a pleasant surprise.'

Ichabod! I heard his words with dismay. I have never visited —— since that day.

But the majority of these old inns have either vanished *in toto*, or, like the one mentioned above, been 'improved' out of recognition. Those that still remain in hoary decrepitude have, for the most part, degenerated into mere alehouses, and offer no accommodation to weary travellers—indeed, would be hurt and surprised if such entertainment were solicited. No; the evil-smelling, belching motor-car and the swift-circling cycle now hold the roads in thrall. What are fifty—nay, a hundred miles to these? Towns have multiplied; villages are crushed back almost out of existence; palatial hotels await the whirring wayfarer at his journey's break or end. And you and I, oh reader, who scorn such expeditious methods of travel, must perforce submit to the inevitable; see our gabled, tottering caravansaries disappear; mark—with what anguish!—our well-loved trout-streams, which flow through the grounds of our favourite inns, given over to the Cockney angler at half-a-crown an hour. Ah, those deep, willow-shaded, sedgy pools, once the home of plump, speckled beauties—are there any shy, lurking trout left in them now? I wonder. Moorhens hid coyly among the tall marsh-marigolds; perhaps a swift jay flew screaming overhead, and in spring-time cuckoos called from copse to copse. Solitary umbrageous pleasances, dew-drenched at dawn and eve, fragrant with the breath of grateful flowers; where blackbird and thrush sang most melodiously; where bats flickered and nightingales trilled when the sun had trailed away to distant lands, scattering the gold-and-crimson shreds of his splendour as he departed; where, as dusk fell, the moody owl hooted from the ferny woods, and the goat-sucker sounded his jarring rattle-note what time the golden moon rose big and full out of the shadowy hills and the wan stars paled at her coming. Are all these things lost to us for ever and a day? I truly fear so; for me, at least, they exist not now. Perhaps it is that the glamour of youth and its thousand-and-one fond hopes are fled; or perhaps they existed not at all save in those pleasant

dreams which come to us in the early morn, before the day is well advanced towards noon and the hot sun has stolen the sap and sweetness from the lap of earth.

So to-day I am a hosteler. Yes; I have found, not an inn—too sanguine a hope that—but, shunning hotels, I chanced upon a hostel. There is more in a name than we ordinarily will admit. We have electric light; baths hot and cold, likewise showers; no motor-garage, heaven be praised! *table-d'hôte*, to be sure; evening-dress, that panoply of civilisation, strictly *au rigueur*. How often I regret the rough suit of Norfolk tweeds, the knickerbockers, the roomy slippers, and the high-tea anathematised by medical men; the steaming dish of ham-and-eggs, the mighty flanking loaf, the cream (real, genuine product of the cow), the fresh butter rich with the flavour of flowery meads, the brown earthenware teapot capable of holding a gallon or so, the cheerfully hissing urn, the indigestible cake chock-full of the plums beloved of adolescence! Unavailing longings! From seven to eight o'clock, or even half-past eight, each night, I sit and taste, or suspiciously refuse, the innumerable kickshaw dishes, not tossed up by the fair hands of pretty, dimple-armed Molly or Peggy, but invented, devised, patented (for aught I know to the contrary) by M. Auguste or Adolphe, mine host of the hostel's autocratic *chef*. No buxom, laughing, friendly Hebe to wait upon my wants, but a solemn, stately, starched individual, clad (like the rest of us) in sable suit and snowy shirt, soft-footed, low-voiced—a functionary of whom, in my heart of hearts, I am secretly in awe.

On the walls, in place of old-fashioned prints depicting the pleasures of the chase: pink-coated, swallow-tailed huntsmen, bestriding steeds wondrous symmetrical, urging on the eager dappled hounds in pursuit of the lithe red fox or the lordly antlered stag—instead of overmantel ornaments of fantastic china shapes, most highly coloured—are severe and classic engravings and smooth porcelain vases, displaying an educated taste; likewise weird æsthetic hangings, rugs deep-stained with dyes quaint and curious; and, worse still, pictorial advertisements of this and that insidious liquor; meretricious, florid examples of Art—save the mark!—by an entirely new process. Furniture of little ease—upholstery upon which, in my hours of relaxation, I slide helplessly into all manner of egregious and comfortless postures.

There is a strange creature inhabiting the apartment next to mine own sanctum. I have never yet, to my knowledge, met him face to face. Sometimes, stealing noiselessly along the thick-carpeted corridor, I have caught a fleeting glimpse of his broad back ere ever he vanished into his room—an obstinate, self-willed back. O'Connell is the name of this elusive man—'poor Mr O'Connell' in the vernacular, from which sympathetic prefix to his cognomen I somehow gather that he is addicted to strong drink. Indeed, mine host confessed as much to me in an expansive moment, not without a perhaps pardonable enthusiasm. 'He is for ever in the bar,' quoth he, 'spending his money' (of which, it seems, he has full meed) 'right royally. One day I will introduce you to him.' Personally, the bar has few attractions for me; and, so far, mine host's threat of making us acquainted, according to the rules and ceremonies of English etiquette, has not come to pass. A strange, elusive being, I repeat, much given to borrowing my brush and comb; why this deponent knoweth not, for, I understand, he has no lack of such-like toilet requisites in his own right. Besides, he is bald; this much, at least, I have gleaned from those cursory, stealthy, behind-the-back glimpses.

One evening the chambermaid—I beg her pardon, the term is out of date; I should have written the lynx-eyed, not to say inquisitive, young lady who administers the second floor—related to me in a confidential whisper (I have never courted her confidences) that 'poor Mr O'Connell' had attired himself in my room that very afternoon, purposing to attend a garden-party in the mayoral grounds. Most strange person! He has a room, and presumably a looking-glass, of his own, yet none but mine would suffice him. My well-set razors could not have been the attraction, for he is, I believe, bearded like unto the pard. That same night I learnt that he had been observed earlier in the evening flitting—debonair at first, faint-drooping later, in all the splendours of frock-coat, high collar, and glossy silk hat—from hotel to hotel of the city; and I derived by inferences an unworthy suspicion that the municipal garden-party had known him not, which, taking his lamentable little weakness into consideration, was perhaps just as well.

Trees—ancient superstition had it, and, for aught I know, still has it—change at the fall of dusk into sentient, communing things, malicious or sweetly reasonable according to their destinies, undergoing indisputable transformation. Like happens, it seems—or so my humour wills it—with my fellow-hostelers. No man is a hero to his own *valet de chambre;* the saturnine hireling has seen him in his negligent deshabille, void of those outer garments which charitably cover a multitude of sins of Nature's omission and commission. Carlyle—was it not?—propounded as the most indubitable fact (and who can deny it?) that a royal levee or other gilded function would lose much—nay, all its impressiveness, its dignified grandeur—if those who came to pay due homage to their sovereign liege lord were for the nonce deprived of their sartorial Court trappings, and perforce appeared *in puris naturalibus* —mere forked-radish shapes with heads. But, on the other hand, my fellow-guests—the miniature world with which I am daily brought into contact—gain immeasurably in dignity, in artistic worthiness, such time as they cast off the common garb of diurnal orthodoxy and swathe themselves in the mysterious wrappings which a pleasing freedom

from the bonds of conventionality allows each one nightly to adopt, in accordance with his or her own individual fancy. For instance, yonder old gentleman seated at the next table to mine, clad in the broadcloth and immaculate linen of respectability, see with what earnestness of purpose he munches his hot buttered toast—so many bites to the mouthful, everything by routine in his well-ordered life; each bite followed by so many sips of strong, full-flavoured tea—a sip more or less would make all the difference to his day. The equilibrium of his existence is very nicely poised; upset it, and you behold a soured, malevolent old man. I tremble to think what might not happen were the waiter to bring him coffee instead of tea; the imagination shrinks back appalled—refuses to speculate. But at present all is well; he studies the columns of his yesterday's *Times* with a complacence only the true-born, prosperous, gray-whiskered Britisher can attain. Would it be believed that morning by morning, as I go to my bath, I meet that same carefully shaven, neatly appointed old gentleman coming rakishly from his matutinal tub, clad in bright raiment which even Solomon in his glory could never have hoped to rival—brocaded silk stuffs of surpassing brilliance, paling the prismatic hues of the sunbow, almost dazzling to eyes not long awakened from slumber? What matter if his sparse hairs, his venerable whiskers, look straggly and rebellious? Conscious of my own shrunken, commonplace suit of neutral-tinted pyjamas, I give him the wall, slink past him with pained, averted eyes, humiliated by a sense of inferiority against which even pronounced Socialistic tendencies are powerless to strive. Never mind; some day I too will purchase much fine figured silk, and have it woven into a garment of weird design, and thus haply become beautiful and goodly to gaze upon. Again, that young man in high, stiff collar, and with small straw-coloured moustache so deftly trained, who jests carelessly with, and even condescendingly banters, the haughty, exclusive dame who makes out my weekly, unerring account. Him I have seen creeping meekly down deserted passages lit only by the wan, gray light of dawn, enveloped in monkish robe of spotless white, loose-trailing, hooded or cowled, midriff cinctured with knotted cord—a very friar save for his foot-gear, which evinces a more worldly taste; and so the bathroom receives him, and he vanishes from my sight—a St Anthony, who in tweed mufti withstands the wiles of the fair siren who dwells by day in a darksome den just within the hospitable portals of the hostel, adjacent to those big swing-doors.

And last, but not least, the seductive young vision I caught sight of but this morning tripping daintily down the dim corridor—a fleeting glimpse of pale blue and pink, with charming lace adornments; a tumble of glossy hair—was it golden, or did my eager eyes deceive me?—a twinkle of tiny, fur-lined slippers, which concealed not a pair of ankles most ravishingly small and white. I heard her laugh—a melodious, silvery laugh, or was it perchance mellowed by distance? Here, at the breakfast-table, directly opposite me, sits an unknown lady; call her not old—say, rather, maturing. I cannot see her feet; doubtless they are diminutive. Her hair is indisputably glossy, and streaked with gray in outlying parts; in front it is virgin-pure gold—no gray at all. She whispers her girl companion—a long-legged, spotty child of fifteen or thereabouts—and laughs. Surely I have heard that laugh before, quite recently? I am conscious of a vague sense of disappointment, a sudden sinking at heart. Can it possibly be that my entrancing vision of the early morning and this bewigged, bepowdered, elderly (yes, I must say it) female are one and the same person? I fear so indeed. Alas! let me draw a veil over another shattered ideal, another unrealised hope. *Basta!*

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# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

By W. E. Cule, Author of *Prince Adrian of Zell*, &c.

## CHAPTER III.—'WHAT WILL MRS GRUNDY SAY?'

WHATEVER the character of the record may be, one cannot write of Mrs Hellier without a sense of awe. In the present instance even the humblest people in Hexminster have described it as a comedy; nevertheless she casts a solemn shadow on the page—a tall, gaunt shadow, full of dignity and condescension. Then one almost begins to suspect an error in description—not comedy, surely, but tragedy.

The Scandal had grown large long before she was aware of its existence. Indeed, one cannot but feel that she was, in some way, the victim of a conspiracy of silence; but even her well-wishers stood so much in awe of her that they dared not approach her with the news—and her well-wishers, it may be said, were so few that there was no companionship to give them courage. Those who detested her were numerous enough, but they enjoyed the situation too much to wish to spoil it. So the city hummed with the story in every quarter while she stalked on her accustomed way without a suspicion.

How her eyes were opened at last is only a little doubtful. It was probably done one evening when she had been to some parochial committee in the schoolroom. Garland had been present, and had walked up the street in her company. He

left her at the corner of the West Road, and she went home alone; but it was, perhaps, the most painful walk she had taken for many years. Her spacious countenance was filled with unutterable tragedy.

'Where is Miss Alison?' she asked in a strained voice as soon as the door was opened.

'She is in the garden,' answered the servant primly.

'Ask her to come to me in the dining-room at once.'

The maid went out and delivered her message with some expression. She, too, had heard of the Scandal. Miss Vicars looked up from her book and saw that the storm had burst.

'I am coming now,' she said faintly.

Poor girl! This was, for her, the end of a period full of emotion and wonder, during which a new influence had come into her life with almost incredible results. Even now she could hardly believe it. That during the first week she should have met the colonist frequently was not surprising, seeing that she spent much time out of doors, while he was renewing his acquaintance with once familiar scenes; but that she should have begun to expect his appearance, and to welcome it, before she had known him a few days, was a fact not to be explained so easily. Yet it had not stopped even there; for on an evening some days ago she had realised, with something akin to fear, that she had actually made a definite promise to see him again next morning. She, Alison Vicars, daughter of a gentleman, niece to the late Solicitor to the Diocese, had actually met by appointment a man who was the son of old Morgan of the Green—a jobbing gardener!

It was hard to believe, but reflection did not spare her. She was honestly unable to explain it, and had shrunk from attempting to define it. The man was able to make her forget; while with him she had breathed a curiously exhilarating atmosphere, one in which the conventions of her previous life had ceased to operate. She would not even admit that she liked him in any personal way; she only liked, she thought, his breezy, boyish frankness, his romantic outlook. It was something she had always needed, and naturally she found enjoyment in it. Her laugh during those summer rambles had been as free as in her long-lost school-days, for something had melted the ice which had been creeping over her whole nature. She was twenty-seven, and he was more than ten years older; yet they were as boy and girl together, for they met on that plane of romance where all the world is young. The one thing she was certain of was that in this case any suggestion of attachment, of anything more than congenial companionship, was utterly absurd. There had been no hint of it, however veiled—no word or glance to afford excuse for such a question. And having reached that point, she had only sighed over the riddles that followed. If that is all, why do you think so much of it? Why would you be sorry if you could not meet him again?

During this period, it is quite clear, the man had used every art he possessed to make himself acceptable. In any case, a girl of twenty-seven without experience, as the gossips declared sententiously, is a poor match for a man ten years older who has seen the world; and, as it happened, Morgan had the further advantage of having gauged her temperament almost at the first meeting. True, he could not prevent himself from falling often into the most annoying solecisms, errors of speech and manner which spoke of the Cottage on the Green as clearly as his wristbands betrayed his lack of the instinct of dress; but such was his determination to overcome all obstacles that he almost succeeded in making her ignore these faults while he was in her company. It was when he had gone that she recalled them one by one with acute distress, remembered who and what he was, believed that he was impossible even as a friend, and realised the horror of the Scandal which overshadowed her. Then she had resolved that she would not see him again; and to-morrow, going for her usual walk, had inevitably found him beside her.

Had he betrayed himself in those first stages by as much as a glance the connection might conceivably have been broken; but, as Mrs Hellier would have pointed out in her superior wisdom, his proper restraint was the refinement of subtlety on the part of one who had resolved to leave no stone unturned to achieve his end. It enabled the girl to deceive herself up to the last moment, and to cloud her own sense with sophistries even while the Scandal was assuming overwhelming proportions. And, deep as was the fear in which she lived, she could not suspect how grave the situation really was. For instance, how could she suppose that the Third Colonial Conference, then preparing in London, was a matter of moment to her welfare; or that the imminent arrival in England of the Honourable Justyn Morgan, the Premier of Kingsland, should have been an event of dreadful interest to her? In the mingled glamour and trepidation of those perplexing days she had quite forgotten an incident which should, at least, have suggested caution and inquiry.

Under these circumstances, of course, disaster had been inevitable all along; though, for the reasons stated, it came with laggard steps. During that month Morgan had lounged about the old city in an aimless fashion, apparently enjoying a complete rest after his strenuous years abroad, and only occasionally spending a day or two in London attending to his commissions. At the end of the first week he had changed his blue flannel for gray of the same texture, showing that he had a definite idea of cleanliness, though perhaps a limited one; nor, as far as one could gather, had he ever gone for more than one day without shaving. He seemed totally unaware, though he was the person most concerned, that Hexminster had now begun

to take a revived interest in his welfare, not only because it saw the Scandal growing, but also because of certain sinister rumours which had somehow got into circulation.

But now the interval was over and the storm was come. Pale, and anything but collected, Alison closed her book and went into the house.

Mrs Hellier had not even taken off her bonnet. This was no occasion for thinking of trifles. With that unspeakable horror in her countenance, she was standing at the table waiting. One look at poor Miss Vicars' face, and she knew that the amazing tale was true. The Scandal was not a rumour but an actuality!

She could scarcely find breath for the awful questions she must put.

'Is this true?' she gasped. 'Is it possible? Am I in my right senses?'

Miss Vicars did her best to bear up. It was either the calmness of despair or the first hint of a healthy self-assertion.

'What is it, aunt?' she asked.

'When—when did you see That Man last?'

Whatever the faults of Miss Vicars' character, a taste for subterfuge was not among them. In this case concealment had poisoned her Paradise, and it was probably even a relief to meet discovery.

'If you mean Mr Morgan,' she said, 'I saw him this morning. He walked with me to Westwater.'

By a strong effort of will—she had always been proud of her Will—Mrs Hellier saved herself from collapse, and only a groan escaped her.

'Heavens!' she ejaculated. 'What do I hear? She admits it—and without shame!'

No—not entirely without shame, but with a great relief that almost cancelled shame. The period of perplexity was over, and that was good.

'Yes,' said Miss Vicars. 'Perhaps I should say, also, that I have seen him very frequently—almost daily—during the last two or three weeks. Why should I not?'

It was then that Mrs Hellier sank into a chair and for a moment closed her eyes. The blow was a very severe one. All true—all true—and worse than all! And the girl actually asking, 'Why not?' The very foundations of her world seemed to be breaking up. A great scandal—and the girl asked, 'Why not?' A low person—the son of that old labourer on the Green—and the girl asked, 'Why not?' She could have shrieked.

With a great effort she rose to the necessities of the occasion. The first of these was to know the truth, however awful.

'Are you—are you in love with him?' she gasped.

'No.'

A long pause. 'Is he—is he making love to you?'

'No.' Poor Miss Vicars was positive enough so far.

'Then'—with a rising note of astonishment and hope—'what *does* it mean?'

'I—I don't know!'

True again, but weak. Mrs Hellier went so far as to open her eyes.

'You—don't—know?'

'No, I don't think I do.' And then the poor girl began to weep. In some things she was still very young.

Mrs Hellier began to breathe again. Hope dawned upon her horizon. And with hope her anger revived.

'Then what on earth *does* it mean?' she stammered. 'You have been out with the man daily. All the place must have been discussing it—and laughing behind my back. You have compromised yourself irretrievably with a scoundrel—and you don't know what it means!'

The girl raised her head. 'A scoundrel?'

'Certainly—a scoundrel.' Mrs Hellier tried to remember what she had heard, but failed. 'He has done something awful in Australia. Everybody is talking about it. And you—and you'——

The situation was too dreadful to be stated in detail. The lady groaned once more. 'A scandal!' she said. 'You, and a low fellow of that kind—and you in my house!'

Then she began to consider; and Hope, having dawned, brightened swiftly in spite of all. No, the thing had not gone too far; it seemed that she had intervened just in time. She became furious.

'You poor, addle-pated simpleton!' she said. 'I see it all now. The man wants your money, and has gone the right way to get it. He has got his name coupled with yours. . . . And your late uncle was Solicitor to the Diocese!'

By this time poor Miss Vicars' courage had evaporated, and she stood with her head bared to the storm. It was a great storm; and the end did not come for some time, Mrs Hellier having at last found expression for her feelings. The final sentence was delivered with shrill violence.

'Go to your room! You shall not show your face in the street again until I have decided what to do with you! If you go out—if you stir beyond the garden—I will have the door bolted against you! Leave me this instant! . . . As for that villain, I shall know how to deal with him!'

And Miss Vicars went meekly, to find refuge in her own room. We may believe that it was a memorable night for the shame and resentment that filled it, and for the mystery that surrounded everything. Had she done anything unmaidenly? Apparently she had, and any excuse or explanation was out of the question. How could any one, much less her aunt, understand the almost ridiculous reasons which had made the man's company so pleasant? Love?—no, there was certainly no question of that. If he had given the faintest hint of such a thing, the whole matter would have been so much simpler. . . . And then the poor girl went to the mirror and examined herself with some care.

Those who best remember Miss Vicars will all agree that she had no special claim to be called beautiful. Hers was a somewhat pale face with

large eyes—large, shy eyes, with shadows under them, and almost child-like in their sincerity. Her nose—well, her nose was one which her aunt had alway despised for its lack of Roman dignity; while her mouth, though it was well shaped, was never really attractive till she smiled. Altogether, you required to look at her three times before you decided that she was good to look at; and several men, having looked at her once, looked twice at her aunt and then looked elsewhere. Her hair, she thought, was good; but, then, there are many people who do not care for nut-brown.

Then she remembered that she was doing a foolish thing, and went immediately to bed.

Mrs Hellier had a bad night, for the shock of the evening had been a disastrous one. Fortunately, however, she had been awakened in time, and could avert the worst developments. Yes, there certainly would be gossip, and she shuddered as she thought of the hideous forms it would take; but the last and fatal thing should never be said. The story should always end happily. 'Of course it was a great scandal, but it was stopped just in time. Mrs Hellier, you know, found it out; and then'—— Why, her reputation might even be enhanced at last by this unhappy business! She must deal with it in a dignified and decisive manner—that was all.

In the morning she rose early to execute her plan. She had once contemplated going in person to the Cottage on the Green; but that, she decided, would be too great a condescension. She spent a busy hour, therefore, in composing a letter, which she despatched by the hand of a servant:

'Mrs Hellier desires to ask David Morgan for an explanation of his conduct with regard to her niece. Apparently he has been forcing his society (?) upon this ignorant and unprotected girl in the most outrageous manner.

'D. Morgan shall be made aware of the fact that the girl is in Mrs Hellier's legal care, whose late husband was Solicitor to the Diocese of Hexminster and the girl's uncle. There are, therefore, those who are in a position to watch over her welfare and to protect her and her property from the dishonourable designs of low-bred persons. They will also see that she is not persecuted by persons of doubtful character.'

This extraordinary but entirely characteristic epistle reached David Morgan while he was sitting in the garden of the cottage reading a morning paper. It was there that most of his visitors found him, the low-ceilinged rooms of the house itself being too confined for his comfort. It might have been noticed that as he sat he generally had his face turned in the direction of the Cathedral. Not that he could see the building itself, but an opening between two high walls afforded just a glimpse of the spire against a background of sky. The colonist said nothing about the spire to any of his visitors, but he generally sat with his face towards it.

When it was sunny, old Thomas Morgan would come and sit for a time with him. He did not talk much, but would rest in a kind of submissive contemplation whose better name might be worship. When he could not go out, the father would often come to the window overlooking the garden and peer through the glass at his son, first polishing his spectacles to get a perfect view. For some minutes he would watch him thoughtfully, and then would return to his chair in the corner, as though to ponder what he had seen. In the course of an hour he might make that little pilgrimage half-a-dozen times with a pathetic regularity.

David opened the letter with considerable interest and read it carefully through. One reading, however, was not enough, and it was evident that the perusal afforded him something more than a first gleam of amusement. One sentence in particular gave him food for thought, and in a little while he showed that it had found connections in his mind.

He took from his pocket a tiny slip of paper, neatly folded. It was a newspaper cutting, and he had taken it from the Australian journal which he had found in the house on the day of his arrival; it was, in fact, the very paragraph which Alison had refused to read aloud. Set for an obscure column of gossip headed 'Small Talk,' it consisted of a few lines of a flippantly malicious character:

'It appears that D——d M——n is leaving his country for a while. Kingsland people who remember his share in the Government House contract scandal will unkindly suggest that he finds the climate oppressive. If he is going to the Old Country he may meet the Premier there. When M——n meets Morgan again there should be a little thunder in the air. Our best wishes are with the Premier.'

Morgan read the lines carefully, and then restored the slip to his pocket. A little more steady thought, and he called to his mother. When he was in the garden she was invariably within hearing.

'Just a minute,' he said. 'Who gave you that newspaper which you were reading on the day I came—the Australian one? Can you remember?'

Could she forget anything connected with that day?

'It was young Charlie Saunders. He does bring one now and again,' she answered almost at once.

'Had he shown it to any one else before he brought it here?'

'My dear boy, how can I tell? I didn't ask.'

He was puzzled for a moment. Then, 'Where did young Saunders get it?'

'He is at the docks, in an office, and the papers sometimes come to the office, he tells me.'

'H'm! What kind of office is it?'

'Why, it is Mr Garland's office. You know Mr Garland?'

Morgan sat up suddenly. He gave a grim little laugh.

'There!' he said. 'That will do, mother. That's all I want to know.'

Much puzzled, but implicitly obedient, the little

old lady returned to her household duties. Morgan trod the garden-path for a few minutes in deep thought, and with traces of bitterness in his face. Then he read Mrs Hellier's letter again, and smiled. After that he went into the house, sat down at the table with writing materials at hand, and began to compose a reply.

It was not an easy matter, for every word seemed to need careful selection. Indeed, the manifest difficulty of his task roused the curiosity of his mother, who presently paused to make an inquiry.

'What are you writing, Davy?' she queried. 'Is it a letter?'

'I am trying,' he said, 'to answer a foolish woman according to her folly—which is almost impossible.'

The letter, however, was at last completed, and he had no difficulty in finding a messenger to bear it to the house in the West Road. After this he returned to the garden and to a further contemplation of the Cathedral spire.

Mrs Hellier received the letter before midday, and its prompt appearance gave her a considerable shock. She had not anticipated any answer at all; for persons of Morgan's quality must certainly never 'answer back.' Imagine her sensations, then, when the following manifesto was spread before her, slightly soiled, written in an uncultured hand, and with at least one misspelling:

'DEAR AND HONOURED MADAM,—You are quite justified in inquiring my intentions, which I ought to have stated sooner, and would have done if I hadn't wanted to be quite sure that your niece was the young lady to suit my taste, which being the case I beg to say that I mean business, and hope to call in a day or two to make a formal proposel, when I trust a satisfactory arrangement for all parties may be reached. I am glad the young lady has got a little property as is commonly reported, as it would be very useful in Kingsland; but being a man of business, I will be very willing to meet you in respect of any out-of-pocket expenses you have been put to on the young lady.

'Trusting you are well and hearty, as it leaves me at present, dear madam, I remain, yours obediently, D. MORGAN.'

Mrs Hellier, still weak from yesterday's shock, seemed to reel beneath this new catastrophe. What had she said—what had she written? Gradually, slowly, the awful truth came home to her that her letter might, indeed, have been genuinely misunderstood, and this grossly ignorant boor had read it in the light of his own amazing self-assurance. Hence this effusion!

Her horror was intense, her chagrin inexpressible. No, she would not write again; it was too dangerous. He was probably exhibiting the first letter even now to a group of loafers at the Black Lion Inn, with his own ludicrous interpretation attached. And this was the man whom Alison had walked with! What on earth was to be done?

What she eventually did was so little characteristic of the self-sufficient Mrs Hellier that it supplies a fair indication of her troubled state of mind. On the other hand, it showed that even at this crisis she was able to look for possible advantages. She sent a message to Mr Garland's rooms, asking that he should call that evening. When she came to reflect, there was hardly any one else in Hexminster whom she could confide in—the Rector last of all. But Garland she knew to be a clever man, and certainly capable of suggesting some way out of the difficulty. Besides, he already sympathised; for it was he that had first opened her eyes, with infinite tact, to the situation. Moreover—and this thought was most gratifying—these events would probably lead him to that declaration which she had been expecting for some time.

Garland came, without any sign of surprise and quietly eager to be of service. He listened sympathetically to as much of the story as Mrs Hellier chose to impart, and had too much sense to ask to see the letter she did not offer to show him. The gist of it all was that this awful Person actually intended to call and make a proposal. What was to be done to get rid of him?

'Are you afraid that Miss Vicars will say "Yes"?' queried Garland gravely.

Mrs Hellier disposed of that question quickly. She intended that Alison should escape the insult of such an offer. The poor girl would be appalled if she found that her thoughtless kindnesses to the old people and her notice of the son had resulted in such a development. It would probably mean a severe shock to her system.

Garland sincerely hoped that such was the case. He did not know—no one really knew, though everybody talked. He suggested that it might be possible to avoid the Man by leaving Hexminster for a time. On the other hand, the most effective way of dealing with him would be by a public exposure. Once it was proclaimed, with official authority, that he was a person of bad character, the public would see at once how absurd the Scandal was.

'Opposition, if I may say so, would only strengthen his position,' said Garland smoothly. 'The whole place—the common people—would be with him, and the Scandal would be greater than ever. Of course, I see how impossible it is for you to take him seriously. But you can easily *appear* to be willing to hear him. That would render the exposure all the more effective.'

He then gave his plan in detail, and Mrs Hellier was greatly interested. It promised her just the part she loved to play.

'Of course,' she said, 'you are positive as to the facts?'

'Very,' smiled Garland. 'A paragraph in an Australian paper caught my eye one day, and led me to make inquiries. I have taken some trouble to discover the truth. But I need not say that had you not required my help I should never have

divulged what I know. The unhappy man could have enjoyed his little triumph here and gone away again without a word being said. Your niece, however, must be protected; that is the first consideration.'

It was not necessary to describe the relentless skill with which he had followed the trail through the London files of the *Sydney Bulletin* before he could run his victim down, or the keen pleasure with which he had collected the evidence. Mrs Hellier was left to imagine it.

'But if he refuses?' she asked doubtfully.

'If he refuses he proves himself afraid of an inquiry. You have simply to ask him to meet you in London, so that a certain charge may be investigated by an adviser of yours. If he suspects, he stays away and you have done with him. If he comes, you bring him face to face with the one man who can denounce him, and whose denunciation will be fatal.'

Mrs Hellier reflected. 'It is an excellent plan,' she said. 'Will you arrange it for me?'

'My dear Mrs Hellier, I shall be delighted to serve you,' he protested almost warmly, 'unpleasant as the business will be in some of its aspects. You may depend upon me.'

He certainly gave some signs of pleasure in the prospect, though as a rule he was anything but demonstrative; and Mrs Hellier, feeling that this was almost a declaration in itself, was highly satisfied. In a few minutes, therefore, he left to put his plan into operation, and she did her part by writing a letter to a relative living in Brixton. 'It was expedient,' she said, 'that she and Alison should spend a few days in London shortly. Could dear Frances take them in?' And having posted this letter, she gave the servants siege instructions. If that Man from Australia should call, he must not be allowed to set foot in the house on any account, but was to be dismissed with the curt intimation that 'Mrs Hellier would write.'

In two days the Brixton relative replied that she would be glad to receive them the week after next, if that would do. Mr Garland, being consulted, said that it would, and preparations were duly made. The only person who was not consulted at all was poor Miss Vicars, who walked the garden-paths with listless steps and drooping head.

It was about this time that the Premier of Kingsland—'that other Morgan,' as Mrs Hellier had come to regard him—received a letter which surprised him considerably. It had been sent to the Agent-General for the colony, and that gentleman brought it to the Premier at the Hotel Cecil, in the quarters provided him by the Government.

'Dear me,' said the Premier, 'this is very extraordinary! Had you heard of David Morgan being in England?'

'No,' said the Agent-General mildly, and watching his man with close attention. 'I am greatly astonished.'

'They want me to help to expose him. What do you think of the idea?'

'It is extremely interesting,' was the cautious reply; for the Agent-General was a man of years and experience, and this Premier was distinctly a Person to be studied.

'He is posing as a fine fellow, no doubt,' said the Premier vigorously. 'Oh, I'll expose him, with all my heart! You arrange it, Aldridge, will you?'

'Certainly,' said the experienced Agent-General. 'Anything you wish.'

The Premier read the letter again. 'It's a very clever idea,' he said thoughtfully. 'We must help it all we can. But I'm not at all sure that David Morgan—the real David Morgan—is to be caught in this way. I rather fear that they have got hold of the wrong man.'

*(To be continued.)*

# THE WORLD'S EIGHTH WONDER.

By W. S. FLETCHER.

IF there is one thing more than another which characterises the present age, it is the enormous and ever-increasing facility for travel; and, availing himself of this, the globe-trotter is everywhere in evidence in his search for something sensational and novel. To those possessed of the tourist craze, desirous of swerving from the beaten track, and—while courting adventure and excitement—not indifferent to comfort *en route*, may I venture to recommend a trip to the renowned Victoria Falls in North-West Rhodesia, justly designated the eighth wonder of the world? Their native name is Mosi-oa-tunya, signifying 'water that smokes,' suggested by the vast volume of spray and mist arising from this phenomenal and awe-inspiring cataract on the great Zambesi River of South Africa.

There is something intensely romantic in being able to leave England, and in three weeks' time find yourself where in 1855 that self-reliant explorer Dr Livingstone stood gazing upon this view of overwhelming grandeur. The tree on which he cut his initials is still pointed out; and in his book, *Travels in South Africa*, he remarks with becoming modesty: 'This is the only instance in which I indulged in this piece of vanity.' Fifty-five years have sped by, and to-day, almost close by this self-same spot, is a large up-to-date hotel, with electric light, modern sanitary arrangements, and unlimited opportunity for the gratification of the most epicurean tastes.

The writer having recently made an excursion to the Falls, one thousand six hundred and forty miles to the northward of Capetown, a few fragmentary reminiscences may be of interest to your readers and possibly lead them to indulge in a like experience.

If we assume that the traveller has arrived in Table Bay by one of the Union Castle Company's palatial steamers, which perform the voyage with almost clockwork regularity in a little over sixteen days, he will find awaiting him at the Capetown docks a *train-de-luxe* ready to whirl him away northwards, and early on the morning of the fifth day land him at the Victoria Falls station. For ease, comfort, and general appointments, these trains could hardly be surpassed on an English or Continental railway. In the matter of eating, sleeping, attendance, the accommodation is excellent; you can procure a book from the library, ice for your wine, and switch on the electric current at pleasure. The journey itself is certainly not devoid of interest, and a few items may be enumerated. The railway, for instance, skirts the battlefields of Magersfontein, Belmont, and Graspan; and two memorials, the Scandinavian and that in honour of the Highland Brigade, are plainly visible from the train. Then Modder River is crossed, where was fought one of the fiercest engagements in the Boer war. Thirty-six hours from Capetown is Kimberley, the great diamond centre, where forty years ago only some scattered thorn-trees and wandering bushmen were to be seen. It is now a substantial, thriving township, with an approximate population of thirty-five thousand. Something over two hundred miles farther on is Mafeking of historic note, also a flourishing trading-centre. To the north of this, again, is a place called Crocodile Pools, adjacent to the Transvaal border, where Colonel Plumer's relief force was held at bay by the Boers for a considerable time. At Mochudi the railway enters upon the eastern fringe of the Kalahari Desert, which is traversed for about two hundred miles. Palapye is in the neighbourhood of the great chief Khama's capital, containing no fewer than forty thousand inhabitants, all under excellent discipline and regulations.

Shortly before reaching Bulawayo, the Matopos are visible in the distance, where repose the remains of Cecil Rhodes in a grave chiselled out of a granite kopje and sealed with a huge slab of the same stone. In this vicinity, also, are interred the bodies of Alan Wilson and his party, whose memorable stand on the Shangani River is one of the thrilling episodes of the conquest of the territory. Government House in Bulawayo is a handsome edifice, built on the site of what was originally Lobengula's kraal. After leaving here there is a significant change in the nature and character of the scenery. Mile after mile one passes through dense forests of teak, mahogany, mapani, and other fine timber, affording cover for lions, tigers, elephants, giraffes, and other descriptions of large game. As affording an instance of the novel experience which one may look for in this region, a few days before I passed over the line the locomotive collided with a large elephant—the former, with several trucks, being derailed. A herd of these animals happened to be standing on the rails, and the victim had three of its legs broken. Before it was despatched thirty-six bullets were fired into it. A number of natives were on the train, and they went half-crazy over the carcass, cutting it up into huge lumps and roasting the meat over a fire beside the line. This is said to be the only instance on record of an engine having been derailed by colliding with a wild animal, and it is to be hoped that some one had the good fortune to take a snap-shot of the occurrence.

Most excellent coal is found at a place called Wankie, and the Rhodesian railways are all supplied from this mine. The run from here to the Victoria Falls station is another seventy miles; but some considerable time before reaching it the roar of the falling water, like the surf of the sea, is plainly heard, and the rain-cloud locating its position distinctly visible. Every one is astonished at finding such a spacious, well-equipped hotel so long a distance from the confines of civilisation, and it need hardly be remarked that after the tedious and trying railway journey the traveller is glad indeed to avail himself of its grateful rest and comfort. The first passenger-train reached here in June 1904, and ever since there has been a continuous flow of persons from all parts of the world; indeed, it would be difficult to find a more cosmopolitan record than that furnished by the visitors' book. The food, cooking, and service leave nothing to be desired; and I opine that in the way of dinner *menus* the following is somewhat of a curiosity: 'Crocodile soup, tiger fish, crumbed leopard cutlets and tomato sauce, devilled hippopotamus heel on toast.' I confess to having approached these luxuries with some misgiving; but prejudice soon vanished, and a more appetising meal I have rarely made in my life.

The first impression one gets of the Falls themselves is a sense of utter amazement. You feel you are quite unable to drink in the majesty and splendour of the sight; the dictionary could be ransacked in vain for adjectives to describe what the eye surveys. Magnify the well-known poem anent the cataract of Lodore a thousand times, and you are a long way from doing justice to the fascinating and sublime spectacle before you. As one eminent enthusiast has remarked, 'you seem to have entered a universe where the phenomena are so far vaster and more majestic than those of any previous earthly experience that one's limited mundane senses fail to grasp them at first, and can only gradually, by extending their perception, adapt themselves to that larger nature.' Imagine a cataract a mile and a quarter in width, with the full force of the river Zambesi behind it, tumbling in a ceaseless, roaring, seething torrent into an abyss four hundred feet below. An American facetiously remarked on one occasion, 'I guess Niagara is only the sweat of these Falls'—an

expressive, though grotesque, tribute to their volume and character. During the flood-season the clouds of rolling, powdery spray take the form of an inverted pyramid, measured by the theodolite to reach a height of three thousand feet. Generally, in the day-time a beautiful rainbow breaks up the prismatic colours with wonderful charm; while at night, when the moon is about full, a lunar rainbow steals over the scene, producing atmospheric effects which baffle description and make a picture which clings for ever to the memory—the most beautiful gem of the earth's scenery.

What are known as the Rain Forest and Palm Grove, adjacent to the Falls, are aptly styled Nature's cathedral, the prevailing moisture ministering to the most luxuriant growths. Here may be seen beautiful tropical palms and every description of fern, from the fragile, delicate maidenhair to the sturdy tree-fern towering up some twenty or thirty feet. One cream-of-tartar tree I saw measured no less than eighty-seven feet round the trunk. All around you the grass and the vegetation generally are vididly green, the fronds of the feathery palms overhead glitter with the continual rain falling upon them, Nature is adorned in her best and richest garb, and everywhere, year in and year out, is the ceaseless, insistent sound of many waters.

I might go on to describe the charming and picturesque islands above the Falls—one of them, named Kandahar in honour of Lord Roberts's visit some little time ago, full of the most interesting vegetable growths, lovely flowers, and peculiar indigenous fruits. Just as the writer landed here a crocodile sprang off the bank into its native element; away across the river a huge hippopotamus was conspicuous; while seals and other animals are to be found in abundance.

What may be called the lip of the Falls is subdivided by several natural features, each of which has its distinctive name. There is, for instance, in this great series of cataracts, the Leaping Water; then the great Fall, five hundred and seventy-three yards broad (divided from a second fall of three hundred and twenty-five yards by a projecting rock); then the Rainbow Fall; and, finally, the Eastern—all blending, more or less, in one mighty whole, thundering into the obscurity of the dark cavern below. Each section of the colossal phantasmagoria possesses its peculiar charm, and even at the very edge may be seen trees and bushes which have successfully resisted the impetuous, maddened onrush of the waters. At the extreme eastern end they enter a narrow gorge called the Boiling Pot; and the cañon is at this point spanned by the handsome railway bridge over four hundred feet above low-water level, the highest in the world. The main parabolic arch is five hundred feet span, and the total length of bridge six hundred and fifty feet. It is a triumph of engineering skill, and was carried to completion with only one accident. It is, of course, one of the main links in the great Cape-to-Cairo line (which, by the way, has now reached the Congo border), and was officially opened to this point on the 11th of December last with befitting *éclat*.

Before returning the visitor should not fail to pay a visit to Livingstone, seven miles distant by rail from the Falls, where will be found many features of interest. It is the seat of the Government of North-Western Rhodesia, and has several fine buildings; indeed, in the near future, as population increases and trade develops, it is destined to become an important centre of the sub-continent.

But I must bring my notes to a conclusion, content if I have whetted the appetite of any tourist in search of fresh fields and pastures new to exploit.

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# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CEYLON TEA-PLANTER.

By E. F. Sellar, Author of *Where Every Prospect Pleases*, &c.

AS I leave my bungalow in order to attend muster, which is supposed to take place at dawn, the correct time may be anything between five and six o'clock A.M. As soon as muster is over the superintendent *makes* it six, and his own watch and the factory clock are set accordingly. Thus the horology of an estate goes on untrammelled by Greenwich or even the nearest station clock—an independence which occasionally leads to disappointment entailed by the loss of a train!

This morning in question, after heavy rain during the night, the air has an indescribable freshness. My bungalow stands at an elevation of some three thousand feet, and commands an extensive view stretching for miles of the low country, at this hour covered, as though by a billowy tablecloth, with a dense curtain of white cloud. As I reach the barbecue of the factory most of the coolies are already mustered in rows; a few stragglers are still hastening up, urged to greater celerity by the fluent and in many instances unprintable admonitions of the *kanganies*.*

Attendance at muster is not an attractive duty. The coolies, cold and shivering, wrapped in their dark *cambelis*, and bearing the unmistakable air of having just got up, present a very different spectacle from the brightly clad, chattering throng which may be seen an hour or so later when the

* Native overseer and head of a gang of coolies. By virtue of his office, extra pay, and responsibility, the *kangany* in theory is of the greatest assistance in the management of an estate. In practice he is ever loquacious and noisily conscientious—in the superintendent's presence.

sun has increased in power and correspondingly raised their spirits and vitality. A few orders are briefly given, and the coolies move off to their appointed tasks, amidst vociferous shouts and exhortations touching the sin of procrastination on the part of their *kanganies*, who in the superintendent's presence show a commendable, if noisy, zeal for vicarious labour on the part of their charges.

Next I proceed to the factory. Some men pride themselves on the scientific personal supervision they devote to the manufacture of tea; others laud the skill of their native tea-maker, with whose judgment, it is whispered, they rarely interfere. In this instance it would be invidious to record from the writer's own experience which method yields the best results and the highest prices. As so much misconception seems to exist as to the method of making tea, even among shareholders in Tea Companies, at the risk of being prolix it may be well briefly to describe the process.

When the fresh green leaves are brought in from the field they are first spread on shelves of jute hessian or wire so that they may wither. The period of drying depends on the state of the atmosphere, and in wet weather an artificial current of warm air is, if feasible, put into use. Eighteen hours may roughly be taken as an average time in which the green leaf should be allowed to wither. Next, in order to extract the moisture, the tea is rolled in powerful machines which can put pressure to any desired extent on the green leaf. After the leaf has issued from the roller in sticky, yellowish lumps it is spread out and allowed to ferment. Then the leaf is hastily run through a desiccator, or furnace of hot air, after which the spongy, copper-coloured mass comes out, dry and brittle, in the form in which we recognise tea in the canister at home. In this state it is sifted by a revolving cylindrical machine consisting of wire meshes of different sizes. The tea is thrown in at the top, where a cutter meets it, then it is revolved quickly in the cylinder, and is ejected in its different grades, according to the size of the meshes through which it has been passed. The minute meshes eject fawnings or dust; the next in size give the highly priced broken orange pekoe; then come, ever increasing in bulk, broken pekoe, pekoe, and finally the coarse and stalky pekoe souchong.

Of course different estates have their distinctive methods of sifting, grading, and labelling their tea. But although small leaves and buds plucked green will invariably make the highest-grade tea, it is an error to suppose, as it is said one worthy board of directors of tea-estates did fondly imagine, that the tea-bushes themselves can be made to grow a particular grade of tea. 'As we observe that broken orange pekoe invariably commands the highest price, we would recommend that all the new clearings be planted exclusively with broken orange tea-plants,' these Solons in England are reported to have written to a bewildered tea-planter in their employment! To sum up. Pluck the buds and small leaves only, and you make good tea of the best quality, but lose in yield of crop. Pluck liberally of the leaves, fine and coarse, and you will get a greater amount of pounds per acre, but your prices will suffer. In any case, the tea-sifter, not the bushes themselves, is the final arbitrator as to how your tea shall be graded.

But this is a digression. My inspection of the factory is soon over, and in a few minutes I am seated in my dining-room, fully occupied with 'early tea'—a repast consisting of eggs, cold ham, home-grown and home-made tea, with toast, marmalade, and fruit.

The meal over, I light my pipe and proceed to the office, outside the open windows of which some coolies are stationed. Their demands have a certain sameness, and consist of a desire to obtain a trifling advance of their pay or else a request for *maranthu*, or medicine. The drugs most in use are chlorodyne and quinine, though castor-oil is perhaps the most popular, for the Tamil coolie betrays an almost unnatural zest for that nauseous bogey of old-fashioned nursery-days. A certain amount of care must be exercised in prescribing medicine, and strict personal supervision in dispensing the drugs is advisable. The narrowest escape I myself ever had of doing a fellow-being to death, and in an excruciatingly painful manner, was one morning when in a hurry I ordered my kitchen coolie to give a man twenty drops of laudanum. The kitchen coolie was, of course, sagacity personified, and understood all about the medicine needed. Fortunately for everybody concerned, some misgiving seized me, and I turned back and entered the back veranda of the bungalow just in time to prevent the ailing Tamil from drinking off a concoction of cantharides which I kept for blistering dogs in the event of sunstroke!

This morning the cases of sickness are simple and soon dealt with. One or two coolies are hale and hearty, and, evidently thinking that time must hang heavy on the superintendent's hands, have stationed themselves at the office window solely in order to talk, air their grievances, and expatiate on those little feuds which at all times and in all countries enliven the existence of a rural and agricultural population.

'*Nan parkritha*' or '*Nalaki va*' are of inestimable use in the planter's vocabulary. Translated literally, they mean 'I'll look into the matter,' and 'Come to-morrow.' These phrases never fail to bring comfort, and by the next day the litigant very probably has forgotten all about his grievance. On this occasion I waste but little time; and, dismissing the loquacious coolies with the suggestion that they should settle their disputes among themselves, I mount my horse and start off to ride to the highest point of the estate. The two bungalow dogs, fox-terriers and mother and daughter, both somewhat leggy and with a far-off trace of harrier about them, joyfully accompany me.

In spite of incidental delays the sun is not yet so powerful as to be unpleasant, and in any case, after a mile or so of winding through the tea, the path strikes into the jungle, at this point partially cleared so as to allow of cardamom cultivation. For this spice, so useful in flavouring and medicinal purposes, demands shade, and is always grown in jungle-land.

By-and-by the cardamoms are left behind, and we enter the jungle proper, a sombre forest of huge trees, with a dense undergrowth on either side of the path. The terriers have been roaming at will, but never very far off. Now, however, the horse-keeper, who has kept pace with me, exclaims excitedly, '*Ayah, pandi!*' ('Sir, a pig!'). And, sure enough, from the thick undergrowth come unmistakable porcine grunts, while both dogs, who have rushed in eagerly, emerge somewhat precipitously and shamefaced. One, indeed, is plastered with red earth, and a crash proclaims that the sow —such it must probably be, for a tusker would have stood his ground and possibly ripped up the terriers—has retreated into some farther fastness. Before emerging into the open the dogs put up a jungle-fowl, which, rising with all the pomp and self-importance of a cock-pheasant, causes my horse to dance a gavotte preparatory to attempting to bolt, a feat for which his snaffle mouth and indolent disposition eminently unfit him. A burst of a couple of hundred yards restores my steed's equanimity, and my panting horse-keeper, ever zealous to impart information, points out the fresh traces of an elephant. This again causes the horse some alarm, as in common with so many of his kind he has a lively, unreasoning horror of 'the huge earth-shaking beast.'

However, the elephant in question is a harmless one. Indeed, he once took part in temple processions and was favoured of the Buddhist priests. But a life of pomp and ceremony did not suit him. One fine day he escaped; all efforts to capture him were futile, and for years this elephant has been leading a nomadic and solitary existence in the thick fringes of jungle bordering a succession of tea-estates.

At length the path suddenly issues from the jungle, and we are once again among tea, and at an elevation of close on five thousand feet. The air is fresh and invigorating, and the coolies on this little, isolated tea-estate keep singularly free from fever, dysentery, and other ills to which Tamil flesh is so susceptible.

The estate is worked by a Tamil conductor, and a visit from the superintendent is only considered necessary about once a week. The *kangany* welcomes me, not so much from a feeling of esteem or affection as for the reason that he wishes an advance of pay, and is also anxious that I should undertake to send his watch to a European shop in Kandy to have the works of that long-suffering instrument adjusted. The question of the watch is submitted owing to my suggestion that the coolies up here seem to muster later and to knock off work earlier than they do on the larger estate below. I also improve the occasion by indicating a few weeds in the tea, and this leads to voluble explanation and an assurance that extra coolies will be put on to weed, for every acre of a tea-estate should in theory be kept as clean as the flower-beds of a well-ordered garden.

With the exception of a few weeds here and there the place looks in good order, and the work appears satisfactory. And so, tempted by the fineness of the morning, and the glorious panorama stretching beneath me, where in the clear atmosphere the temple dagobas of a ruined city some seventy miles distant can be discerned with the naked eye, I determine to-day, for the first time, to reach the highest peak of the mountain on whose lower slopes the tea is planted; and once more I strike into the jungle. The path, through long disuse, is difficult to find, and I take the precaution—somewhat intermittently, it must be confessed—to blaze the trees with my pruning-knife so that I may have something to guide me on my homeward journey.

The undergrowth becomes very thick, and after a bit my knife is used in order to cut a way and facilitate progress. Finally I emerge into a comparatively clear space studded with dwarf trees, only to find that another ridge covered with thick jungle intervenes between me and the summit. 'This is very pleasant, but it is not tea-planting,' I reflect as I begin to retrace my footsteps. But, alas! the return journey seems as bewildering as the heights were baffling, and all traces of the blazed trees are lost. I lose the path and begin to flounder about among thick, clinging undergrowth.

Somewhat intolerant of the absurd predicament, I climb a tree, and below me I see the Beulah of my search, a clear space of open tea belonging to a neighbouring tea-estate, and in the distance my own factory, coolies' lines and bungalow looking very much like carved Swiss toys. I have missed the point at which I entered, and have come half-way down a long, narrow strip of jungle; but at any rate I have not been going round in a circle. A minute or two later I strike a stream furtively trickling its way down the slopes. Following this, I soon emerge into the open, and in a short time, after visiting the factory where the leaf plucked in the morning is being spread out to wither, I am once again in my own bungalow, very tired, very hot, and inordinately thirsty.

At twelve I sit down to a solid meal of bacon and eggs, *brinjal* cutlets, beef-steak, cold meat, and salad, ending with the invariable curry and rice, and washed down by beer, whisky-and-soda, tea, or fresh-squeezed lime-juice and soda, as inclination or prudence may suggest. Then an adjournment to a long chair in the veranda follows; and, after a comfortable rest or siesta, by two o'clock I am again ready for the field.

This time my direction lies downhill; so, telling the horse-keeper to meet me at four o'clock, and leaving the terriers behind, I take the short-cut through the tea, and am soon at the bottom of the estate, where the pluckers, pruners, and manurers are all at work in adjacent fields. There is a certain monotony about the appearance of growing tea, which looks from a distance like vast acres of gooseberry-bushes planted methodically in rows. Here, however, the elevation is only some two thousand feet, and we are in the vicinity of rice-fields, bamboos, and other signs of tropical vegetation, in startling contrast to the dark growth of the higher reaches; while in place of the dusky minas which flitted about the jungle, flocks of gaudy-coloured, noisy parrots and brilliant golden orioles are to be seen.

After spending some time with the men who are pruning and forking-in manure, I go on to the pluckers. These are divided into two gangs. The old women and children are plucking tea which is two years from pruning, and consequently again ready for the knife. Little time need be wasted in the supervision of this gang, as they can be left to strip the bushes as ruthlessly as they choose. In the next field, however, where the tea is coming into bearing after pruning, great care must be taken in the plucking. The gang employed on this task is a select one, consisting of a few smart boys and several young and in some instances good-looking girls. These young women earn good pay, and can afford to wear clean and showy clothes, and adorn themselves with much native jewellery. A tendency to almost coquettish frivolity is noticeable among them; but they are good workers, and can pluck an astonishing quantity of pounds of leaf per day.*

At four o'clock the horn blows as a signal to knock off work, my horse is ready for me, and with shouts of jubilation and much chattering the coolies proceed to the factory to have their leaf weighed and their names entered in the check-roll.

The leaf is duly inspected and weighed, a little tea-tasting follows, a final look round the factory, and I am preparing to go back to the bungalow, when a cheery 'Coo-ey' and a clattering of hoofs in the barbecue warn me of the arrival of a *durai*.† This proves to be my nearest neighbour, a Scotsman and a genial soul, who looks on me, as a new-comer to the district, in the light of one to be cultivated, perhaps in a friendly manner almost patronised, by the older residenters. Instinctively I think of the late Mr Murray's lines in his delightful volume of poetry, *The Scarlet Gown*:

> His name is Alexander Bell,
> His home Dundee;
> I do not know him quite so well
> As he knows me.

Bell, who is effusive in his greetings, is armed with a double-barrelled gun, and I suddenly remember that he had volunteered to come over and shoot hares with me this evening. After returning to the bungalow and offering Bell some light refreshment, which he first protestingly refuses and then coyly accepts, in the form of a large whisky-and-soda, I call for the dog-boy. The bungalow terriers are coupled; three more couples of beagle-terriers, which, with an imported beagle and a cross-bred harrier, make up the *bobbery* pack, are in waiting for us; and off we start.

I have no intention of giving a detailed account of our sport. Suffice it to say that, after drawing blank two patches of scrub, the pack in full cry, showing a levity due to want of work, to the unqualified disgust of Bell, get on to the scent of a pariah cur that has come out to see the fun. Nor can they be called back, in spite of weird but vigorous tootings on the part of Bell, who is carrying the horn. And not until they have run their quarry to earth in a set of coolie lines about a mile distant, where, although unmolested, pariah-like he lay cringing on his back, do the exuberant pack return, quite unawed by the severe rebukes of the somewhat officious Bell.

This time they are put into a likely piece of marna grass, a burst of music follows, a hare is soon bolted and raced vigorously up and down the lines of tea. Finally she pops out in the open, and is accounted for by Bell's unerring aim. Another patch of scrub is drawn, and again, after a pretty hunt, Bell has the satisfaction of bagging his hare with a long second-barrel shot.

And now the sun is sinking, the tree-frogs begin to herald the swiftly approaching darkness, and, the dogs having been coupled, we turn for home and reach the bungalow as darkness falls.

Hot baths are quickly provided, and soon two hungry men are sitting comfortably, if unconventionally clad according to English standard, in clean pyjamas, and thoroughly enjoying the efforts of the Cingalese cook to provide, with the materials at his command, a good dinner.

At an early hour we go to bed, for Bell, still garrulous as a brook, makes a point of being back next morning at his factory for muster, and this will entail early tea by lamplight at about 5 A.M. Hospitality has ever been the keynote of a planter's life, and before retiring Bell has trysted me to dine and spend the night with him at an early date next week. And thus ends—albeit perhaps somewhat minimising the rough and enlarging on the smooth—what I think may be taken as a fair example of a day of my life on a tea-estate; a day chosen at random from personal experience, and one in which the social side has been given due prominence, for neighbours do not always drop in as auspiciously as did Bell; a day spent chiefly in the open and beneath the sky, and in a country of which it may truthfully be said that

> For a man with pride and an empty purse,
> There's many a land that might be worse.

* Four pounds of green leaf makes one pound of manufactured tea.

† *Durai*, literally 'master,' corresponds to the *sahib* of India.

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# COLOURED GEMS IN JEWELLERY.

By R. BURNETT.

IF 'the apparel oft proclaims the man,' even more surely do the ornaments she wears proclaim the woman. The selection of gems for jewellery, therefore, becomes a matter of no small moment to those who can afford to indulge their tastes in this direction. In 'Coloured Precious Stones' (*Chambers's Journal* for 1908) the chief properties of the less costly coloured stones, such as tourmalines, peridots, olivines, and aquamarines, were briefly reviewed; and I now propose to deal similarly with the more valuable coloured gems.

The most important qualifications of all jewelstones are colour, brilliancy, hardness, and freedom from flaws. The first two attributes are very quickly recognised by ladies, and may be safely left to their individual taste. Sufficient hardness may be assumed in all cases here referred to where not otherwise stated, while the imperfections detectable by amateurs are pointed out under each gem. The demand for finer qualities of stones, which can be obtained only by careful inspection and comparison, and for jewellery of exclusive design, is steadily growing, and nowhere more so than in our leading provincial towns. The guidance offered may, therefore, assist those who, in the perplexity of selecting jewels and of securing distinctive ornaments, are fain, like Portia, to exclaim, 'Oh me, the word "choose"!'

Of emeralds it is difficult to write, for two main reasons. Opinions differ rather sharply upon their beauty, and their price is prohibitive. Some people cannot admire them sufficiently, while a small but assertive few maintain they are atrocious and even 'barbaric.' Yet the true emerald-green—so well defined as to give a name to a colour—is unquestionably beautiful, and the finest stones show a lovely, soft, velvety grass-green which is a never-failing delight to those who favour decided shades. Unfortunately only comparatively few emeralds attain this high standard. Most of those in ordinary use are dull, whitish-green slabs, and are far from pretty. This no doubt turns many against the gem. The attraction of emeralds, and consequently their value, depend on their colour, especially if it is evenly distributed. Unless defects are very apparent to the naked eye, fine colour compensates even for flaws such as fissures and clouds, to which emeralds are highly subject; indeed, a flawless emerald is almost a rarity in nature.

Few gems have been so liable to the caprice of fashion as emeralds. Readers of Egyptian history will remember how much they were esteemed thousands of years ago, and many a tomb in Egypt has been ransacked for scarabs made of these stones. A generation back in this country they were considered suitable only for elderly ladies, and were consequently of small value. Even now their popularity is more or less confined to districts; but this does not seem to affect their price, which everywhere is very high for good specimens. Emeralds in ordinary trade jewellery would be worth only perhaps ten to fifteen pounds a carat, but fine stones—even small ones—may fetch as much as seventy-five pounds a carat. For large sizes and exceptionally fine gems the prices are exceedingly high. Needless to say, emeralds accord well with diamonds, and their deep, pleasing green colour gives distinction and virility to any ornament.

Rubies enjoy a more uniform popularity than emeralds; but, like them, their use in jewellery depends on their colour, which varies from reddish-brown in the poorer qualities to the rich, pinky, vivid red of the Burma stones. The latter, known as pigeon-blood rubies, are the *ne plus ultra* in this gem. The ordinary sorts, from their small dispersive power, have but little play of colour to give prettiness and life to the stone. Rubies are comparatively free from flaws, and hence colour is the chief criterion of quality. They make up best with diamonds, but go well with pearls, and in a less degree with opals. In very small sizes they combine suitably with aquamarines, the glitter of which is apt to give a cold appearance to jewellery without a touch of warmth such as brightly coloured rubies supply.

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Ordinary quality of rubies would cost about five to ten pounds per carat, but the very fine pigeon-blood variety may run to anything over a hundred pounds per carat. They are the most costly of all gems, partly from scarcity, partly from the unique fascination of their colour. In consequence many inferior stones of allied formation and colour are made to do duty as real rubies. Those selecting a fine gem should insist on the absence of all such prefixes as Balas, Bohemian, or Cape, and on having a fairly large number to choose from, not one or two only. Colours are deceptive, and can be wisely selected only by comparison. Ladies, too, in buying expensive coloured stones, should not allow their instinct for matching colours to be unduly influenced by a frock or a hat they may possess for the moment.

A more important point for those buying gems of this kind is that a large trade is now done in 'reconstructed,' and more recently in 'scientific,' rubies. These are actually ruby material, ground down, coloured, and scientifically remade to give an appearance equal to the finest real gems. They are powerfully crushed together in order that they may have the same density, hardness, and other qualities as the natural stone—the only difference, according to the advertisements, being sentiment. This last counts for a good deal; but despite the fact that the best class of jewellers, both here and on the Continent, have stood out against their sale, 'scientific' rubies are gaining ground. No doubt this is partially owing to their beautiful appearance, but more to their price, which is probably less than a fiftieth of that of natural stones of the same apparent quality. They are frequently mounted with real diamonds, and thus give exquisite effects at comparatively small cost. In London, and more so in Paris, they are the *bête noire* of respectable jewellery firms at the present day. In a well-known street of the latter city two handsome shops stand side by side. The one contains only expensive real-stone jewellery; the other, reconstructed rubies and high-class artificial coloured stones mounted with real diamonds. Of what avail is the announcement '*pierres veritables*' in the former shop to a lady who sees next door an equally good-looking ornament at probably one-fourth the price? Sentiment, I fear, has to go, and likewise the sale of the real article. It might be as well, therefore, in buying rubies, to put the question whether the stones are natural or reconstructed.

Although of the same formation as rubies, the sapphire is not nearly so important a gem. Yet its blue colour appeals to some in preference to the green of the emerald or the red of the ruby, and to those who can afford a suite of jewellery of each main colour sapphires make a pretty enough variant. The colour most sought after is corn-flower blue, but the range of intensity is very considerable; indeed, in large sizes, which are much more frequently found in this gem than in the ruby, the colour is generally too deep, thereby lowering the value. Moderately sized stones, well under a carat, usually show best, especially if the colour is evenly distributed, which is not always the case. The price of sapphires is about two-fifths that of rubies, probably from one to five pounds per carat; and small and large differ little in value per carat. Those found in Ceylon, which are lighter in colour and 'lifier' than any of the others, appeal more to the majority of people. They are seen much oftener on the Continent than in this country. Their delicate azure hue combines very harmoniously with fine blue-white moonstone, rivalling the new Madagascar aquamarine in this respect; whereas darker-coloured stones can be used effectively only with diamonds, and even then in small quantities.

But while emeralds and rubies maintain their appearance in artificial light—the latter, in fact, being enhanced—sapphires, with rare exceptions, turn nearly black and absolutely dead at night. As jewellery is most worn in artificial light, the behaviour of stones under this condition becomes a highly important factor in their selection. Indeed, no gem should be bought without being thoroughly examined both in day and night light. Decided colours, such as a sharp, 'clean' green, red, or sky-blue, are seldom injured; whereas indefinitely coloured stones nearly all change for the worse. The ordinary purple amethyst, many pink tourmalines, blue chalcedony, and smoky cairngorms are cases in point. Gems that retain their colour in all lights are consequently the most expensive.

Turquoise is a different order of stone from any previously mentioned. As it is nearly opaque and without any sparkle, its beauty depends entirely on the delicacy of its colour, which at its best is a fine cerulean blue; but poorer qualities tend to grayness. Those having a greenish tint are less valuable. The stone does not command high prices. It is most suitable for cluster-earrings with a border of small diamonds. The gem is dainty and refined if worn along with fit accessories; but otherwise, being so easily imitated, it is apt to appear cheap and commonplace. Its colour deteriorates and inclines towards green with the lapse of time.

The fascination of opals lies in their variety of colours. All the prismatic hues of the rainbow—orange, green, yellow, violet, electric blue, and crimson—are represented with great intensity, according to the play of light on the gem. The sheen of the opal is so distinctive that it gives rise to the term 'opalescent.' While authorities differ as to the cause of the colours, it should be enough for those buying opals that pretty colours exist in the gem selected. Stones having large spangles are preferable to 'pin-point' opals, which show only minute specks of colour. The former display the finest fire and maintain their colour best, although the colours of all opals degenerate with exposure. Opal is brittle and scarcely hard enough to stand up well as a gem-stone, and is peculiarly liable to injury by contact with oily or greasy matter. In consequence it is not well suited for finger-rings.

Pendants for evening wear afford the gem its best opportunity, as the heat of the body dries up the excessive moisture of the stone and increases its brilliancy. These remarks apply chiefly to fine opals, costing anywhere from thirty to fifty shillings a carat. But there are common opals that may be bought from two to ten shillings a carat; these are milky and nearly opaque, and so dull in appearance as to bring the stone into disrepute.

As an example of the use of opals, take one small and one reasonably large oval opal, each bordered by small olivines, or, as a variant, olivines and brilliants alternately. Let the smaller run crosswise with the neck-chain, and the larger lengthwise about three-quarters of an inch down. Midway between these place an olivine or a diamond, about a quarter-carat size, surrounded by a small ring of thin gold, and we have a simple but very effective pendant at no great expense.

Although perhaps neither a stone nor a gem, coral is so much employed in jewellery that it cannot be overlooked here. Colour is the compelling allurement, which seems greater in the 'sunny South' than in this country. No doubt the dull, unattractive red of the poorer qualities, and the many imitations shown, repel many ladies. Yet few materials look so refined, delicate, and handsome as coral when properly selected and made up. Yellowness of tinge should be avoided. Patchiness of colour also lessens the value, though seldom is a coral 'drop' found evenly coloured all round. One side well coloured counts for much. Artificial colouring must also be looked for; only, as nearly all coral contains little fissures here and there, and as the colouring-matter goes too deeply into them, attempts to deceive in this way are not difficult to detect. Real coral varies from white to deep salmon; but the colour most to be desiderated is a delicate pale pink, with a soft, waxy lustre, fine as the bloom on a peach. This applies to Japan coral, which is the best in the market just now. The Messina coral is generally of deeper pink, with a lustre more glassy, even metallic, suggesting a porcelain glaze almost.

Prices of coral vary immensely—'from five shillings to one hundred and twenty pounds the ounce,' a well-known British authority says. Continental dealers sell cheaper. Good ordinary coral can be bought from them at forty francs a gram (under seven shillings a carat), and fair-sized drops for earrings would weigh from ten to fifteen carats a pair. Very good qualities might run to several times this figure, and exceptional pieces to what can be obtained for them. A very fine short string of coral beads, the centre one a sphere of under half an inch diameter, finely graduated and perfect in colour, was recently offered at one hundred and seventy-five pounds.

To avoid the appearance of mere imitations, coral ornaments require to be richly mounted; say, the chains and connecting-bars well studded with small diamonds. Much, too, depends on the arrangement. The somewhat commonplace row of pear-shaped drops, seven to thirteen, perhaps, in number, does not appeal strongly to many. But let a lady select a fairly large rounded centre-piece (known as a *bouton* by French and Italian dealers), two much smaller ones at each side, and two pear-shaped drops to hang from the centre, and set the whole nicely with small brilliants, and a much more 'toney' ornament is obtained at no greater expense. The complete set, of course, requires the addition of a brooch and earrings mounted in keeping. This would be 'the infinity of excellence,' and, it may be added, of refinement.

Of artificial imitations of gems, the 'doublets' and 'triplets' obtainable in emeralds, rubies, and sapphires have nothing to recommend them but cheapness. The former consist of real stone in the top part and 'paste' below the girdle; the latter are merely a thin slice of actual stone—to give colour—cemented in between an upper and lower portion of paste. When 'set' they are not easily distinguished from real gems, and have to be guarded against. Actual 'pastes,' however, are seldom offered as genuine stones—never by respectable dealers. If they were, the difference would often be difficult to detect. The primitive method of estimating the degree of cold by the tip of the tongue would be insufficient. The scientific methods of the expert for testing hardness, density, and pleochroism are beyond most people. I plead, in the selection of gems, however, only for the middle course—some knowledge of the properties of stones and intelligent comparison.

A word as to the keeping of jewellery. Even those who own good gem ornaments seldom take sufficient pains to keep them thoroughly clean. No diamond, tourmaline, or indeed any sparkling stone will show its best unless absolutely free from all grease or dirt of any kind. Few ladies realise how much pendants, rings, and ornaments in contact with the skin require attention after even one evening's wear in a hot room, theatre, or assembly. Many, too, have a foolish habit of fingering at the gems in an ornament. Give the average lady, say, a ring to look at, and almost invariably she will touch the diamonds. The lustre, of course, with the grease from her fingers, however clean they may be, is immediately dimmed. Even in putting on jewellery the gems should be touched as little as possible, and, when adjusted, come over gently with a selvyt cloth, silk handkerchief, or fine tissue-paper. Fortunately all open-set, hard, faceted stones are uninjured by washing with soap and hot water; and if this is done lightly with a soft brush, and the ornaments dried quickly and carefully out of reasonably hot water, they will shine again as good as new. Jewellers, I believe, employ fine sawdust for drying purposes; but a soft towel, if dabbed gently, not rubbed so as to haul open the claws, may safely be used. Opals, corals, pearls, and such-like softer, close-set gems all readily

absorb greasy matter; hence they should be touched as seldom as possible. Of these, pearls should never be washed; and the others should only be wiped with a damp cloth, care being taken to keep all wet or soapy grease away from the settings. Platinum mountings should be frequently, and gold occasionally, rubbed with selvyt cloth, or even with damp rouge on a soft brush, if it is not allowed to dry on; but usually, when this is required, it is better to give a jeweller the job.

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# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

## CHAPTER IV.—IS THIS A SCANDAL?

MRS HELLIER'S garden had a high gray wall in the West Road, and another high gray wall facing a narrow lane behind the National Schools. Walls of that character are frequent in Hexminster, and are in some sense symbolical of the social conditions. Those who walked behind them were shut off from the street and cottage people by innumerable laws of caste and custom, and the people in the street sometimes lived long lives through without getting a single glimpse of the domains behind the barrier. In many cases they had no curiosity in the matter; for those high walls were a part of their environment which they never thought of questioning, like the city police-station or the Deanery. But when one left the place and grew old elsewhere, one's thoughts would turn to those remembered things with a kind of mild surprise.

'Now I wonder,' said an old Hexminster man the other day, discussing the ancient city with a friend—'now I wonder what was behind that high wall in the West Road—the one with the green bottle-glass on the top? I suppose it must have been Mrs Hellier's garden. I must have passed the place almost every day for years, and yet the question seems never to have crossed my mind before. What a quaint life people live in some of those old English cities!'

Mrs Hellier's house occupied the third side of the Canonry made the fourth. Only two of the Canonry windows faced the garden, and these were first-floor windows of an unobtrusive character. The garden was well filled with old fruit-trees, and it had two garden seats. One of these was in the centre of a small square of turf, and the other was close against the Canonry wall.

On this last seat Mr Garland sat, with Alison at the other end of it. It was Saturday, and a short day at the Westhampton Docks, where he was said to be making a fortune rapidly as a junior partner in a firm of shipbrokers. Not yet forty, he was of gentlemanly appearance and ingratiating manner, with that taste for suitable dress which is so helpful to a man in the battle of life. He had a smooth, well-modulated voice, and he never spoke hastily. At the present moment he looked grave, and assisted his thoughts by turning up the gravel with the point of his cane.

'Don't mistake me,' he said earnestly, but without looking up to say it. 'I do not defend Mrs Hellier. She is—well, she is inclined to go to extremes. But I do believe that she has the best motives. And in this case I am afraid that she has some justification.'

'What! justification for treatment of this kind?' said Alison coldly.

'She wishes to protect you from a man whose—whose record is not a good one.'

The last words were spoken almost regretfully. Alison was flushed and indignant, but she could not fail to be impressed. Few people liked Lewis Garland—he was of too calculating a disposition to be liked; and as he had grown up from childhood in the city, every one had some opinion of him. But every one agreed that he always knew what he was about, and in this case the studied impartiality of his pose could not but influence his listener.

'Those absurd stories!' she protested feebly.

'Your aunt does not believe them to be absurd. Indeed, she has good reason—though I dislike saying so.'

'What! you believe them too?'

Garland paused. Then he said with sorrowful deliberation, 'I did not wish to believe them. Why, the man is an old schoolmate of mine, and I was naturally glad to hear of his supposed prosperity. But your aunt has made careful inquiries during the last week or two, and I am bound to admit that the results justify her—her indignation.'

Alison's face fell. Garland glanced at her and was satisfied; but he had more to say. Of course he did not say that Mrs Hellier's inquiries had been made to himself.

'At the same time,' he went on, 'she is anxious, I believe, to be thoroughly just—even to him, and also to convince you that she has only your interests at heart; so she has taken a course which I believe is to be commended. I may tell you now that the charge against Morgan is that he is the man who tried to defraud the Kingsland Government in a large building contract. Indeed, there seems to be no doubt about it. But I have told Mrs Hellier that she should take nothing for granted in such a case. After all, you know, the man is a native of the city. So she has applied for information to the one man who should know all about this business, and who can settle it in a word. That is the Premier of Kingsland, who is in London just now for the Colonial Conference.'

Alison showed no emotion, but almost all her

confidence had gone. She suddenly remembered that curious paragraph in the Australian newspaper—the one she had carefully refrained from reading to the old people at the cottage. It had haunted her since that fatal day when Mrs Hellier had repeated those unpleasant rumours to her—the day of the discovery.

'He is a fine man,' continued Garland quietly. 'Since Seddon died he undoubtedly holds the first place among Colonial statesmen. At the moment he is the chief London lion, just as Botha was at the last Conference. . . . Well, as your aunt tells me, he has consented to see her and to give her, personally, any information she may need. And she has asked David Morgan to meet her there when she goes, so that the whole matter may be cleared up. She has told him that she cannot consider any communication from him until this is done.'

Alison was startled. 'She has arranged all this?' she asked in astonishment. 'It is all settled?'

'Yes, I understand so—all, that is, except the date and the presence of David Morgan. He has certainly promised to be there; but we must not be surprised if he fails. No one will blame him—under the circumstances.'

His tone was so colourless that it took from the malicious character of the words he used without robbing them of their weight. Alison looked up quickly.

'You will be there?' she asked.

'I have promised to try to run up—I may be of some assistance. I shall, of course, be glad if I can. You will like to have somebody there whom you know.'

'Then I am to be present too?'

'You would probably wish to be, would you not?'

Poor Miss Vicars was too bewildered to reply. This careful arrangement pointed to extreme determination on her aunt's part, tempered apparently by some new spirit of reasonableness, which she could only ascribe to Garland's influence. Though it must be unpleasant in its consequences to her, she could hardly do less than give it grateful acknowledgment. She believed that he was acting as a reconciling force in the war between herself and her imperious aunt—a miserable and unequal conflict which had now lasted for more than a fortnight.

'I—I don't know,' she said listlessly.

'Of course it is unpleasant,' agreed Garland with fine tact. 'But you will think it over. It is only fair to Mrs Hellier that you should be there; she believes she is acting for your benefit; and, at the same time, she has conceded much by consenting to such an arrangement. And if the man is innocent, it is only fair to him that you should be there when he proves himself so.'

He rose to go, and she rose at the same time. He was never addicted to staying too long in any company. But as they moved towards the house he made another revelation.

'Why, I almost forgot to say,' he cried, 'that the Rector has been consulted as to this arrangement, and has given it his hearty approval.'

'He has?' said Alison slowly; and she did not know whether to feel a kind of relief or to feel that a friend had failed her.

And Garland added in a matter-of-fact way, 'Certainly he has. He thought it a very proper plan. And now, as you go to London on Monday, I shall not see you again till this appointment is arranged—probably some time next week. But I want to say that I hope everything will turn out well, and just as you would wish it. And if I can do anything more to help, you may be sure I will.'

In spite of her discomfort, she had never liked him so well as she did then, when he said 'Good-bye' on the threshold and passed on into the conservatory. The natures of the two were as the poles asunder, and she had always known it; but for some three years he had loomed large in her field of vision, and it was a field singularly bare of promise. In such an environment, and with Mrs Hellier for a house-companion, even a girl of very high ideals might well be driven to welcome the best that offered.

As she turned back to the garden, Garland joined Mrs Hellier in the drawing-room to take his leave. That lady was expecting a visitor.

'I think it is all right,' he said. 'I have brought her to look at the matter reasonably.'

'You are exceedingly tactful,' said Mrs Hellier with a grim smile. 'I had little hope that she would consent to be present—though I fully intended that she should.'

'She will now fall in, I believe, with the arrangement. I should not think it necessary, however, to tell her of my share in it.'

'I will tell her nothing. Indeed, I say as little to her as possible. Seeing that I have acted solely in her interests throughout, I consider that her attitude is most ungrateful and unbecoming.'

Garland was careful not to smile. He would have liked to secure a stronger assurance of the lady's discretion in regard to his own share in the arrangement; but there was no time, a ring at the door-bell just then announcing the expected visitor.

'Very good,' he said cordially. 'Then I may expect a note from you when you have made the appointment with the Premier? And you may depend upon my presence, if it is at all possible. I hope—indeed, I feel sure—that everything will turn out well.'

Mrs Hellier smiled slightly. In spite of his prosperity, in spite of the fact that he was on one of her parochial committees, and the only man in the place whom she had been brought to regard favourably as a suitor for her niece's hand (a result which he had secured by the exercise of infinite tact and patience), she could never forget that he was not of her caste. His father had been only a small maltster, and Garland himself had been one of David Morgan's class-fellows. By sheer ability he had lifted himself out of the ruck, and might claim to

have passed from the street to the other side of the great gray walls; but still——

'I shall not forget,' she said. 'You shall have a letter or a telegram as soon as I hear. And I am sure you have taken a deal of trouble in this unpleasant business. Good afternoon.'

With this grudging acknowledgment he left; but he was well content as he passed down the street. He knew Mrs Hellier thoroughly, and she amused as much as she irritated him. In the present instance he had laid all his plans well, and they were working towards success; therefore he could afford to be satisfied.

'It will settle the fellow,' he said under his breath, 'whether he comes or stays away. And when he is gone I shall have no difficulty with the girl. I ought to have spoken earlier, of course; I have actually lost a couple of years because I was afraid to throw myself away. But who could have expected him to turn up; and who would have dreamed that even if he did turn up she would as much as look at him? It is astounding! But I think, my dear Morgan, it is all arranged now. We will settle the old score and the new one at the same time.'

He shook himself free from the discomfiture which had lingered about him since he had first seen Miss Vicars and Morgan together on the evening of their walk to the Mill. It had been an unpleasant shock, and had rudely roused him from his dream of security. Since that moment, however, he had laboured to some effect to put things right.

'It is bad to have a past,' he moralised, 'especially if one comes into conflict with a man like myself. And a past is a thing you can't leave behind you in Australia. And as for you, Miss Alison, it will do you no harm to have to look foolish before strangers—and before me. You will be humbler after.' And with a contented smile he turned into the Cathedral Close.

In the meantime Miss Vicars had returned to her seat under the Canonry wall in a thoroughly dejected state of mind. A conversation with Garland always left this simple-hearted girl dissatisfied, and in the present case her sense of gratitude did not long survive his departure. It was all so straight and reasonable and plausible, this meeting before an arbitrator; but why all this care and circumstance? It was not to prove Morgan's innocence, because he did not believe him innocent; it was not to convince Mrs Hellier of his guilt, for she was convinced already. It must be to convince her, Alison, which was not an object to be grateful for. But it seemed to be going a long way round to attain even that object; Mrs Hellier would never have condescended to treat with the colonist for such an end as that. No; there was some other end in view, and she could not discern it. Indeed, she could not discern anything clearly, but was only conscious of ulterior motives in a web of anger and suspicion and shame. She was not aware, of course, of Mrs Hellier's correspondence with Morgan, and of its influence in throwing that lady open to Garland's suggestions; and it could not suggest itself to her that her own humiliation was one of the results to be sought for.

Shame—that was the prevailing atmosphere of this bewildering business. Since the day of discovery she had been treated like a criminal or an evil-minded child—confined to the house and the garden unless she went out with her aunt, and always watched with the jealous eyes of suspicion and resentment. No day had passed without some cruel reference to the man who had caused all this trouble, some fresh presentment of his supposed designs, some new hint as to the blackness of his record and the low quality of his intellect. It was no wonder that her wretchedness had increased daily, until at last she had ceased to reply to the woman's gibes, and had tried to find relief in solitary thought.

But when she began to think, she only saw that there was no kind of compensation in this absurd and wretched affair—not even a gleam of the romantic to set against its ridiculous sordidness. She had not seen him since, and had heard nothing about him but evil; and inevitably she had begun to include him at last in the circle of her indignation and resentment. Mrs Hellier's stream of invective, Lewis Garland's regretful admissions and excuses, had not been without their natural influence. The colonist, she felt, had not behaved well, even if his record were clean and his intentions the most innocent; but a man who dressed as he dressed could hardly be expected to do better. In some ways he was an agreeable companion; but he must be lacking in the finer feelings. Otherwise—— No, there was nothing in this history that could be regarded with pleasure or even pleasurable guilt.

She sat with her hands clasped listlessly, nursing her resentment and bewilderment, with a face, no doubt, cheerless and bitter enough; but suddenly a sound startled her, breaking abruptly upon the quiet of the high-walled garden. Close by, only just above her, a window was being opened, the lower sash slowly rising. It was one of the two Canonry windows, and she recollected at once that the decorators were in the house. They were apparently in that room, and were about to intrude upon her privacy.

She prepared to rise and move away. But then two hands appeared, resting upon the window-ledge. They were followed by a man's head, somewhat familiar in spite of the absence of its usual covering. And a voice spoke insinuatingly.

'Excuse me, miss'——

Miss Vicars was breathless. She rose.

'Don't be alarmed,' said David Morgan. 'It's only me. No, you needn't look towards the house. Your aunt has a visitor; I saw her go in, and they are both busy by this time. I'll look out sharp for the first sign of danger. We must do what we can, you know, to prevent the Scandal from becoming more scandalous. Eh, miss?'

He looked down upon her, smiling, the same winning frankness in the voice, the same straight, open glance; but also, alas! the same offending wristbands, the same ill-cut suit of cheap tweeds. She did not know what to do—whether to regard him as a friend or as an enemy.

'I am afraid I must explain,' he proceeded in a confidential tone that went far to disarm her resentment. By this time he was leaning comfortably on his elbows, only a few feet above her head. 'I don't usually seek an interview in this fashion, you know. But I have called twice at the house, only to find everybody "not at home." Then I wrote twice, with much the same result; that is to say, my first letter received no answer, and the second avoided the whole question by asking whether I could keep an appointment with your aunt in London. I hope to do that; but it was very necessary that I should have a talk with you first, and so I had to find some way of getting it.'

'You called at the house—and wrote?' said Alison indignantly.

'Indeed I did.'

Her resentment and distrust faded away. She saw that she had misjudged him, and also that she had been kept in the dark.

And he went on good-humouredly: 'So I got hold of the man who is going to paint this room, and arranged to carry his materials in. It was a task of some difficulty, I can tell you. He is a timid, fearful kind of chap. That was why I remembered him.'

'Remembered him?'

'Just so. He is the man—or boy—whose signature on the sycamore-tree was cut into by Lewis Garland. I fixed him, as soon as we began to talk together, as the very same chap. And that's why I am here now.'

I am a little ashamed to say that Miss Vicars' first embarrassment had vanished. Somehow there was the wine of new life in this frank, friendly, and most unconventional talk. She felt eager to listen—eager, poor, simple girl, to be persuaded. And she was comforted, too, as some poor prisoner may be when he has received a secret message of hope from some powerful friend outside.

'He told me,' said Morgan, 'that it was as much as his place was worth. I offered him a better place in Kingsland and his passage over; but, somehow, he didn't take to it. He's used to Hexminster and everything in it—even these high walls. He said he'd never feel at home in a place where there was no Bishop and Dean and Chapter, and no aristocracy; so I had to give up trying to bribe him. But then I remembered who he was, and reminded him of the day when I had offered to fight Lewis Garland for cutting out his name. Somehow that fetched him, and he gave in at once. It's often hard to know what sort of argument is going to win a man over. That's why it's well to have a few in reserve. See?'

The man had brought his atmosphere with him, an atmosphere of Highland breeze and free sunshine. Alison found herself smiling at him.

'Well,' he went on, 'I'm not going to say much about the past, except that I'm sorry there's been such a to-do. I couldn't guess that your aunt would prove quite such a dragon, or that she would get hold of queer stories about me, or that she would have such views about low-class persons. You see, in the other half of the world we don't lay so much on those things, and I had rather forgotten. Somehow I had quite forgotten, too, that she would be bound to take me for a fortune-hunter. On the whole, I can't blame her for that.'

She could smile at it all now—she could not help smiling. He was so whimsically penitent, and his boyish talk had such an effect of putting all this absurd business into its proper place. Nor had she ever before heard her little fortune referred to in such an off-hand way; it seemed to relegate her unhappy two thousand, for the first time, to a rear place in her life.

'Anyway,' he went on, 'since she *is* a dragon, I suppose we must regard her as such. And it seems that she has imprisoned the Princess between these high walls, so that no one can get at her. Now I wonder what the Princess would say if a person—we won't call him a Prince—came along and offered to take her out. Eh, miss?'

Alison did not know whether or not she was intended to laugh. She answered cautiously, after a considerable pause, 'Much would depend upon the person who came.'

'That's very neat,' said the rough-hewn colonist. 'Let us suppose, then, that the person who came was no grand Prince at all, but only a very rough sort of poor man's son. Would she refuse to listen because of that, and prefer to stay in the garden?'

This time she had no answer to give. There was certainly a vein of seriousness in his question, and it confused her. But he did not expect a reply, and leaned out of the window a little farther.

*(To be continued.)*

# A FINANCIAL CRISIS IN ANGLO-INDIA.

By A. G. Throssell.

ONCE upon a time India was the fairy-land of commercial romance, its streets more thickly paved with gold than any outside the realm of dreams. The adventurer who braved the six months' voyage round the Cape and the perils and discomforts of exile in a tropical and unhealthy climate was quickly and abundantly repaid. Provided he kept alive, he shook the 'pagoda-tree' to such purpose that he had a fortune to take back with him after a few years. Even after the extinction of the East India Company and all its ways, every one who went out to business firms there expected to have plenty of money during his stay, and to be able to retire while still comparatively young with a very comfortable provision for the remainder of his life. But now the picture is altered in almost every detail. Not only are profits smaller and promotion slower and less a matter of course, so that the retiring age comes much later, but the halcyon days of Anglo-Indian life, when all could afford to lighten their exile with every luxury they had a mind for and which money could buy, are gone, never to return. In Calcutta and Bombay, and to a less extent in Madras and Allahabad, the newly arrived assistant and the young Benedick are really hard put to it to maintain that state of life which the hard-dying custom of past and happier generations has ordained for them.

So much has the cost of living increased. In the days before the Government fixed the value of the rupee at one shilling and fourpence, Anglo-Indians with inflexible salaries suffered heavily by its continued depreciations; but the worst trials of that period were not so bad as those which have been experienced since. While the rupee fell from two shillings to one and twopence, the fall was mainly only felt when pensions or remittances had to be converted into sterling. Now the rupee is as good in England as it makes out to be in India; but that advantage is more than outweighed by the fact that, as far as its purchasing power in India is concerned, it is worth scarcely half what it was forty years ago. There are few things which have not doubled in price in that period, and there are some which have more than doubled. The rise, which still continues, has been so alarming that an official inquiry has been demanded, and so general as to suggest an excessive output from the Mints rather than a change in the relations of demand and supply. But whatever the ultimate cause, the effect for the poor Anglo-Indian is the same. He has to pay twice as much for food and servants, and more than twice as much for house-rent, as his predecessors in 1870, all out of a salary that is not an anna higher than was theirs. Salaries, and profits (on which in the long-run salaries must depend), have in fact alone failed to share in the balloon-like tendency. The ryot has gained more than he has lost by higher prices (witness the fact, as evidence of his higher standard of comfort, that he now indulges in the luxury of an umbrella), the coolie gets higher wages, so do the babus and Parsee clerks of Calcutta and Bombay. Wage-earning India has more money to meet the increased cost of living; salaried and profit-earning Anglo-India has not.

Fortunately for that class, it has a large stock of reserve strength, just as the Esquimaux subsist on their own accumulated blubber when extraneous supplies fail. In the days of prosperity, when the rupee, like the dollar that Washington threw across the Potomac River, 'went farther,' the Anglo-Indian spared no expense to make his existence as luxurious and pleasurable as possible. From the day when he drew his first month's pay he was able to live on the best procurable food, keep as many servants as he could find work for, ride a horse, drive another, and perhaps keep a couple of ponies for polo, join every club that he fancied, and generally get every comfort and amusement that was then to be had. It is not necessary to go back to the time of the old '*Qui hais*' to find this opulent style of living. It lasted in almost all its pristine glory until a very few years ago, and the economic history of the European in the capital cities during the last ten or twenty years is nothing but the simple and affecting story of his struggles to maintain the old style on a fast-depreciating salary.

No doubt a sternly practical and common-sense community would in such circumstances have cut its coat according to its cloth, and made no fuss about it. But Anglo-India lives by tradition and custom, and its life follows an unvarying course through succeeding generations. It begins at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, when the youth is sent out to a business firm with a salary of two hundred and forty pounds (rarely two hundred and eighty pounds) a year. He starts on just the same terms as all his predecessors, and he expects, like them, to become in due time a partner in the firm and eventually to retire on his savings somewhere about the age of fifty-five. Naturally, therefore, the new arrival fails to see any reason why he should not have just as good a time as those who came out a year or two before him. Fresh from the 'varsity, as he is, or from an office at home where his salary probably was considerably less than half two hundred and forty pounds a year, his inclinations and the experience of others, both pointing the same way, are not easily overruled by one hard but slow-to-be-discovered fact that the price of almost everything he must have and everything he wants to have is steadily and inexorably rising. If he were ideally wise he

would wait until his fourth or fifth year, when his salary in the usual course will have risen to a point fairly equal to bearing the strain; but if he does not keep a horse and 'tum-tum,' belong to the usual clubs, and live in a house to which he can invite his friends without apologies, he feels, and actually is, out of it; for even Calcutta is but a small and self-contained community, and Bombay, Madras, and other places are the same, only more so.

Ten years ago the young assistant was able, with care, to do all these things on his commencing salary. By his fifth year he was comfortably off, and a year or two later he began to contemplate matrimony as within the bounds of financial possibility. To-day horses and clubs and a good house are managed only by running pretty heavily into debt, while marriage cannot be thought of until after eight or nine years have been passed. It is a sad and solemn fact, but 'you may grave it on his tombstone, you may write it on his card—a young man married' in Calcutta under thirty is either exceptionally lucky or badly marred in financial stability.

Such is the situation now in the two capital cities. Elsewhere the stringency is not so acute, because high house-rent, which is the heaviest weight in the Calcutta and Bombay scales, is unknown. Rents are, indeed, rising everywhere, like everything else. In Madras, for instance, the day is gone when two neighbours, each paying about sixty pounds a year rent, could make a useful golf-links out of their united compounds; but as yet it is only in the capitals that rents are really high. There they would astonish the householder in a good residential part of London. So great is the demand for house-room, and so restricted the supply, owing to the determination at any cost to live in the fashionable quarter—or, to put it more kindly, within reach of one's hosts and one's guests—that the problem has become a perfect nightmare. A municipal committee sat on it last year, and Government has been asked to 'do something;' practical people have erected more hotels and boarding-houses, compounds have been cut down to nothing and two houses built where one stood before, co-operative societies have been formed to build houses and flats on a philanthropy-at-five-per-cent. basis, and still rents go merrily up. To-day a house of seven rooms, with servants' quarters and stabling, cannot be had for less than three hundred and twenty-five rupees a month, or two hundred and sixty pounds a year. That, too, is for a three-years' lease; for the cold weather alone, when Government officials and other happy sojourners in the Hills descend for the season, the price may be one thousand rupees a month. Three years ago the rent of such a house was twenty pounds or forty pounds a year less; three years hence, to all appearances, it will be forty pounds or sixty pounds more.

Similar, though less obvious to the unobservant, has been the rise in prices of food and servants; and some astonishment was caused by the publication last year of figures showing that they had doubled within the last forty years. It may not seem, of course, very much even now to have to pay a pound or twenty-six shillings a month for a cook, and fourteen to sixteen shillings for a butler or valet, especially as they find their own food; but then the ordinary Anglo-Indian household fancies itself unable to exist with less than a dozen servants, besides a groom for each horse. That was all very well in the last generation. The point for the present and future generations is that, either in a boarding-house or as partner with four or five others in a 'chummery,' the bare cost of living for the most economical dweller in Calcutta or Bombay is two hundred rupees a month. That deducted from the new arrival's salary of three hundred rupees a month does not leave much for clothes and incidental expenses, not to mention club subscriptions and horse-keep—the latter alone is now fifty rupees a month, having very nearly doubled in five short years. The odds are overwhelming, but the only part of his position the defender has yet abandoned is that he admits the necessity of postponing polo and marriage to a slightly later period of his stay. He still refuses to admit that he can and ought to do without a horse and clubs on his commencing salary. Inevitably the result is that he runs into debt, from which he does not free himself for years. And, curiously enough, the business firms actually encourage this extravagance by allowing and even advising each new assistant on his arrival to overdraw his salary. They argue that it is nice to see their men enjoying themselves, and that the social standing of the house should be maintained.

But this is a vicious device, which, moreover, cannot do duty much longer, for prices show no signs of falling or even of remaining stationary. If the firms were wise they would stop this pledging of the future now. If they do not, they will in a few years be compelled to do so by the size of the overdrafts and the slowness of repayment. Then the last support of the young assistant on the pinnacle on which he cannot now balance himself unaided will be removed, and a radical alteration in his position must follow. In an ideal world the salaries would have kept regular pace with the advancing cost of living; but, as has been stated, in India they have not. And now an extra fifty rupees a month all round would scarcely relieve the assistants, while its effects on the profits of a firm employing twenty to forty Europeans would be too awful for any *burra sahib* to contemplate. Profits, again, are themselves suffering severely from increased competition. Had Anglo-India in the past realised the situation and acted accordingly there would be no hardships to face now. Because they refused to accept circumstances, and maintained the same scale of living as their more fortunate predecessors in spite of debt and prospects of permanent insolvency, the general cutting-down of expenses which must soon ensue will, to the sufferers, seem a real and a severe hardship. Unless some sort of miracle

happens in the meantime, no young man going out to Calcutta or Bombay a year or so hence will be able to keep a horse, or join the more expensive clubs, or live in the present height of domestic luxury for some years after his arrival, and he will feel himself poor and very badly used.

A gradual descent from the height of luxury would have been less trying for another reason. In the period discussed the conditions of life have materially improved. The old stagers had some excuse for their extravagance in the heat and deadliness of the climate and the rarity of visits Home. Now electric light and fans and artificial ice discount the worst of the heat, good sanitation has made the cities unusually healthy for the tropics, fast steamers and the Suez Canal make a trip Home obtainable every three or five years. Former generations regarded their luxury and distractions as compensation for their discomforts and hardships. Since these have been so materially lessened their successors have need for fewer compensations; and though they have now to 'moderate their transports' considerably, they will still find themselves better off in almost everything that makes life pleasant than they would have been if they had stayed in a business office in Britain.

# PETER, PAYING GUEST.

## CHAPTER II.

MAJOR CARPIERS awoke next morning with a start and looked round his room. The sun was pouring in through the far window, and the chintz curtains, with their old-fashioned patterns of roses and peacocks, were fluttering in the spring breeze. In the garden below he could hear a fresh, girlish voice lilting an old refrain; and he smiled as he thought of the singer and her discomfiture of the previous day.

'Evidently the "future Mrs Carpiers" is shy,' he said to himself. 'She hardly utters a word when in my company, and that is just as well; her attentions being nipped in the bud will not interfere with my holiday. She is bound to be a bore. Most young girls are; and this one never has had the chance of seeing anything, living as she does at the back of God speed.' He dressed hurriedly and went downstairs. Never for a moment did he think of pitying the girl for the dreariness of her life. She had made a thoroughly bad impression at the start, and Major Carpiers was one of those men—not uncommon at all—who are too lazy to reverse their first verdict on a woman unless circumstances force them to do so.

Biddy was crossing the hall as he descended. She held a large bowl of narcissus in her hand, and, preceding him into the dining-room, set it in the middle of the table.

'Coffee, Major Carpiers?'

'Please. Are we to breakfast alone?'

'You are. Mother never appears till midday, and Terry and I are up and out before seven.' She went round the table, attending to his wants.

'Oh, I say, you make me feel quite nervous waiting on me like this!' He half-rose as he spoke.

'Sit still, Major Carpiers; there is no one else to do it. At this hour the girl has gone to feed the pigs.' She said it with an air of innocence; but he glanced at her sharply, wondering if she intended to draw a parallel between the housemaid's occupation and her own. Her manner, polite and distant, seemed to imply that the tasks might possibly be equally distasteful.

'Are you going to fish to-day?'

'I am not quite sure yet.'

'You might please let me know as soon as you decide, as I must send for Pat; also, if you wish to take out lunch.'

'Something depends on the hour of the post. I may have to write letters.'

'The post will be here directly; in fact, he is a little late now.'

'And when does it go out?'

'About four.'

The Major continued his meal in silence, while Biddy went to look out of the window. 'Ah, there he is at last!'

A tall, bent old man appeared in the avenue; and, opening the French window, the girl went to meet him. 'Any letters, Anthony?'

'Ay, a good few.'

He began emptying his wallet, all the time carrying on a brisk conversation, every word of which was audible indoors. After a while he paused a moment, scratched his head, and addressed the girl confidentially.

'I say, Miss Bridget, have ye got e'er a spare pair av bags on ye? I'm all in ribbons.' He glanced down at his nether garments.

The girl looked at him, dumfounded; then, seeing the humour of the situation, she burst into a peal of laughter. 'Oh, Anthony, Anthony, you are too funny for words! I'll see if Master Terence can give you an old pair. Such a question to ask a young lady!'

'I'm sorry, miss. Sure, I meant no harm.'

'No, I'm certain you didn't; but I'm not such a new woman as that.'

'There's no tellin' what the women are comin' to these days,' with a shake of his head. 'They say down in the village that they're tryin' to shut the public-houses on us; but I'm thinkin' t' House av Commons will have a word to say to that. Well, good-

day to ye, miss.' He shouldered his knapsack and shuffled away.

'Here are your letters, Major Carpiers.' She laid them on the table.

'What an odd character this local postman seems to be!'

'Oh, Anthony is not the postman; we pay him to bring the letters down from the lodge. He is simple, poor creature—Mad Anthony they call him. The postman is a very superior person—quite the official.'

She stood hesitating a moment. 'Well, if you don't want any more coffee, I'll leave you to finish your breakfast. Be sure and ring if you wish Pat to go out with you.' She disappeared through the open window.

The Major lifted his letters and stepped out on to the gravel. There was a wooden bench near the house, on which he sat to read his correspondence. The contents of the post-bag did not seem to bring him any pleasure. On the contrary, he sighed wearily, and sat staring straight in front of him with unseeing eyes. He was so absorbed in his own gloomy thoughts that he hardly heard a patter of feet on the drive, till he looked up to find that Mad Anthony had returned and was standing before him.

'Beg pardon, yer honour.'

'Yes, my good man?'

'I'm in a bit av a quandary, yer honour. I did not like to be troublin' Miss Bridget. Sure, she has some quare notions, an', like all the women, is fond av scoldin'. But maybe ye'd say a word to the pollis-inspector for me?'

'Oh, I don't know the inspector; I never even heard his name.'

'Clancy, yer honour; an' sure it 'u'd be easy for ye to get to know him.' He spoke with an insinuating drawl.

'But I'm a total stranger; the inspector would not mind a syllable I said.'

'Faith, and then he would, sir; they think a lot av a stranger in these parts. Sure, Miss Bridget, the cr'atur', she's begged me off that often he doesn't mind a word she says now.'

'So that's how the land lies, is it? Well, what have you done this time? A drop too much?'

'Worse nor that, yer honour; and yet I'd no more idea av harm than the babe unborn.'

'Suppose you tell me what it was?'

'Well, ye know, sir, it's about these ould-age pensions. It seems they keep them back till yer sevinty, an' I'm that—ay, an' over—yer honour. Pat Flaherty had a notion as how he'd like to get one; so he settled it with me, an' he got it right enough. Well, to make a long story short, yer honour, he had taken a sup, an' he tould the whole av it in the public-house the other night, an' Tom Conneely the pollisman sittin' an' listenin'.'

'Told what story, my good man?'

'How he got an ould Alibi from the mountains, who went before the Pension Committee in his name, yer honour.'

'So that's what you did, you old ruffian?'

'What else, yer honour? An' they do be sayin' in the village that the bobbies is out after me. I'll have to take to the hills unless you would say a good word for me to the inspector.' His voice shook with excitement.

The Major burst out laughing. 'Well, of all the dodges!' he said. 'I'll do what I can for you, but you richly deserve some punishment. However, I'll go and see the inspector. Not that I think it will do much good, anyhow.'

'The blessin' av God Almighty be on yer honour! May the'——

'There, there, my good man! Can't you see I'm busy?' He lifted his neglected letters as a hint.

'Whatever ye do, don't be havin' any words with Miss Clancy, yer honour—Miss Jane, I mean. She's that set ag'in me this month back she'd get the brother to run me in out av contrairiness.'

'Why, how did you offend her, Anthony?'

'She's a fine woman is Miss Jane—a fine, big figure of a girl—an' how was I to know she was ashamed av her size? Well, I met her in the village, sir. "The Lord bless ye, Miss Clancy, ye fill the road!" sez I; an' with that the boys set up a laugh. She had an Englishman with her, an' she gave me a look both sour an' bitter. I could see she was vexed in herself.'

Major Carpiers smothered a laugh. 'Oh, I'll avoid Miss Jane; I promise you that,' he said.

Mad Anthony drew a little nearer with an air of desperate mystery. 'Maybe for a few civil words from yerself she'd be speakin' up for me. Ye are the fine, upstandin' gentleman, sir, an' I'm not sayin' that to flatter ye.'

'Oh, go on, Anthony! you won't come round me that way.'

'Well, I'm grateful to ye, yer honour. Ye'll be sure an' see Miss Clancy yerself; it's our best chantz.' Confidentially, 'I'd as soon stan' an' whistle to a milestone as speak to the D.-I. meself. It's too well he knows me intirely.' So saying, he departed.

'I suppose I'd better try to find this Clancy before lunch. I wish I had not been so good-natured as to interfere on behalf of the old reprobate at all. I wonder if he is within a walking distance? Anyway, I must go and ask.' Rising, he wandered round the side of the house, a little vexed at having let himself in for such a task, and wondering if Bridget would laugh at him when he asked her the way to the inspector's abode.

He went into the yard at the back, and looked about to find Bridget. She was standing at the door of an outhouse, a large brush in one hand, and the shoe she was trying to clean in the other. On seeing him she flushed crimson with annoyance, but continued her task, seemingly oblivious of the fact that her face was traversed by a dirty smudge.

'Oh Miss Bridget, I want you to direct me to Mr Clancy, the district-inspector,' he began. Then he

added abruptly, 'Surely it is not my shoes you are cleaning?'

'Deed, then, it is.'

'Oh, I cannot allow such a thing!' greatly horrified.

'I don't usually blacken the boots,' said Bridget with a sarcastic laugh; 'but the stupid girl never saw yellow shoes before, and she has blackened yours. I'm afraid she has utterly ruined them. I've been half-an-hour trying to get the stuff off, but in vain. I'm awfully sorry about it.' He saw that tears of vexation stood in her eyes, and wondered at the rapid transition in her moods.

'Miss Blake, as if it mattered! I really cannot bear to see you distressed. I'd far rather wear them as they are than see you bother over them.'

'You oughtn't to see it at all,' stiffly. 'You have no particular reason to come into the scullery.'

'I apologise. I know I am wrong. Now, do lay it down; you must not clean my boots.'

'I am not cleaning *your* boots,' with an emphasis on the pronoun; 'I'm cleaning the boots of our "paying guest," which is a very different matter, I can assure you.'

'Why do you dislike me so, Miss Bridget?' in crestfallen tones, for suddenly a desire seized him to stand well with the girl. 'Everything I say seems to give offence.'

The girl smiled at him for the first time, and in spite of the smears of black on her cheek he thought her very winning. 'I don't mean to be nasty; but I've a horrid temper, and I hate being caught—that's the truth. Besides, I'm doing this menial work out of no liking for you. You know quite well I'd never go out of my way to oblige you—as an acquaintance, I mean; as a lodger, I feel prepared to lick your very boots.'

'Miss Blake, what a very original way to word it! And why wouldn't you go out of your way to oblige me?'

She flushed and looked uneasy. 'Because you are laughing at me all the time in that superior English way of yours. That's the reason, if you want to know.'

'I'm not laughing at you. I feel quite sorry for you.'

'Well, that's worse. Don't you know that in Ireland we hate ridicule, and we have a great deal of false pride? I ought to be above caring what you think of me, and because I'm not strong-minded enough it makes me cross.'

'I may not even be sorry that you have to work so hard?'

'I haven't to. I could sit in the drawing-room with my hands folded and let the whole place go to rack and ruin.'

'Well, to return to what we were discussing: am I so superior, or so very English either, Miss Blake?' His eyes twinkled. 'After all, my mother was an Irishwoman; she was a Daly of Dunlaughlin, only I was afraid to say it after the way I distinguished myself to your mother yesterday. We are distant cousins, I suppose.'

The girl laid down her brushes and burst into a peal of laughter so infectious that he found himself smiling in sympathy. All her stiffness vanished, and she turned to him frankly. 'I have been a silly! You must have been laughing at me all the time, and with cause. Look, I've finished this shoe, and got it quite right. Suppose you help me with the other, instead of standing there wasting my time and your own?'

When Terry came into the yard some half-hour later he was surprised to find the Major sitting on an upturned box helping his sister to clean shoes; and, what was more astonishing, he actually seemed to enjoy the task!

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### CHAPTER III.

URING the next three weeks the Major settled down into the life at Ballyboy in a most wonderful way, becoming quite like one of the family. Mrs Blake, on learning that he claimed descent from the same august source as herself, took him into immediate favour. Terry was glad of his company, and the country-folk adopted him entirely. His kindness to Anthony, and the fact that he had himself paid the fine inflicted on the 'innicent,' was an immediate passport with all the neighbourhood. Bridget and he were firm friends by now, the awkwardness of their introduction seemed forgotten, and every day added to his admiration of her. She was a fine character, reliable, helpful, just everybody's 'right hand.' Accustomed as he was to languid Anglo-Indian women, he could only compare her freshness and vigour to the breezes blowing over her own native boglands—sweet and bracing. The inevitable was happening; and he was fast losing his heart, though as yet he did not guess it. To-day she had offered to row for him while he fished, for Pat was away at a fair. When they reached the lake and got into the boat, Major Carpiers shoved off, remarking, 'I'm afraid the day is too bright.' The girl paddled to the spot from whence they generally started to drift, and, leaning on her oars, waited for the sky to cloud.

'What a glorious day! How lovely it all is, and how I shall hate to leave it!'

'Leave it, Miss Bridget?' startled. 'Surely you are not thinking of going away?'

'Yes; next winter I shall try and do something for myself.'

'Can you be spared here?'

'Yes; but I forgot I did not tell you. Two very important letters arrived this morning. Honor is going to be married to a Captain Bacon in September; and my brother-in-law's regiment has been ordered to a very hot station in India, so that my other sister writes that she will spend the next year or two with mother, as the children could not stand the

great heat out there. It seems a good time for me to go and try to add to the family exchequer.'

'Do you know, Miss Bridget, I was just talking to Terry this morning about buying a strip of land and settling here; and now you are going away!'

'Yes; but that has nothing to do with it,' colouring, for his regretful tone made her vaguely uncomfortable. After a pause which did not restore her self-possession, but rather made her feel shyer than before, if possible, she broke into conversation once more. 'How lovely it all is!'

The lake was very blue and fringed with stunted hawthorn-bushes, a mass of white foam; here and there an almond-tree raised rosy branches against the rocky background of the mountain-side, while a wreath of blue turf-smoke hung over the little cabin in the fold of the hills.

'Miss Bridget, may I tell you something about myself?' He laid down his rod.

'Certainly,' rather nervously.

'I am in a very odd position. I came to Ireland to try to get away from my difficulties, but I have only added other complications.'

'I have noticed that your letters often worry you.'

'I must go back to talk of the past. When I first joined the regiment my cousin was second in command. He had a very pretty wife, much younger than himself. We became great friends.'

'Yes?'

'She posed as a neglected wife. I was not experienced enough to see that it was nearly all pose; I was a callow youth then, and flirted a little—very mildly, very harmlessly—with her, chiefly because she seemed to expect it. Are you listening, Miss Bridget?'

'Yes,' listlessly dragging her hand through the water and watching the drops as they ran between her fingers—'yes; go on.'

'They had two little girls, but no son, which was a pity. I should say that my cousin was Lord Carpiers, and that I was his heir. Well, three months ago he died, and I am in a terrible fix. You see, if Milly's expected child is a boy I get nothing, neither title nor property; if it should be another girl, I am, in a way, bound to look after the mother, for she will be left practically penniless. With the sort of woman Milly is, there is only one way to do this: I shall have to marry her. She has let me see she quite counts on that. It is a hard case.'

'I don't see that at all,' said Biddy with stiff lips, hoping he might not detect the effort of her speech.

He turned very pale. 'It is hard on me because, for the first time in my life, I've fallen seriously in love with another woman. I simply cannot go back to Milly; and yet if she is left destitute and I deprive her of everything, what can I do?'

'Did you ever really love her, that you can speak so of her now?' She could not hide the jealousy in her voice.

He grew even paler. 'No, never; I swear it!'

'Well, I don't see what is to be done. Why do you ask me?' said she miserably. 'Where were you thinking of building your fishing-lodge?' Anything to change a conversation which was trying her endurance too far. She cared horribly, and two weeks ago she hardly knew the man and would not have minded a jot. Now every word gave her a fresh stab.

'There,' pointing to where a tiny stream ran into the lake; 'there—that is, if ever I do build it. I would only wish to settle here if I were free.'

A skiff of cloud obscured the sun, and the girl lifted her oars. 'Better try a few casts now; there is a nice breeze.'

He shook his head. 'Aren't you rather cruel to ask me to fish just now?'

'Lady Carpiers,' said Biddy suddenly—'she cares for you?'

'Not a bit; but if I'm worth the marrying she means to do it. From her letters I can see that much.'

'Perhaps you are mistaken.'

'I know Milly too well for that.'

'In either way you stand to lose'—she spoke a little hoarsely—'to lose either your freedom or your succession. Which would you prefer?'

'I do not think you need to ask that, Miss Bridget. But I ought not to trouble you with my worries; I never meant to.'

'I'm very glad you told me,' she answered gravely, 'whatever way it turns out, Major Carpiers. And if you are not going to fish, suppose we go home? There is Mad Anthony gesticulating on the bank; I wonder what on earth he wants, and if he has got into any more mischief.'

She ran the boat alongside the little jetty as she spoke, and the Major sprang ashore, leaving her behind. In a flash he was back again, a yellow envelope in his hand. Anthony had vanished.

'Will you open it?' he said breathlessly. 'It may mean life or death to me.'

She drew back. 'I cannot.'

'I'm afraid; that 's the truth, Bridget. It matters so very much.'

She took it from him and did as he asked. 'I hope you won't be very disappointed,' she said with a faint smile; 'but'——

'Yes?'

'You've lost the inheritance, I'm afraid.'

'Thank Heaven!'

His relief was genuine. Biddy felt a strange lifting of heart. 'Most men would not say that.'

'Most men have not so much at stake, Bridget. Aren't you going to make up this loss to me? Do not pretend to misunderstand me. I have loved you from nearly the first. When may I begin to build my—our house?'

She had meant to tease and tantalise him. Before the pleading in his eyes her own fell, and she answered timidly enough, 'Whenever you like.

After all, I said I was going to marry you. I wonder you have anything to say to an unmaidenly girl like me.'

'My dearest'—catching her in his arms and parodying words she had once used to himself—'as a mere acquaintance I might never have done it; but as your paying guest I have changed my mind—or, rather, you have done it for me.'

And with that she was content.

THE END.

# GHENT DURING THE HUNDRED DAYS.

By G. W. T. OMOND.

A TALK one morning last summer with the Comte de Bouisies, whose charming old mansion in the Rue des Champs at Ghent was the refuge of Louis XVIII. during the Waterloo campaign, suggested that some account of the king's flight from France and sojourn in Belgium, after the return of Napoleon from Elba, might be of interest. Two admirably written books, Monsieur Gilbert Stenger's *Return of Louis XVIII.* and *The Bourbon Restoration*, by Major Hall, both include the period of the Hundred Days; and to these works, together with Monsieur Houssaye's well-known *1815*, the reader may turn for more information about the Court of France at that time than can be given within the limits of a single article.

On the evening of March 5, 1815, Louis XVIII. was lying on a sofa in the Tuileries. The old king was now enormously fat. His legs were swollen, and his feet were so painful from the gout that he could hardly bear the pressure of the old slippers which he always liked to wear. That evening he was suffering more than usual, and groaned when he heard that M. de Vitrolles craved an audience. But the business which had brought the Minister of State to the palace could not be delayed; for he had come to tell the king that Napoleon had left Elba, had been in France for the last five days, and was now on the road to Paris. Such was the magic of Napoleon's name that the population could not be trusted; and Louis, after hesitating for some days, resolved to fly.

The preparations were made secretly. During the evening of March 19 the Duc de Richelieu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was at the palace. The king gave no hint of his departure; but as Richelieu was leaving, the Prince de Poix, Captain of the Bodyguard, whispered to him, 'We start in an hour. The relays are prepared. Meet us at Lille.'

It was a tempestuous night when, as the clocks struck twelve, the king, leaning heavily on the arm of his favourite, the Comte de Blacas, went out into the wind and rain, and was hoisted into his carriage. De Blacas followed, and they were driven out of Paris, guarded by an escort of musketeers and Swiss Guards under the command of 'Monsieur' the Comte d'Artois, brother of the king, and his son the Duc de Berri. The rain was pouring in torrents. The meadows were flooded for mile after mile. The roads, bad at all times, were almost impassable, they were so deep in mud; and it was not till late in the afternoon that they reached Abbeville, where they were to rest for a few hours. By this time the king's gout was worse than ever. He called for his slippers; but the royal trunk had been stolen or lost. The slippers were gone, and the king spent that evening in lamenting them. They were an old pair which had taken the shape of his feet, he said, and could never be replaced.

Two days later Louis reached Lille. The Duc d'Orleans wished the king to remain there; but the garrison was sullen. There were tricolor badges on all sides, Eagles were pulled out of knapsacks, and the fleur-de-lis was nowhere to be seen. So Louis, after consulting De Blacas and Marshals Macdonald and Berthier, made up his mind to cross the frontier into Belgium. Some years before the Comte d'Hane de Steenhuyse had offered the king the use of his house at any time; and Louis now resolved to make Ghent his place of refuge. Marshal Macdonald conducted him to the frontier at Menin; and on March 30 he drove into the capital of East Flanders, where he found the Comte d'Artois and the Duc de Berri awaiting him.

A short distance along the Rue des Champs, the entrance to which is before the ancient Church of St Nicholas, are two old and lofty mansions, which stand opposite each other. That on the right-hand side of the street, a large white building, the flat front of which is pierced by many oblong windows with small leaded panes, is now divided into two parts and numbered. No. 58 is a clothier's shop, and No. 60 is a printer's office. In 1815 it was one private dwelling, in which the Duke of Wellington lived when he had occasion to visit Ghent during the Hundred Days. On the opposite side of the street is No. 61, now the home of the Comte de Bouisies, who married the daughter of Madame Borluut, the direct descendant and representative of the Comte d'Hane de Steenhuyse of 1815.

It was about five o'clock on the evening of March 30 that Louis arrived. The rooms which he occupied are little changed since then; the old furniture still remains—tables, chairs, and sofas of the Louis Quinze period, such as were in common use at that time, but are now becoming every year more rare and costly. The walls of one large reception-room and of two smaller *salons* which open from it are still hung with the same tapestry and paintings by Flemish artists. The floors of Italian inlaid wood remain unaltered. The room in which the king

dined opens on a garden, and is overlooked by a gallery, from which a passage leads to the bedroom in which he slept till the trouble of mounting the staircase proved too much for his unwieldy frame, and he found it more convenient to pass the night in a small room on the ground floor. In this room he had his *petit lever* and *petit coucher* with the same ceremony as at the Tuileries or Versailles.

The king rose at six every morning, and at once dressed for the day. He usually put on a blue coat with small gold epaulets, a white waistcoat, black satin breeches, and boots made of black or red velvet, for his feet were so swollen and tender that he could hardly bear the touch of leather. His hair was curled in front and fastened in a short queue behind. His head and face were copiously powdered. He always wore a sword, and was generally bedecked with a number of orders and ribbons. As soon as he was dressed he went to one of the smaller *salons*, where he read his letters and transacted business for two or three hours. Then came Mass, at home on week-days and in the Cathedral of St Bavon on Sundays. At ten he took breakfast, an enormous meal of many courses, for Louis had the greedy appetite of all the Bourbons. After breakfast he often waddled to the windows which opened on the Rue des Champs, and saluted the people in the street. Some years ago a few old men in Ghent used to describe the crowd before the house, all with white cockades, gazing at the windows, where the French king stood swaying from one leg to the other like some huge animal in a cage. Later in the day, if the weather was fine, he went out in his coach-and-six, drawn by chargers bought in England, 'at a sale of cast horses from the Scots Greys,' says General Mercer, who was then in Ghent. A guard of honour, consisting of English troops, attended him. Sometimes he drove to a squalid little tavern in the suburbs to eat a kind of small white fish which was considered a great dainty at Ghent. At four o'clock there were receptions; and at six came dinner, the chief event of the day.

At dinner the king carved for himself, and consumed enormous helpings of everything. His appetite was insatiable. The Comte d'Hane de Steenhuyse gave a dinner-party one day, at which the king, the story goes, managed to swallow one hundred oysters for dessert. Chateaubriand, who was at Ghent, went to another dinner, when they sat at table from one o'clock till eight. 'They began,' he complained, 'with sweets, and finished with cutlets. The French alone know how to dine with method.' During dinner at the Rue des Champs a military band played in the garden, and on certain days the ladies of Ghent received cards allowing them to stand or walk round the table. Sometimes they went upstairs to watch the king and his courtiers from the gallery, and on these occasions it was the fashion to wear white cockades, which could not be too big. After dinner there was whist or a party to the theatre. Catalani sang both in public and privately to amuse the king; but long before midnight Louis was in bed, the English guards spread their mattresses on the black-and-white marble floor of the vestibule, and the sentinels were posted outside the windows.

At Ghent Louis XVIII. was surrounded, as kings in exile always have been, by Officers of State who had no affairs of State to manage. Chateaubriand posed as Minister of the Interior. Clarke, on whom Napoleon some years before bestowed the title of Duc de Feltre and the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour, had decided that his old master's cause was hopeless, and followed the king to Ghent; he now filled the office of Minister of War. The Foreign Minister was the Marquis de Jaucourt. The portfolio of Education was held by Lally-Tollendal. Among the diplomatists who kept a watchful eye on all that was done in the Rue des Champs, Sir Robert Stewart was prominent as the representative of Great Britain.

In the beginning of April the Duke of Wellington arrived from Vienna; but his headquarters were at Brussels. It is said that when, during his visits to Ghent, he chanced to meet the king in the streets, Louis drove past him with a casual nod. He treated all who served him in the same way. The Comtesse de Boigne's uncle, Edward Dillon, who was in Belgium at this time, complained that he accepted their services with the same carelessness as at the Tuileries. 'An officer in the Life Guards,' Madame de Boigne says, 'told me he had been at Ghent, and had commanded a considerable number of his company who had come together in pure zeal, and that neither he nor they had ever received a word from the king, or had ever been able to discover that he knew of their existence.'

But, in spite of all this arrogance, Louis was fully aware of his danger; and when, on the evening of June 15, he heard that Napoleon had crossed the Belgian frontier, the luggage was packed, and it was arranged that if the French army approached a move should be made to Ostend, and thence to England. Late next day the Duc de Berri, who was now in command of what was called the 'Armée Royale,' a body of some nine hundred troops posted at Alost, came to Ghent, and wished to prepare the town for a siege. It was known that the Prussians had been defeated at Ligny; and the reception-room at the Rue des Champs was crowded with courtiers who implored the king to fly at once. His reply, however, was, 'I'll not go till I'm forced.' Many left without waiting for Louis. Clarke, who, wishing to prepare for the journey to Ostend, went to order post-horses, found that the supply was running short owing to the number of persons who were already on the roads to Brussels or Antwerp.

The news that Wellington was retiring towards Brussels caused intense alarm; but on the famous morning of June 18 it became known that the Prussians had retreated from Ligny in good order, and that Wellington, having repulsed the French at Quatre Bras, was merely retiring in order to effect a junction with Blücher. Louis, however,

was very nervous, and kept his carriage ready for flight.

Chateaubriand was fond of strolling about by himself. He often went to the Béguinage, that 'little world of veiled or wimpled women,' which is one of the great sights of Ghent, where he used to sit and read, and with some of whose quiet inhabitants the author of the *Génie du Christianisme* seems to have made friends. But on Sunday, June 18, he took a walk outside the town with, very appropriately, Cæsar's *De Bello Gallico* for a companion. It was a fine afternoon, and the Flemish labourers were busy in the fields; but Chateaubriand, as he sauntered about, heard the incessant booming of cannon. About six o'clock he was near one of the gates when an orderly galloped up with a despatch from the Duc de Berri. Chateaubriand opened it and read: 'Bonaparte entered Brussels yesterday, June 17, after a bloody battle. The battle is expected to begin again to-day. It is believed that the allies have been completely defeated, and that the order for retreat has been given.' *

When this message was known in Ghent the alarm of the last three days became a panic. The white cockades disappeared suddenly. The Crown jewels, which had been brought from Paris, and all objects of value were packed up and put on wagons. The royal carriages stood in the courtyard of the Rue des Champs with the postillions in the saddle. The king could not hide his agitation, and his terror is said to have given him the use of his legs. He walked about the room, and went to the windows and looked out for a courier with another despatch. The long June evening wore on. The house was full of people coming and going, all anxious and uncertain what to do. Midnight tolled from the belfry. Nobody went to bed. The windows were open, and the people in the street could see the excited groups in the brightly lighted room. At last, between one and two in the morning, a Russian officer rode up to the door, dismounted, and entered the house. The crowd pressed close to the windows and watched. Suddenly they saw every face become joyful, and the whole company within exchanging congratulations.

The story goes that one of those who had been waiting for news instantly slipped away without a word to any one, and in a few minutes was riding at top speed to the coast, where a yacht was ready, in which he crossed to England, and carried the earliest information of the victory to Rothschild in London, who, as is well known, turned the valuable secret to good account on the Stock Exchange.

The despatch which the officer had brought to the Rue des Champs was from Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian diplomatist, who not only told Louis that Napoleon was defeated, but gave him a timely hint. The king, he said, should start at once, and be at Paris as soon as possible if he wished to reign before his place was occupied.

These words were pregnant with meaning; for Pozzo di Borgo knew that the Czar did not love the Bourbons, and must have been aware that in 1814, before the allies marched on Paris, he had secretly tried to prevent their return to the throne of France. As soon as he heard of the victory at Waterloo he sent a letter to Pozzo di Borgo, who was with Wellington, in which he said that in his opinion Louis should await the decision of his fate in Belgium. Pozzo di Borgo, however, though in the Russian service, wished to secure the king's favour. He therefore told Wellington how matters stood, on which the Duke issued a general order in which the sovereigns of Europe were called Allies of the King of France, and at the same time wrote to Clarke at Ghent, saying that the king should start at once for Paris.

On June 22 Louis left Ghent, drove as fast as possible to Paris, and, the Comtesse de Boigne says, 'was rushed into the palace of the Tuileries, to use the picturesque language of Pozzo in telling the story.' He was there before the Czar knew he had left Ghent. 'What!' exclaimed Alexander when he was told; 'Louis XVIII. in Paris! What is done is done, and there is no use attempting to undo it. Perhaps it is for the best.'

* The Duc de Berri had broken up his camp at Alost just when the battle of Waterloo was beginning. He also destroyed the bridge over the river Dendre, on which Alost stands. For this he excused himself to Wellington by saying that he thought the allied army was beaten, and wished to secure his rear. 'The worse for you, sir,' replied Wellington. 'When you run away you should not place obstacles in the way of brave men who may be obliged to make an honourable retreat.'

## CHAMOUNIX IN CHEVIOT

(THE VALE OF COLLEGE).

Dappled with shadows cast by travelling cloud,
In what soft, flowing symmetry of line
(Which now the heavens enlighten, now enshroud)
These hills, each to his counterpart, incline!

In long perspective, smilingly outdrawn,
This valley to the windings of the stream
Harmoniously adapts its breadths of lawn—
As fair as mirage or a painter's dream.

And all is silence, solitude, and peace,
Excepting that the grown lambs to the ewes
Clamour for wonted sustenance, and these
Yearn to their offspring, powerless to refuse;

Except that waters murmur, and the breese
Hums to himself as aimlessly he roams,
Or cuckoo cries from isolated trees
Beside those few and scattered shepherd-homes.

Ah! here, when shadows lengthen toward the east,
And flocks at leisured pace the hill-top scale,
Yon two-nights' crescent, like Astarte's priest,
Would I be first to welcome and to hail;

And, whilst a grayness—softer than the green
Wherewith, by bracken scarcely yet uncurled,
These gentle hills are clothed—enwraps the scene,
Would I in sight of heaven forget the world!

SIR GEORGE DOUGLAS, BART.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

STORY VII.

## THE INNER MEANING.

YOU will understand that many of my professional engagements were too uninteresting and commonplace to be worth remembering, while others would only interest brother-medicals. I will not here tell the story of the late Miss Brakenridge; and if I mention that I had an experience which I always think of as 'The Shadow,' it is merely because that caused a bad nervous breakdown, which ended in my having to stop work and go to stay with my sister.

Cecilia lived in our little, old home just outside Warwick, with the Scamp, her boy. Married at nineteen, she was a widow with one child at twenty-one. At the time I speak of the Scamp was nearly five. I had not seen him for a couple of years or so; but, strolling up the river before breakfast the morning after my arrival, I met him at what had been long ago a favourite playground for Cecilia and myself. An ancient horse-mill topped a little mound by the river, and there I found the Scamp playing within the circle worn by the feet of many generations of horses. We chummed quickly, and the Scamp after that was a faithful companion for me. 'I percept I can help,' was a favourite phrase with him; and a time came when he did help, as you will see.

Half-a-dozen family portraits hung in the little dining-room, making the dark walls darker still. My great-grandfather, grandfather, and father all were there, staring gloomily down at me; and on the left-hand little finger of each in his turn the ring was obvious—perhaps more obvious than artistic. I stared at them, and they at me, during meals; and I thought of them as I hunted up all the family papers I could find in bureaus and the attic.

There was no lack of material, but a large proportion of it seemed incomprehensible or valueless. Where it was interesting, at least to me, it was often dreary. Cecilia and I smiled and gloomed together over a packet of accounts docketed in my great-grandfather's stiff hand, 'Dick's christening dinner.' Dick was, of course, my grandfather, and those were prosperous days, with hints of days anticipated more prosperous yet. There was a mine on the Cornish estate, and my great-grandfather seemed to sink a lot of money in it. He kept a journal, though irregularly; and here and there large sums, at any rate a few thousands at a time, were noted as raised by various means, and spent. Mixed with these were such quaint items as 'Laid down 100 Magnums Wine of Oporto for Dick's Coming of Age.' This was 1830, and Dick, my grandfather, was then in his first year. I greatly doubt but that all those magnums were sold or otherwise disposed of before his coming of age.

The latter part of the diary was in a different hand. Turning back to where this was first shown, I found an entry in a boy's writing: 'Father dyed December 14, 1840; Mother dyed December 15, 1840;' and no entry is made after that until one dated January 1, 1846: 'I am Sixteen, and will keep a Journal like Father did, though I shall never be as clever.'

Perhaps he was not so clever as his father; perhaps he was not so determined. The entries, at least, were less frequent and less cheerful. The book closed with a single sentence: '*Eheu, fugaces!*' —the only entry in my father's writing.

I put the journal aside, to go through it more thoroughly when the whim seized me; and, thinking my great-grandfather's the most virile and interesting personality, I sorted out everything in his handwriting which I came across. He was the connecting-link too, you see, between Warwick and Cornwall.

The Scamp came one day when I happened to

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linger before my great-grandfather, slipping a hand into mine, and staring up too.

'What 've you got in your hand up there, Uncle Dick?' he asked me at last.

''Tisn't I,' I explained. 'That's your great-great-grandfather.'

'That's very great,' he decided. 'Well, what's *he* got?'

Frankly, I didn't know, and hadn't noticed, and I humbly acknowledged as much. In the left hand was apparently a small, shallow oval box; but its shape and material were not clear.

'I dare say it's a snuff-box,' I said, 'and I think it is made of silver; but I don't know.'

Then I had to explain about snuff, but Lance didn't approve of my theory.

'I percept it's chocs,' he decided; and then suddenly remembering that he had hidden a 'choc' under his pillow the night before, and had forgotten it in the morning, he rushed off to search for this hidden treasure, if peradventure it was yet in existence. I stayed a moment or two longer, trying to make out the box more distinctly.

I could see nothing very well, for the picture badly needed cleaning. Probably, as I had said, it was a snuff-box, and I thought little more about it.

Three or four mornings later, it being a blustering, rainy day, I spent some time in the garret ferreting into holes and corners. Imagine me there, squatting among ancient boxes and portmanteaus, turning over dusty yellow papers, from ledgers to love-letters, by the gray light falling through a small window from a rainy sky, with the perpetual accompaniment of autumn rain pelting upon the roof. It was an uncanny business. At times it seemed to verge upon the indecent. These letters were never meant for me. I was looking over scattered correspondence between my great-grandfather and great-grandmother before and after their marriage. What right had I to know that she loved and tormented him, and that the grim-faced man who stared down from the dining-room wall could be tender and familiar and playful with her?

A howl from the Scamp, with more strength than pathos in it, advised me that his lessons were proceeding with pains and penalties, and that poor Cecilia was trying to play the Spartan mother.

I was reminded of a passage in one of my great-grandmother's letters to her husband: 'Dick is headstrong, but I am very resolute with him. He shall be a good man like his father.' To that her husband in his next letter, written from Paris, had said: 'If the Tnemele' (or something that read like it) 'does well, Dick will have every advantage and great temptations. Meanwhile I must raise more money.' But he did not say what for, or why he wrote from Paris, Bologna, and Vienna.

It was a relief that gray morning to find something which took my attention off the letters. A little chamois-leather bag lay among the stiff foolscap papers in one of the large envelopes. It held a shallow, oval box of some tarnished metal, not so large as the ordinary cigarette-case, convex on one side, concave on the opposite. It was a curious little box, for apparently there was no movable lid. The concave surface seemed to be of some translucent material like horn, cemented to the metal. The little thing was of no weight, and practically empty. On shaking it I heard a slight rattle, as of snuff inside. On the convex surface were the winged horse and motto engraved very small. It was evidently the box seen in my great-grandfather's picture. I ended my search for the day, and went downstairs, to interrupt the Scamp's wailings by showing the tarnished box to him and Cecilia.

I was hailed by both with evident relief; though of course Cecilia tried to pretend that I must not interrupt lessons, which the Scamp had endeavoured to render more interesting by spelling everything backwards.

Naturally he at once wanted to open the box and see what was inside; but I declined to attempt this, and at last slipped it into a small, high waistcoat-pocket. By reason of its shape and shallowness it fitted there quite easily, and there it stayed until, I think, two nights later, when the whim took me after dinner to polish it up while chatting to Cecilia.

That evening my interest in a little contrivance of my own made me particularly on the alert. I had bought a new petrolite lamp for Cecilia, and then, for my own use and amusement, I had made a sort of diaphragm—or shall I call it an iris?—a circular curtain with a reflecting inner surface, which at any time would concentrate the light on as small a space as I wished. I intended it for the examination of some stereoscopic anatomical plates; but when I had begun to polish the silver back of the box I thought that I saw a slight difference between the crest there (the winged horse) and the one on the ring.

I focussed the light on the two crests, and examined them in turn with a strong lens. First I had the ring on my left finger, and then I laid it on the table so that I might hold the lens with my left hand. It was then that I saw what a very distinct image I got with the combined lens and focussed light. The difference between the two crests was immaterial, and, I think, merely the result of careless engraving. But as the ring lay upon the table I could see the scratches upon the inside of the circle, and thought they had never before looked so definitely shaped.

I had nothing of any importance to do that evening, and I played at deciphering these scratches, leaving the box half-cleaned.

When I had tired of my new game I had something like this traced out on a big scale:

This seemed tolerable nonsense, and besides, in doing it, and twisting the ring and lamp and lens about to get a clear view, I was unlucky enough to

upset the saucer of whiting-and-spirit which Cecilia had provided for cleaning the silver.

I said I would finish my silver-cleaning in my own den the next day; and, turning to the fire, I spent what little of the evening was left in chatting with Cecilia about the old place in Cornwall, which I had never seen. It was a question whether or no I should spend a fortnight in wandering about down there before I got into harness again. Cecilia wanted me to go and hunt up graves, monuments, brasses, *et cetera*—cheerful occupation! She had a totally unreasonable theory that the last three generations or so had been done out of their little inheritance. It was rubbish, I knew, and I said so with brotherly frankness. But I myself was quite equally unpractical, for I had a fancy for going down west to find out what my forebears had done that was worth doing, instead of turning to and doing something notable myself. We yarned about these things until bedtime, and I am glad that no one else was there to hear our foolish haverings.

The next day came one of the storms of the autumnal equinox. Rain slashed against the window-panes, dead leaves drifted like dull gold from the two big beech-trees, and a straggling creeper, torn from the wall outside my den, tapped importunately at my window.

As I sat alone and turned over more of the letters, it needed no great effort of imagination to fancy that one of the writers was beating at the window for admission.

First I made another scrutiny of the scratches inside the ring, and compared them carefully with my copy:

But of that copy, or rather of that attempt at one, I could make no sense whatever. I dropped it, and began to fiddle with the 'snuff-box' again. I tried, quite uselessly, to look through the horn-like cemented cover. I polished it at the back, and occasionally stopped to admire the result of my rubbing.

The bright, convex surface now acted like a magnifying mirror, in which my own somewhat ugly and saturnine features appeared even longer than they are. I shifted my uncomplimentary mirror this way and that, and was amused to think that the exaggeration of nose and chin somehow seemed to make me more markedly a Carvell. Suddenly, as the shifting surface reflected some of the letters and papers upon the table, I caught sight of what seemed to be a Latin word. My eyes naturally turned from the box to the disorderly pile, tossed rather carelessly aside, and at once I lost my bearings. I had shifted a litter of documents with my elbow, and nothing showed but what I had already looked over. It seemed of no importance in any case. Just then I was wondering somewhat vaguely whether I had ever known what caused the death of my great-grandfather and great-grandmother. I had the idea, from their portraits, that she was considerably younger than he, perhaps a dozen years or more. He could hardly have been more than middle-aged at the time of his death, and she, a young woman, had lived but one day longer than he, as my grandfather had recorded.

Speculating upon this, I continued idly to twist the box to and fro, and presently there was the Latin word again, '*nova*,' very badly written. This time my attention was firmly held, and I was determined not to be beaten. I kept the 'snuff-box' steadily in position with the right hand, and fixing my eyes upon the word '*nova*' on the polished surface, I let my left hand wander blindly over the pile till, in the reflection, I saw it fall upon that word. There I fixed it, and then turned to see where it lay on the pile of papers. It pointed to a scrawl nearly hidden beneath the rest of the heap. I drew that paper out, still carefully keeping my left-hand index-finger on the word. I found that I had hold of the sheet upon which I myself experimented the night before. My finger lay upon the last hieroglyph in the line.

Hold that before your mirror, and you will see what I found and wrote beneath the other: '*nova puti dihi*.'

I puzzled over this for some time, angry with myself for not being able to translate it at once. My Latinity was no better than that of the average medical, perhaps worse. At any rate, it was shaky, and if I had misread the scratches, as I might easily have done, my Latin vocabulary was not rich enough to suggest many alternative words.

Outside, the wind still moaned about the cottage, the leaves still swirled down, and still that ghostly tapping at the window broke in now and again to interrupt my thoughts.

A less ghostly intruder was at hand, even more importunate. There was a stumbling scurry along the passage, one bang—my nephew was taught by Cecilia that he must always knock at my door—and a hurried entry without any time allowed for a refusal.

'Do you want to stay?' I asked. 'I'm busy reading.'

'I can read too—and write.'

'Go ahead then, old fellow.' I pushed a chair to the table for him, and gave him some blank sheets of paper and a pencil. Then I went on reading until interrupted.

'Uncle Dick!'

'Hallo!'

'What's h-i-d?'

'Hid.'

'Money!' I read. 'I must have Money. Nothing can be done without Money! The lawyers must manage another mortgage quickly on any terms. Be comforted! I am convinced that the worst

is over, and we are but using Sprats to catch Whales.'

'Uncle Dick, you're like me.'

'Proud, I'm sure, old man.'

'Muvver says you must cross your t's and dot your i's.'

'And mind your p's and q's,' I said absent-mindedly. 'I know.'

The Scamp gurgled a fat, appreciative chuckle. 'That's a joke,' he informed me. 'I percept you're a funny man, Uncle Dick!'

'Hallo!'

'What's A-v-o-n?'

'Avon, old man.'

'I thought so. I *can* read, then. I know all the rest myself. I knew I could read. I'm going to tell mother I'm right.'

'All right. Shut the door after you.' And rather to my relief the Scamp departed. He obediently shut the door, but I could hear him intoning, 'I'm right! I'm right!' all over the house as he hunted for his mother.

I listened, staring out of the window at the stripped, swaying boughs, then stirred the dull fire to a blaze, and read on.

The letter ended with something unintelligible to me, even when reflected by my convex mirror.

I read no more. I could hear the Scamp trotting back along the passage, talking hard all the time about 'my readin' and writin'.'

Presently the door opened and he came in, accompanied by Cecilia, who seemed queerly excited.

'So the Scamp can read when he chooses?' I said, thinking her triumphant.

She stood and looked at me oddly in silence before she replied. 'What did you give him to read?' she demanded at last.

'I? Nothing.'

Cecilia took a step nearer and held out a sheet of paper. 'Didn't you give him this?'

I looked and saw '*nova puti dihi*,' and I laughed.

'No,' I said. 'It's what I thought I made out on the ring. And if he can read it he knows more than I do.'

'Read it, Lance. Read it to Uncle Dick!' Cecilia commanded, and the Scamp proudly obeyed, intoning as though a chubby infant chorister, reading as follows: 'I h-i-d, I hid; i-t, it; u-p, up; A-v-o-n, Avon.'

'How on earth did you get that?' I was suddenly interested.

'By reading it backwards,' said Cecilia, laughing excitedly and handing me the paper, 'in the way I've told him *not* to do.'

In that way, at any rate, we drew a step nearer to the Inner Meaning.

*(To be continued.)*

# THE PIRATE WITH A CONSCIENCE.

By JOHN LANG.

IN the early days of the eighteenth century few parts of the world formed a happier hunting-ground for pirates than the Guinea Coast in West Africa. Its creeks, its bays, its rivers formed secure harbours of refuge where pirate ships might careen in safety; along the coast was no lack of prizes bearing rich cargoes of all things desired by pirates—wine, rum, and gold-dust—to be picked up almost for the asking, with small risk of interruption from ships of war; and the few inhabitants who dwelt permanently in those latitudes ('private traders' they called themselves) were themselves for the most part either retired pirates or were—from fear, or possibly for diplomatic reasons—friendly to the pirates.

Old charts of the coasts, with their sailing directions, read for all the world as if they had been taken direct from the pages of some boys' romance. 'Pyrate's Bay,' the 'Cape is known by a single Tree much larger than the rest and high Land on the back of it,' 'Plenty of Oysters on y^e^ Mangrove Trees along this River,' are entries that one finds in those charts.

Near Pyrate's Bay in Sierra Leone River dwelt alone one Ben Gunn, a name familiar to lovers of *Treasure Island;* and not far distant lived a hoary villain, John Leadstone (Old Cracker he was called), who devoted the last of his evil days to rum and to the keeping up of a battery of brass guns at his door wherewith to salute his friends the pirates as they came sweeping in from sea. Many a man bearing a name notorious in criminal history ran in there to drink and carouse and rout with Old Cracker. There came England, and Avery (who robbed the Governor of San Thomé and paid him with a bill drawn on the pump at Aldgate), Davis, Roberts, Cocklyn, La Bouse, and half a score others, most of them men with hardly a redeeming point except that of reckless courage.

Davis was the exception to the general rule; 'a generous and humane man' he is described by one who saw much of him during a month's captivity, a man who 'kept his crew in good order.' But there was another exception to this rule, a man who never fell in with any of the notorious crew already mentioned, and who perhaps would never have become a pirate but for that famous exploit by Davis, the capture of Fort James in the Gambia River, 'the next best fortification to Cape Coast Castle of all that are to be found on either the north or south coasts of Guinea.'

Captain John Massey's reign as a corsair was

singularly brief, unstained, too, by bloodshed or by other crime common to the vile brotherhood that served under the black flag. He seems, indeed, to have embarked on the life more in a fit of anger at his real or supposed ill-treatment by the Royal African Company than from any attraction that such a career presented to him. He was a man entirely unused to seafaring life—a soldier, in fact, sent out from England in 1721 in command of a detachment under orders to garrison Fort James. This was some months after its capture and destruction by Davis, but at a time when all London yet rang with news of the exploit.

When Massey, in the ship *Gambia Castle*, arrived in West Africa, there landed at Fort James from another ship, but almost at the same time, the new Governor, Colonel Whitney. Now Massey and his superior officer had scarcely been ashore a single day ere they discovered that, instead of being respectively 'Governor' of a rising settlement and 'officer in command of the troops' of that settlement, titles usually indicative of position and authority, they were in effect nobodies, a sort of superior servant, indeed, at the beck and call, as it were, of the merchants and factors of the Gambia.

The position was intolerable, and both officers were roused to just anger, Massey especially so. Colonel Whitney himself, who was at the time seriously ill of a fever, stated his intention of immediately throwing up his appointment and returning to England. 'He resolv'd not to stay in a Place where there was so little Occasion for him, and where his Power was so confin'd.' It may perhaps have been but a sick man's fractious and irritable chatter; but it served no doubt further to inflame Massey, who, when he found later that the provisions and liquor supplied to his men by order of the merchants were inadequate as well in quantity as in quality, gave free rein to his indignation. He had not come here to be a Guinea slave, said he; he had promised his men good treatment and good and sufficient food. He was responsible for the soldiers under his command, and if things were not mightily improved he would 'take suitable measures for the preservation of so many of his countrymen and companions.' It all sounds eminently reasonable, and the chances are that some one of the merchants or factors in reality was feathering his nest at the expense of the garrison.

The question of what are 'suitable measures' in such a case is where one may quarrel with Massey. What he really did do was almost certainly very much more than he had in his mind when the threat was made.

It chanced that on the *Gambia Castle* was a certain George Lowther, her second mate, with whom during the voyage Massey had become very friendly. Now, Lowther, who was a great favourite with the crew, had had, as is not uncommon, some misunderstanding with his captain, or had committed some breach of discipline, from the consequences of which—namely, being put in irons—only the intervention and threats of the men saved him. He who laid hand on Lowther might chance to find himself knocked on the head with a handspike, said they.

Whatever the rights or wrongs of the case, Lowther had, or thought that he had, a grievance against his captain, and he and Massey, in listening to the tale of each other's wrongs, became even more intimate and friendly than before had been the case, and no doubt each by his talk inflamed the mind of the other, and swelled the spate of his indignation. Massey wished himself away from this miserable hole where his men were starved on bad rations. If he could only get them home again!

'Nothing easier,' suggested Lowther. 'There's the ship. The crew will stick to me to a man. Why not seize her and go home?'

Why not, indeed? The seed fell on favourable soil, put out root, and sprang to quick maturity.

The plot made rapid headway. Massey sounded his men, whom he found eager to follow his lead in any direction he pleased. Lowther let the foremast-hands of the *Gambia Castle* into the secret, and the crew, by little signs—insolent manner, slovenly work, neglect of orders, and that indescribable *something* which in such cases is always apparent—plainly showed Captain Russel that some untoward event was in the wind. He went ashore to consult the council, and by the same boat Lowther secretly sent a letter to Massey.

'It is high time,' wrote Lowther. 'Now or never!'

At once Massey hastened to the barracks. 'You men that have a mind to go to England, now's your time,' cried he.

They were all of a mind to go to England. How could it well be otherwise? So a message was sent back to Lowther that all was well; and he, taking time by the forelock, at once put the mate in irons and seized the ship. Meantime Massey and his men broke open the storehouse, and sent on board the *Gambia Castle* all the provisions and nearly all the wine (eleven pipes) found there. Then Massey, going to Colonel Whitney's quarters, packed up that officer's bed, baggage, plate, and effects, and had them also conveyed to the ship, being under the belief that the colonel meant to come with them, according to promise. The latter, however, now declined to have any hand in this particular way of settling their grievances. It was nothing short of piracy, said he.

However, not to be deterred by any seeming change of front on the part of his senior officer, Massey came on board in the afternoon, having first dismounted all the guns in the fort so that the ship might not be fired on. Then, lest time should be wasted in weighing anchor and daylight fail them ere they cleared the treacherous river-shoals and made sufficient offing to give them sea-room, the cable was hurriedly slipped. Down-stream she drifted with

the tide; but there was no wind to give her steerage-way, and the current set her on to a mud-bank, where she remained fast.

There were other armed ships in the river; here was the chance for a man of action, here the opportunity for the *Gambia Castle's* ex-captain. But whilst Lowther took charge of the ship, Massey with sixteen hands returned to the fort, remounted the guns, and kept strict guard till morning. No one should interfere with the ship if he could help it. By daylight the *Gambia Castle* was once more clear of the ground, so Massey carefully spiked and again dismounted the fort's guns, and rejoined her ere she stood out to sea, exchanging shots as she went with various craft lying in the channel.

And now that they were safe in blue water, Lowther showed his real hand; he admitted that his intention throughout had been to take to piracy, and not a man of his crew hesitated to join him. Whatever the intentions of Massey had been, however comparatively innocent his original plan, he and his soldiers were now in a tight corner, with small chance of escape. A few days later the *Gambia Castle*, now rechristened the *Delivery*, captured and plundered a brigantine. Massey also bore some part, a prominent though not a brutal part, in the subsequent taking of a wine-laden French sloop. The fact that she was French, his country's hereditary enemy, no doubt might incline him to think that in helping to capture her he was doing no more than his bounden duty. But in any case, with his will or against it, he was now a pirate, liable to be hanged if captured.

Massey tried, poor simple man, when they reached West Indian waters, to persuade Lowther to send him ashore with thirty men to attack the French settlements. He had been a soldier all his days; this sea-fighting was not to his taste; for his part, let him fight on dry land. There was plunder in plenty to be had from the Frenchmen, legitimate plunder, at the cost of a few hard knocks. Let them so gain both profit and glory.

But Lowther refused, and this led to a hot quarrel. Massey persisted; Lowther showed, to his own satisfaction, how hopeless such an expedition must be. Massey appealed to the ship's company, amongst whom he found some—probably his own soldiers whom he had brought on board—who favoured his scheme, who preferred fighting the French to plundering and burning ships. Lowther still refused, and the quarrel between the two spread to the men. Both parties were at white-heat, and in another minute would have been at each other's throats, when 'Sail, ho!' from the mast-head turned their thoughts to other things. In a few hours the chase was overhauled—a Jamaica ship bound to London. Lowther helped himself, as usual, out of her cargo, and then proposed sinking her with all her passengers on board. Hereupon the quarrel of the morning broke out afresh. At any cost Massey would have no murder done, and the majority of the crew backing him up, the ship was let go. It was impossible now, however, for Massey and Lowther to remain on the same vessel; there must be a final separation.

Accordingly some days later Lowther, finding that Massey still remained troublesome, still from a piratical point of view was hopelessly unbusiness-like, put him, with as many hands as chose to accompany him, on a small sloop lately captured, and left them to shift for themselves.

Massey, accompanied by ten men of like mind with himself, headed straight for Jamaica, where he gave himself up to the Governor, Sir Nicholas Laws, telling him the entire story from first to last, concealing no part of his own guilt in helping to take the *Gambia Castle*, but saying "'twas to save so many of His Majesty's Subjects from perishing; and that his Design was to return to England, till Lowther, conspiring with the greater Part of the Company, went a pyrating with the Ship.'

The Governor, a wide-minded man, had no difficulty in understanding how Massey had been duped. The latter's guilt in the business did not seem to him to be very black, and he gave the poor man his liberty, even permitting him to cruise off Hispaniola with Captain Laws in the armed sloop *Harpy*, in an unsuccessful attempt to capture Lowther.

Most men, one imagines, would have been content henceforward to let sleeping dogs lie. So far as lay in Massey's power he had made amends. He had voluntarily delivered himself into the hands of the law, and the law, in the person of the Governor of Jamaica, had acquitted him. At the worst, what the law said was: 'Not guilty, but don't do it again.'

Massey was not content with this; he must needs keep on pulling the tails of the sleeping dogs.

> My conscience hath a thousand tongues,
> And every tongue brings in a several tale,
> And every tale condemns me for a villain.

That was Massey's point of view.

> O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!

His conscience, indeed, was now a constant source of misery, an endless affliction to him, and to let that inconvenient 'conscience have vacation' was to him an impossibility. There are men built in that way, but they do not usually adopt piracy as a career, nor even, it may be said, achieve notable success as men of business.

A sensitive, hysterical, highly strung pirate is a hopeless anomaly, and Massey was that strange product. Having failed to salve a red-hot and gnawing conscience by catching Lowther with the help of Sir Nicholas Laws, he took passage to London, and there continued his career of self-accusation.

Letters took a deal of writing in those days, and one may imagine the painful, conscientious zeal with which Massey indited a lengthy despatch to the Deputy-Governor and Directors of the African Company, wherein he set forth his entire story, concealing nothing, extenuating nothing, rather

insisting on his own participation in guilty misdeeds, explaining his motives, and excusing the whole as 'Rashness and Inadvertency in himself, occasioned by his being ill-used, contrary to the Promises that had been made to him.' He owned, poor man, that his crimes merited death. 'Yet,' said he, 'if they had Generosity enough to forgive him, as he was still capable to do them Service as a Soldier, so he would be very ready to do it; but if they resolved to prosecute him, he begged only this Favour, that he might not be hang'd like a Dog, but suffer'd to die like a Soldier, as he had been bred from his Childhood'—that is, that he might be shot.

Poor Massey! he was not now dealing with a single man, who might well have inclined to leniency, but he had to do with a bowelless Board, which knew not so much as the name of mercy. A speedy answer reached him that 'he should be fairly hang'd.'

He knew now what to expect. Why did he not take himself out of the way? But not he! Not Don Quixote himself ever more valorously and recklessly ran amuck at a windmill than now did Massey play for his life against Fate's cogged dice. That there might be no question as to his whereabouts, the unhappy man took lodgings in Aldersgate Street, and the following day posted off to the Lord Chief-Justice's chambers.

'Has a warrant yet been granted by my Lord against Captain John Massey for piracy?' asked he.

The clerks had no knowledge either of such a man or of such a warrant.

'Ah, well,' said Massey, 'there will be one soon, and I am the man in question. I lodge at So and so's in Aldersgate Street. You will make no mistake when you want to find me?'

It was a new experience for the clerks, but they took down the address in writing. In a few days the African Company did take out a warrant, and Massey was found readily enough in his lodgings. But nothing whatever could be proved against him; there was not any person in London who could so much as charge him with any fact outside his own statement, and the statement even could not be proved to be in his writing. So that still he might well have gone free if only he had been able to hold his tongue. But in reply to a question, he not only owned that the letter written to the African Company was his, but he insisted also on retelling the whole story to the magistrate. He was, in fact, a sort of early 'Mr Dick,' and his King Charles's head was the not very blighting list of his own crimes.

They committed him to Newgate after this; but there being no witnesses in England to testify against him, he was let out on bail until such time as witnesses could be brought from Africa.

On the 5th July 1723 Captain Russel of the *Gambia Castle* and others—one, the son of Colonel Whitney, whom Massey had taken with him on board the ship and set ashore again on learning definitely that the boy's father was certainly not coming—gave evidence. Three weeks later Execution Dock saw the last act in the life of Captain John Massey.

He was of that stamp which produces martyrs. One can conceive such a man dying for his faith; had he been a Scottish Covenanter, one can see him, to use a phrase employed by Lord Lauderdale, 'glorifying God at the Grassmarket.' But it is not understandable how in any possible circumstances a man of the disposition and temperament of Massey could for a moment have permitted himself to be hurried into piracy, even into such modified piracy as that with which he did get mixed up. That he rushed open-armed at death, entreating to be taken, was the almost inevitable outcome of a conscience so abnormally morbid.

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# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

'I'M afraid that our time is going,' Morgan said. 'And the Dragon may appear at any moment. I came here to say something, and mustn't go away without doing it. Do you know, I've had a rather changeful kind of life—any amount of ups and downs, and not a little raw adventure. I've always wanted to settle down, but there was at least one thing lacking. I failed to find it in Australia, though I certainly kept my eyes open. But after twenty years—twenty-two years—I came home and walked into my father's cottage; and it seemed to me that I found it there as soon as the door opened—standing on the threshold.'

Apparently he was still in a whimsical mood, for the smile was yet upon his lips. Miss Vicars felt that he was going to be ridiculous now—that was surely the only word for it—and yet her heart beat stronger under an irresistible emotion. The old spell was upon her, even while she wondered why she condescended to stand there and listen. Scandal—was this the great Scandal? Was it not, rather, strange and wonderful and—beautiful? Was it not romance?

'At first,' he said, 'I did not notice much. I was amazed, and could not look at you. Then you shook hands with me, and I looked into your face, and you spoke to me. It was when I saw your smile and heard your voice that I knew what had happened. Then I said to myself, "Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me!" Then my father and mother told me about you, and of your kindness to them; and I saw that your heart was even better

than your voice, or you wouldn't have treated them so. And when I learned all this I said, "Here, by God's rood, is the one maid for me!" For I believed that I had found the one thing my life needed, and that if you were not for me, no other woman would ever be. Do you understand now, miss?'

She did, and yet did not. She heard in a tumult of emotion, poor creature, mingled doubt and surprise, and smarting pleasure and quivering embarrassment. And while the strong voice wooed her all around, she kept her face turned away so that it might not be seen. But it is possible that she looked sweet enough nevertheless.

'Afterwards,' the man continued, 'I tried to see you and please you. I knew that I was only a poor man's son, and not much of a gentleman—not a bit of a gentleman; but I did try to show you what I really was, anyway, without soft words. I wanted to make you like me in spite of my faults, and sometimes I had a kind of hope that I had succeeded. Was I wrong?'

He was waiting for his answer now, she thought, and wondered what answer she could give. She might admit that she had learned to like him—that was quite true. But if she said so much, would he not misunderstand? Yet while she still hesitated, with her cheeks burning, he went on, returning to a lighter tone.

'There—now I've told you and done it! But don't be afraid. I'm not going to ask you any questions now—or, rather, I'm not going to ask you for any answer. I only want you to consider and decide before I ask you again—decide whether I shall be the one to rescue you from this garden, or will you wait for some one who will be more of a gentleman than I am?'

She felt sorry that he should be so painfully aware of his lack, and wondered whether she had ever hurt his feelings—perhaps by some incautious glance at his wristbands.

'This is a quaint garden,' he said, appearing to change the subject suddenly. 'The quaintness of it is chiefly in the height of the walls. I should think, you know, that any one living always in such a place would be apt to get queer ideas of life. She (or he) might sometimes mistake unimportant things for important ones, and the other way about—using the garden as a standard, don't you see, and forgetting that the world is so much bigger. But even here, I notice, you can get a glimpse of the Cathedral spire. It must be always open and breezy up there.'

She was a little bewildered, but still had a vague idea of his meaning. But he did not pursue that train of thought.

'Is there anything you would like to ask me?' he inquired gently.

She shook her head. There were many things to ask, but how could she ask them? She wanted only to be alone, to think over this strange proposal.

'Then I must go,' he said. 'They will wonder why I am so long putting two paint-pots and three brushes into an empty room. Good-bye—and God bless you!'

Still she could not as much as look up. She heard him draw back from the window, shutting it down. A moment later she heard him cross the room and leave it, closing a door behind him. He was gone. What a decisive way he had of doing things!

Presently the poor girl found herself trying to remember what he had said. In some respects he had spoken well; there was, for instance, the unexpected aptness of those two lines from *Enid*. And, quite unreasonably, as she recalled them something happened. Her heart found wings, and rose suddenly, like a lark, far above those tall, gray walls into a clear sky, up and up, singing as it soared, until the prison was out of sight and even the Cathedral spire had vanished. What was the note of that song—that strange, new note to her! Could it be joy?

It was only for a moment, while she sat with clasped hands and veiled eyes. Then Mrs Hellier called 'Alison!' in her stern voice from the conservatory door, and she came to earth again. It was not so easy to get out of her prison; it was not easy, even, to decide that she really wished to go . . . with him! Oh, why—why was he not a gentleman? What strange fate was it that had given him everything but the last coat of polish?

She might have been much happier if she had known the Rector's real attitude in regard to her troubles. As a matter of fact, that dear old gentleman had called upon Mrs Hellier at the very height of the Scandal, and had had an interview with her upon this subject. Neither of them had greatly enjoyed it, but it is safe to say that Mrs Hellier had liked it least. True, the Rector listened to her denunciations quietly, without making any defence of Morgan; but it cannot be denied that there was a subtle lack of sympathy in his prolonged silences. When he did speak, it was chiefly to ask questions.

'It is a very grave trouble,' he said in his gentlest tone. 'One needs to be very prudent. . . . Those reports about the man's character, now. Are they true beyond doubt?'

'True?' said Mrs Hellier, shocked. 'My dear Rector, do you think'——

'May I ask how they originated?'

'Certainly. They came out of an Australian newspaper. But I did not accept them until Mr Garland had made full inquiry.'

'Ah!' said the Rector thoughtfully. 'Mr Garland!'

He was certainly impressed. Had he not known these two men in their boyhood? He considered carefully before he spoke again.

'I am glad,' he said, 'that proper inquiry has been made. It is so important when a fellow-creature's character is at stake.'

Mrs Hellier's agreement was verbal only. It seemed to her inhuman to place the character of a common, working-class person—a perfect blockhead, too—in a first place under the present circumstances. But to meet the 'dear old simpleton's' mood, she described the elaborate plan which Lewis Garland had proposed and which she had adopted. Could anything be more just or even more generous? But she could hardly help showing, too, that she thought it an extremely clever plan. Only Garland could have conceived it.

'Certainly,' sighed the Rector, 'it will be well to have the matter cleared up.' And he added, after a moment's thought, 'I will try to see the man myself in the meantime and persuade him to meet your wishes. It will be best for all parties. We shall see what he says.'

Accordingly he quitted the house ten minutes later to make his way to the Green, leaving Mrs Hellier in a turmoil of indignation, wrath, and bewilderment. But before he reached the cottage he came face to face with the man he wished to see, Morgan being on his road to the post-office. They walked a little way together, but the gossips of that same evening were utterly wrong as to the nature of their conversation. It is not true that the good Rector, white-hot with Mrs Hellier's wrongs, ordered the fortune-hunter to quit the city at once, and so allow it to return to its condition of cloistered peace; nor is it true that Morgan, with the brutal insolence inseparable from the character of the low person, refused to take his departure, and, in defiance, told the dear old man to go to Jericho. (Some of the gossips mention another place as the suggested destination.) What actually did occur was this.

'I am sorry to hear of this trouble,' said the Rector. 'It is a very unpleasant business.'

'One fool, sir, or one rogue, can make a great bother,' said the colonist calmly. 'But I am sorry too.'

'Mrs Hellier tells me she has made a suggestion to you.'

'Yes, sir. I have been considering it.'

The Rector waited. There was no fencing between these two men, who trusted each other implicitly.

Then Morgan continued, 'I am going to fall in with the suggestion. I need not tell you sir, that there has been a mistake, and that I shall be able to plead "Not guilty" to these charges—or, at least, the most serious of them.'

'This is good news,' said the Rector. 'But it is not exactly news to me. I had every confidence.'

What an excellent investment that twenty guineas had been for the colonist!

'Thank you!' he said heartily. 'Oh yes, I think I shall be exonerated. It is quite true that there are some grounds for the suspicions; but, all the same—— And the Premier will be generous enough to put it right. I don't think much of Justyn Morgan myself; he's only a man after all, and not the little god they are trying to make him out. Their calling him a heaven-sent statesman makes me wonder where all the others at the Conference came from. Indeed, we've had words before now. . . . But I do believe that he is doing his best, and that, in spite of any personal feeling he may have against me, he will be fair and just; so I am not afraid to face him. . . . But as to the other side of this business. Have you anything to ask, sir, about my relations with Miss Vicars?'

In a moment the Rector looked him straight in the eyes. 'No, Morgan,' he said then; 'I have nothing to say to that. It rests between you two.'

The colonist seemed pleased, as well he might be. 'Very good, sir,' he said. 'Then, if all turns out well and I achieve what I hope to achieve, you will officiate at the Cathedral on our wedding-day?'

The Rector was certainly startled. He stopped suddenly, struck no doubt by the calm audacity of the man. In spite of his being of the elect, it must be remembered that he was of the old city also, and that its rulings were important to him. That was why he started, and it was this sudden start and stop that led the gossips to invent the 'Go to Jericho!' legend. But it did not take him long to find an answer.

'My dear boy,' he said, forgetting the flight of years, 'that would be one of the happiest days of my life.'

And the simple old gentleman smiled, and Morgan smiled too. Then they parted amicably, the latter going on to the post-office, and the Rector taking his way to the Rectory. But as he went he talked a little to himself, quite aloud, as his harmless manner was, so that several people heard him as they met and passed him. The gardener at the Old Lodge even caught the words of one of his remarks: 'A remarkable man . . . he impresses me more every time I see him!'

*(To be continued.)*

# ADVERSARIA.

THIS is merely a bundle of faggots, selected from the gleanings of many years' miscellaneous reading, loosely bound together; a 'confused feeding' of words and expressions noted as peculiar or interesting, of conceits that have pleased, and other diverse jottings in the world of letters; a tangled mass difficult to unravel and reduce to any regular order, and only a few of which can be set down without becoming tiresome.

Orthographic changes, by virtue of numerical superiority, claim precedence. We are not all Will Honeycombs, who declared that he never liked pedantry in spelling, and that he spelled like a gentleman and not like a scholar; nor are we all possessed of the effrontery of the American editor who, when a dictionary was handed to him as proof that he had misspelled a word, calmly altered—the dictionary! Were any one nowadays to record his liking for a fried soal it would be accounted ignorance; and it is a pity that the spelling has been altered, since there are plenty of 'soles' in our language without this flat fish. Besides Dr Johnson, who thus wrote the word, his contemporary poet Cowper, in his 'Conversation,' thus describes the perversity of a hypochondriac:

> Serve him with venison, he chooses fish;
> With soal, that's just the sort he would not wish.

The poet Gray also spelled it with an *a*. Izaak Walton's bold 'pearch,' though it might be caught in water with a rod, could not be mistaken for a rod of land. For a like reason it would be well had the old spelling employed by the great lexicographer in the *Rambler* and elsewhere to describe a barren wilderness been allowed to remain 'desart,' seeing that we have two other kinds of 'desert,' not to mention the frequent confusion between 'desert' and 'dessert.' On the other hand, many changes such as 'choir' for 'quire,' used by Byron, Lamb, and others; 'stayed' (remained) for 'staid;' 'straight' for 'strait,' have been for the better. One can understand the change in words not borne out by their derivation, 'batchelor,' 'chairwoman,' 'geer,' &c., but not in such as were etymologically sound, 'gulph,' 'burthen,' 'sollicit,' &c. And why has the final *k* in 'musick,' 'physick,' and such-like words been dropped? When Dr Johnson was asked why he spelled Imlac in his *Rasselas* with a *c* at the end, he replied, 'I spelled it with a *c* at the end because it is less like English, which should always have the Saxon *k* added to the *c*.' The allusion just made to the equivocal words 'sole' and 'desert' recalls the old anecdote concerning Mr Pye, quondam poet-laureate, who, on his first appearance in the literary world, was much cut up by the critics. This being a subject of conversation some time after in Berkshire, and just as Mr Pye's seat had undergone some repairs, an advocate of his literary improvement observed that his style of late was much mended. 'You're very right, master,' exclaimed a farmer who overheard him, 'for I saw the carpenter at work upon it as I came through the fields yesterday.'

Passages from still popular writings read strangely owing to words (here italicised) having fallen into disuse or to their being no longer familiarly employed in their old sense: 'And now, let's every one go to bed, that we may rise early, for my purpose is to *prevent* the sun rising' (Izaak Walton), to modern ears savours of an attempt to perform a miracle like that of Ahaz. 'Her *commode* was not half a foot high' (*The Spectator*). 'An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a *shrewd* thing in an orchard or garden' (Bacon). 'The next time this opera is acted, the singing birds will be personated by tom-tits; the *undertakers* having resolved to spare neither pains nor money' (Addison); which brings to mind the witty reply of the late Dr Haig-Brown, Master of Charterhouse, to a fond parent who requested him to enter her son at the school: 'DEAR MADAM,—I shall be most happy to undertake your son.'

We are all wont to use words and to repeat sayings without knowing what they mean or whence they are derived. Often as in our younger days we chanted the old jingle,

> Up and down the City Road,
> In and out the 'Eagle,'
> That's the way the money goes,
> Pop goes the weasel,

we never paused to consider why a weasel should pop. The word has no allusion to the egg-sucking carnivore of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, but in the time of jolly John Nash was the slang term for the family plate. After the wild expenditure of careering up and down the City Road, paying for drinks, &c., in the 'Eagle' public-house, the easiest means of replenishing the purse was 'to pop the weasel'—that is, pawn the family jewels or plate. The question, 'Where do you hang out?' now considered slang, was not so in the era of the signboard, that distinctive feature of old-time trading, when a shopkeeper was content to live over his place of business.

The arbitrary pronunciation of our language has caused some unfortunate corrections. At a dinner-party one evening Thackeray met a dignified personage whom he addressed as Mr Reach, which very much upset the gentleman, as in a loud voice he exclaimed that his name was pronounced Reack. Thackeray bowed and said nothing; but during dessert, when there was a dead silence, the author handed a dish of peaches to the pompous gentleman, and with a smile remarked, 'Oh Mr Reack, will you take a peack?' One of the stories told of Mr Hawkins as a junior illustrates his imperturbability.

He was practising before Lord Campbell, who was precise to the verge of pedantry. The case involved reference to various descriptions of carriages, both public and private. On his referring during his address to the jury to a brougham, which he pronounced with two syllables, 'bro'am,' the judge interrupted with the bland correction, 'Excuse me, but I think that if, instead of saying "bro'am," you were to say "broom," you would be more intelligible to the jury, and, moreover, you would save a syllable.' 'I am much obliged to your lordship,' replied Mr Hawkins, as he proceeded to close his speech and sit down to nurse his resentment. Presently the judge, while summing up, said 'omnibus.' Instantly the daring, non-pedantic junior rose and exclaimed, 'Pardon me, m' lud, but I would take the liberty of suggesting that instead of saying "omnibus," your lordship should say "'bus," and you would then be more intelligible to the jury, and besides you would save *two* syllables.' A smile flitted across the jury-box and a titter rippled through the court, and Lord Campbell looked at Mr Hawkins with thought too deep for words.

Some there are who disapprove of quotations, more especially in a foreign tongue, like James Hogg, who one evening in the blue parlour behind Ambrose's interrupted Christopher North with: 'Od, man! if ye but kenn'd hoo I like to listen to you when you speak plain English, ye wouldna haul in a Latin word (or a Greek ane, gude kens whilk yon was) when your ain mither-tongue would serve the turn.' But when correct and properly applied, they appeal to most readers; and a neatly turned quotation is highly pleasing. It is said that when Dr Keate, the famous flogger, was headmaster of Eton, he one day set a certain form an essay on '*Temere nil facias;*' and that, when the boys sent in their efforts, that of a boy named Rashleigh was missing. The clouds were gathering on the Doctor's brow as he asked him sternly why he had not brought his essay; but the pupil calmly replied, 'I have not brought it, sir, because you told me not to do it.' 'What do you mean?' was the reply. 'Why, sir, you said in setting the theme, "Do nothing rashly," and I did nothing.' The boy, it is reported, escaped punishment by his ready wit.

The capping of a quotation is equally agreeable. Boswell tells us that, on Dr Johnson's physician visiting him a few days before his death, the patient, who was in very low spirits, broke out in the words of Macbeth:

> 'Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,
> Pluck from the memory,' &c.?

whereupon Dr Brocklesby replied in the succeeding words of the play:

> 'Therein the patient
> Must minister to himself.'

Like quotations, similes are looked upon by some as mere pedantry and packing; but to the general reader they afford considerable gratification. Numerous as are the changes that have been rung on Juvenal's

> Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit
> Damnatos,

the author of *Many-Coloured Essays*, recently published, soars above his peers in his free rendering of it: 'The friendship of some people is like our shadow—keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine, but deserting us the moment we enter the shade.'

The act of plagiarism that has naturally struck the writer most forcibly was an article contributed by him to *Chambers's Journal*, which he read very shortly afterwards in a certain weekly without any apology or reference as to its source. Sterne was a great offender in this respect, and is described by Sir Walter Scott in his *Lives of the Novelists* as 'the most unhesitating plagiarist who ever cribbed from his predecessors in order to garnish his own pages.' There is an old Latin adage, '*Pereant isti qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!*' ('Confound those fellows who have said our good things before us!'); and so numerous are the cases one meets with of two or more writers expressing a sentiment in almost identical language that there is hardly need to exemplify. One instance, however, may be given. The lines in Tennyson's *In Memoriam*,

> We may stand
> Where he in English earth is laid,
> And from his ashes may be made
> The violet of his native land,

bear a striking resemblance to those of Laertes at the graveside of his sister Ophelia:

> Lay her i' the earth,
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring.

'The cavilling at, or invidiously pointing out, a few slips of the pen will embitter the pleasure or alter our opinion of a whole work, and make us throw it down in disgust,' wrote one of our great essayists, who doubtless appreciated the reward meted out to Zoilus by Apollo. Bulls of genius and mistakes of famous writers have ever been a favourite theme with the carping critic. The night before the publication of his *Shakespeare*, Dr Johnson supped with some of his congeners in the Temple, who kept him up, nothing loath, till past five the next morning. Much pleasantry was passing on the subject of commentatorship, when all of a sudden the Doctor, looking at his watch, cried out, 'This may be sport to you, gentlemen; but you do not consider that there are at most only four hours between me and criticism.' So talented an author as Harrison Ainsworth wrote in the first few lines of one of his novels: 'The sixteenth century drew to a close. It was the last day of the last year, and two hours only were wanting to the birth of another year and of another century.' The chapter is headed with the date 1599! But such an error is casual, external. Even good Homer nods at times.

Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls must dive below.

One is struck from time to time by the foreshadowing by great minds of future scientific achievements. Tennyson dreamed of 'airy navies grappling in the central blue,' and Pope of a star shooting through liquid air. Lord Bolingbroke would seem to have had a prevision of the X-rays when he wrote: 'We see for use and not for curiosity. Was our sight so fine as to pierce into the internal make of things we should distinguish all the fine ducts and contrivances of each canal for the conveyance of the juices in every one of these leaves;' while Steele, in No. 241 of the *Spectator*, describes with accuracy the principle and working of wireless telegraphy.

It is not always easy to understand how doubts as to authorship come about. Whether Rowley or the unfortunate boy Chatterton wrote the poems attributed to the former, whether Swift did or did not compose *The Tale of a Tub*, and whether Shakespeare compiled his own plays or Lord Bacon did so for him are prominent instances. In the last-named controversy the pains taken by the advocates of either side are marvels of toil and ingenuity, and the flood of illogical nonsense let loose by the cryptogram idea is so truly surprising that a brief sketch of one specimen may be given. An attentive reader of the Psalms (Bible version) discovered that in Psalm xlvi., by counting forty-six words from the beginning, we arrive at the word 'shake,' and by counting forty-six from the end (omitting, of course, the exclamation 'Selah') we come to the word 'spear;' and he asks whether, since these conjoined make up the surname of the Swan of Avon, they do not form a cryptogram. This enthusiast is quickly followed by another close investigator, who discovers that in the first line of the second verse of the same psalm is to be found the word 'will,' that by a strange coincidence occur in the first line of the second verse from the end the words 'I am,' and that by uniting the two we have 'William,' which, prefixed to the other combination, renders the poet's name complete. To accentuate his theory, he points out that the 'am' is in italics, as if to call attention to its importance. This is on a par with Macaulay's satirical proof that the House of Commons of 1834 was 'the beast' referred to in Rev. xiii. 18, because there were six hundred and fifty-eight members; and these, with their chief officers—namely, the three Clerks, the Sergeant and his Deputy, the Chaplain, the doorkeeper, and the librarian—made up the number six hundred and sixty-six.

Some verses 'To Octavia' which appeared in the pages of the *Edinburgh Magazine* during June 1818 show how such misconceptions may come about. 'In most of the journals,' says Mr Alaric A. Watts, 'daily, weekly, and monthly, these verses were ascribed, with very flattering eulogium, to the pen of no less distinguished a poet than Lord Byron. Their extended circulation (for which they were, of course, entirely indebted to this circumstance) affords a striking proof of the omnipotence of a NAME! The trifle—which with my undignified patronymic might have slumbered unmolested in the pages of a Scottish magazine until Doomsday—aided by its factitious appendage, was forthwith ushered into life, light, and popularity. Well may we say with a slight variation of Pope's couplet,

Ascribe but to a lord the happy lines,
How the wit brightens! how the sense refines!'

How fully this incident bears out Montesquieu's axiom that 'a work gives celebrity to a man's name, and after that, his name gives celebrity to his works'! Curiously enough, Hazlitt had a very similar experience in the same magazine.

Those who are now treading the downward path of life will remember Adah Isaacs Menken in the character of Mazeppa at Astley's Amphitheatre, on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge, but may not recollect a little volume of poetry entitled *Infelicia* by that clever and romantic circus-rider—who married the prize-fighter Heenan, Tom Sayers's famous antagonist—which was published anonymously in 1868, and which was good enough to be attributed to Mr Swinburne. Though not even the publisher's name appeared on the title-page, it has recently transpired that John Camden Hotten published it, and that the original manuscript is now in the possession of Messrs Chatto & Windus.

The truth that in any translation the spirit of the original evaporates, and seldom aught remains but a *caput mortuum*, was exemplified in the first edition of St Matthew in Micmac for the Indians of Nova Scotia, where chap. xxiv. 7 read, instead of 'nation shall rise against nation,' 'a pair of snow-shoes shall rise up against a pair of snow-shoes.' Only one letter was misprinted, *naookkakumikoijik* (a snow-shoe) instead of *naookkukumikoijik* (a nation).

It has been said that the paradise of an author is to compose, his purgatory to read over and polish his compositions, and his hell to correct the printer's proofs. In the writer's copy of the *Noctes* Dr Maginn, when giving Lord Byron his candid opinion of *Don Juan*, is made to say that the work is 'immortal;' but from the context it is clear that the *t* was added by what Foote called the Printer's Prime Minister, and escaped correction in the proof. Another possibility of a letter too much recently appeared in an Indian newspaper: 'Captain X., Indian Army, arrived last Monday as special plague officer, and it is quite time he died.'

And here I must conclude, or I shall lay myself open to a like reproach to that of the old Scotchwoman who, hobbling out of the kirk one Sabbath, was asked by a waiting coachman, 'Is the minister dune wi' his sermon?' 'He was dune lang syne, replied the aged lady somewhat testily, 'but he winna stop.'

# AN UNDERSTOOD THING.

By Rosaline Masson.

THE worst of an engagement that is no engagement, but merely 'an understood thing,' is that the young woman, if she is conscientious, feels a deep sense of responsibility without having any official position. What the young man feels is, no doubt, that pleasant certainty which is no incentive to effort. Of course in some cases the position is reversed. It is merely a matter of temperament. But I am speaking of the case of Adelaide Thomson and Paul Kennington. In their case the 'understood thing' had been the outcome of their having been brought up together. Their mothers had been school-friends; and their fathers had begun their careers at the same time at the same college at Oxford, and later on, as solicitor and barrister, had played into each other's hands and preserved common interests. They were now both widowers, and both portly and prosperous men, occupying adjoining houses in a street of imposing residences between Piccadilly and Oxford Street. Paul was an only son, and Adelaide was an only daughter; and it seemed natural, as in their tender years they had very often shared the same perambulator and sat together at the same nursery tea-table, that as time went on they should very often share the same hansom and be bound in it for the same light-hearted sociability.

When Paul, at the age of twenty-two, tossed back the hair out of his dark eyes and abjured law and all its works, and announced that he meant to be an artist, Adelaide interposed her soft, prosaic little body between him and his father's wrath. She was a great favourite with Mr Kennington, senior—almost as great a favourite as Paul was with her father. 'I have never had a daughter, and I envy you yours,' Kennington senior would often say to his friend Thomson 'in after-dinner talk across the walnuts and the wine.' To which his friend Thomson would invariably reply, 'I have never had a son, and I envy you yours.' And then the two lawyers would extend their big legal mouths in a chuckle. And Kennington would sip his port and observe, 'He is my only son; all I have will go to him, you know, and the business. He is finding conveyancing a bit irksome. Well, no doubt it is; but he must stick to it.' And Thomson would reply, 'Well, she is my only child, too; all I have will go to her, but I don't approve of a woman having uncontrolled disposal of her own property.' And again the elders would look at one another in perfect understanding.

The two youngsters also looked at one another in perfect understanding. But Adelaide was not in the least interested in whether Paul stuck to conveyancing so long as he stuck to her; and Paul did not care a rap whether Adelaide would have the uncontrolled disposal of her own money so long as she had the uncontrolled disposal of her own self. By which it will be seen that Paul Kennington hadn't it in him to become a successful lawyer.

So time passed. Paul's years at Oxford had left him without a degree, but with many friends who were devoted to him, an accumulation of old furniture and art curios, a collection of books (mostly either odd volumes or duplicates), vast stores of unprofitable knowledge, at least three fancy religions, and a pile of portfolios of sketches that, in the prejudiced eyes of his friends at college and of Adelaide at home, showed indisputable signs of genius.

These Oxford years had brought Adelaide many brilliant letters, intermittent and fitful—sometimes two in one day and then none for a month, but finally amounting to a goodly store of packets. They also brought her the recollection of Commemorations and Boat-weeks, hazy with the glamour of youth and spring and lilac and laburnums; very old stones and traditions, and very young faces and ideas; drooping willows that dipped into the river, and crazy canoes that dipped into it too; the sonorous ambiguity of Latin orations, and the sobbing melancholy of waltzes by string bands; misty blue distances across parks and low-lying meadows by day, and by night mysterious beauty of moonlit and lamplit gardens. But Adelaide had a faithful heart, and all this was to her merely the background for Paul's figure, and all the glamour concentrated itself in her recollection until it formed nothing more nor less than a halo at the back of Paul's handsome head.

It was after Paul came back, and was plunged, fresh from all the ideals born of his Oxford life, into a dusty office and the maddening reality of the study of conveyancing, that Adelaide, being a woman and gifted with sympathy, foresaw that the very suitability and commonplace inevitableness of their future engagement would be the unconscious stumbling-block to Paul's desire for it. When he tossed back the front lock of his hair and abjured law and all its works, and announced his intention of devoting his life to art, and his father stormed, Adelaide found it in her heart to wish that she also were not parent-sanctioned and representative of worldly prosperity, but were something forbidden—even with a touch of the Bohemian—by himself discovered, and, above all, possibly unattainable. Something to which, therefore, Paul would passionately and recklessly devote his life. She understood Paul's character better than his father did; but then that was not wonderful, for, though she could not remember the father's own youth as the father could have done if he had wished, she was a woman, and a woman needs no extraneous aids to perception.

She found herself wishing that a crash might

come that would leave a yawning chasm between Paul and her, for she knew quite well that Paul cared for her with every fibre of his heart, and that it only required a chasm to separate them in order that he should become as aware of his love for her and his need for her as she was herself. So she prayed for a crash—and it came.

The first ominous peal of thunder was the voice of rage of Kennington *père*. He had certainly much to complain of. He complained of it in chronological order. There were the Oxford bills, there was the oblivion to the necessity of taking a degree, there was the non-application to the study of conveyancing, there were the portfolios of sketches, there was the general air of vague and poetic and artistic dreaminess, and, finally, there was the madness and ingratitude of this sudden rebellion, the sheer idiocy of the notion of giving up a respectable profession.

'Is it, sir?' inquired Paul, interrupting the thunder for the first time.

'Is it a respectable profession? Law, sir? Is it a respectable—— Are you asking if law is'—— Kennington *père* fairly spluttered in his indignation.

'I meant, sir, is it sheer idiocy?' Paul explained, with his courteous smile.

'Of course it is, sir! Idiocy! Idiocy! How do you expect to support a wife and family out of a paint-box? Pshaw! That son of mine'——

'It does not seem inherited, certainly,' Paul agreed thoughtfully.

'No! And as you see that, perhaps you will agree with the logic of my view that nothing else shall be inherited?—Eh, sir—eh?'

The second growl of thunder came from Thomson *père*. He agreed entirely with his friend Kennington, and sympathised deeply with him in his feelings with regard to his son's conduct. In the circumstances, he felt bound to ask that Paul's intimacy in his house should, until the young man saw reason, be checked, as he thought the unfilial attitude Paul had adopted would be a bad example to Adelaide, who would naturally be influenced by the views of one who had always been to her as an elder brother. This, as the engagement was only 'an understood thing,' was as clear as Adelaide's father could make his decision.

To his surprise, Adelaide, who in general had a soft, persuasive method of always getting her own way with him, did not demur. On the contrary, she seemed rather elated.

The effect upon Paul was equally surprising. Paul sent Adelaide a volume of Nora Chesson's poems as a parting present, and went to Paris, 'on his own,' to study Art.

. . . . . .

'A relation of yours in the smash, you say? Hurt?'

'No, he was not hurt—at the time,' Adelaide answered. 'And he isn't a relation,' she added.

'H'm!' said the great nerve-specialist, beginning to divide his attention between the *entrée* he was eating and the girl he had taken in to dinner. He gave her a quick downward glance. 'Nasty thing that accident,' he said. 'And they'll have difficulty in fixing responsibility. Reminded me of the smash at Granley Junction in 'sixty. You won't remember it—of course not! I knew a man in it. It simply ended him.'

'Killed?' the girl asked, looking up with wide, pitiful eyes.

The old nerve-specialist noticed what pretty eyes they were. 'No,' he said; 'it would have been better if it *had* killed him. It was the after-shock'——

Suddenly such a look of terror came into the pretty eyes that the old man stopped dead. Adelaide's face blanched and quivered.

'It is the after-shock with—with Paul Kennington too, I suppose,' she said. 'For he was all right at the time—went about and helped the others. He would do that! But he is so sensitive, and I think that—the sights—as much as the railway accident—— He has turned—blind.'

She said the last word softly, with a little shudder.

'H'm!' said Sir James. And then, 'Kennington—Kennington?' he repeated—'son of old Horatio Kennington of Prague & Kennington?' He took it for granted that she was speaking of quite a young man.

'Yes,' Adelaide answered. 'They live next door to us.'

'H'm!' said Sir James again, with another quick look down at her. He enjoyed a romance; but he also enjoyed a good dinner, and at this moment another *entrée* was handed to him which promised rare and hitherto undiscovered flavours in its composition. He lost interest in Adelaide. The necessity of speaking again recalled her presently to his mind, and with a little jerk of his eyeglasses he recalled the subject of their conversation.

'Your friend may recover'—— he began.

'Oh, *do* you think so?' She looked up with passionate gratitude, and there was an ominous brightness in her eyes.

'God bless my soul! my dear young lady, how can I tell?' he said with testy kindliness. It would be very compromising to have the lady next you at table dissolve into tears; and, moreover, he did not feel inclined to give a professional opinion at a dinner-party. 'You are eating and drinking nothing, and that is a mistake,' he said. 'You should cultivate a fastidious palate; it is a great stand-by.' And presently, as the girl seemed dull, he turned to the elderly lady on his other side.

But later on during the dinner he had some further talk with her and found he was mistaken—she was not dull. Perhaps this was by comparison with the elderly lady, who was interested in foreign stamps and Home Missions. At any rate, Sir James Howieson went home with a grateful sense of Adelaide's pretty eyes and bright talk, which revived and intensified when he opened his engagement-book in his consulting-room next morning and

found the entry, 'Paul Kennington, from Forbes.' Forbes was the great oculist three doors off. He and Sir James were both Scotch, both had Edinburgh degrees, and each was the most eminent specialist in his own line in all London.

'Paul Kennington!' exclaimed Sir James, taking off his eyeglasses. 'Why, that's the name of the man she was talking about! The man in the railway accident—*her* young man! Dear, dear! son of old Horatio Kennington of Prague & Kennington. I remember! Pretty creature!'

At two-thirty Paul arrived, and half-an-hour later was shown into the consulting-room—a very different Paul from the man who had punted and dreamt at Oxford, and then turned restive and tossed the hair out of his eyes and abjured law. Art had been a capricious mistress; but the lad's strength of purpose had outlasted his devotion to her. He had worked very hard, and fretted very much. And at the end of a year had come a despairing letter to Adelaide.

'I don't mind anything else; but I feel I have lost *you*, Adelaide,' it said, 'so I'm off to Toronto with a man here who knows of an opening for a chap with a little capital. I still have that—not what father would call capital, but the rest of my mother's little fortune. I must go before I have spent any more of it. The berth is right enough—I've made inquiries. Don't let father think me a fool. If I get on a bit, then I shall feel I can face him, and I'll return; but though I see now he had a good share of right on his side, I can't come cringing home while I'm still a failure. Perhaps, if I make some sort of a success of this Toronto chance, things will come right—that's what I'm working for. But I sha'n't ask you to wait for me; it would not be fair. I've been a great idiot, Adelaide. I've banged the door on my own happiness. But I'm not a cad; I won't shadow yours. You will write to me sometimes, though?'

This was the first time he had spoken to her definitely, and he took it all for granted. Had it not been 'an understood thing' since they were boy and girl?

And Adelaide wrote her reply and posted it, and went about the house smiling and blushing to herself, and counting the days till he would get her letter. But it never reached him. The great railway smash occurred two days later, and the name 'Paul Kennington' appeared in the list of passengers injured, with the words 'fracture and shock' after it.

'H'm!' said Sir James. 'H'm! The blindness came on suddenly, you say? How long after? Ah! exactly.'

'I'm not *totally* blind, Sir James—not *yet*,' said the young man despondently.

The patient's chair faced the light as well as the doctor. Sir James looked at him keenly. Paul sat with his head bowed forward, twisting his long, nervous, fidgeting fingers. He was very handsome and very lovable. There was a suggestion of the Paris artist about him, in his careless, shabby clothes; in the loosely knotted, faded-green silk tie; in the soft Parisian sombrero that had dropped at his feet. But the face was thin and miserable, and the great dark eyes, when he raised his head, were dazed and sightless.

'I can see *you*, just a sort of blurred blot against the light. But I couldn't paint your portrait,' the would-be artist added with a harsh, nervous laugh.

The doctor rose and made some adjustment of the blinds, so that the room was in a moment almost dark.

'How's that?' he asked briefly.

'Yes, I can see better; but then I'm always less blind in the semi-darkness than in the light. I've noticed that. Has that any meaning?'

Sir James lightened the room again and resumed his seat.

'Very interesting case yours! I own I'm very much interested.' And then, as Paul's sightless eyes looked up at his words, he led him to talk of himself, and drew out of him a not altogether inaccurate account of the history of his break with home, and of all that had led to the accident.

'Bilateral hysterical amblyopia,' he wrote in his clear, neat little hand in his case-book while the young man was still talking. He screwed up his stylograph and put it into his waistcoat-pocket, and leant back in his chair. 'H'm, yes! Very interesting case. I know exactly what I would recommend you to do, if you are able to do it,' he announced.

'Yes?' asked Paul eagerly. His listless manner had left him. He had begun to be interested in his case too.

'Great strain preceding sudden shock. H'm, yes! Three weeks in a rest-cure to recover tone and balance, and then straight off abroad—the Austrian Tyrol for choice, if that's new to you; ending with old Hoffenlieb. He's your man.'

'Hoffenlieb?'

'Do you speak German?'

'Not a word.'

'Ah! all the better. Hoffenlieb is a great man—a very great man, but utterly unknown. Thousands benefit from his—his methods, without being in the least aware to whom they owe it. I do not mind owning frankly that he can do far more for you than I can. You go to him.'

'But what is he? An oculist?'

'Same line as myself. You'll find him in a queer little retreat at Altweg. Yes, yes; he doesn't see everybody. But he's a great friend of mine; your case interests me, and it will interest him. I somehow feel it is your best chance. Go to him; put yourself in his hands; follow his advice, his dictates; and I believe I can promise you that you will not regret it.'

Paul Kennington was rather taken with the novelty of the prescription. He had expected tonics and restrictions, and now he was offered the vista of foreign travel, and of a strange and mysteriously powerful personality, and of a possible cure.

'Well, thanks awfully, Sir James,' he said heartily, rising as he spoke. 'I mustn't keep you, and keep all your other patients, any longer to-day. I'll think it over, and'——

'That's just what you must not do,' said the great nerve-specialist, also rising. His manner changed to one of almost gruff earnestness. 'If you put yourself into my hands it must be at once. Thinking is precisely what you have already done too much of. As to consulting others, whom have you to consult, eh? You are now in that state when another forty-eight hours of neglect might render a complete cure impossible. Isolation and rest at once—that is what I want. I'll send for my car, and you can go straight now to my private rest-cure home; and I'll telephone to them, so that they will expect you. You can write one letter telling your people—*two* letters, let us say; and a third to your servant, telling him to pack your things. That's all—three letters, no more. Not long ones. After that, no letters to be written or received—rest and isolation. I'll come round at five o'clock, or as near to it as I can, and see you. Three weeks of perfect obedience, and then off you go to Liebenhoff—I mean Hoffenlieb. Can you trust me? If not, say so now, and I'll give up the case.'

Paul Kennington laughed. 'Trust you, Sir James? Why, all London trusts you! Besides, whom else have I to trust? I'm sick of everything. I've lost everything; my eyesight is only one of the things. If you can give me a chance, work your will on me. May I receive answers to my letters?'

Sir James considered. 'One answer,' he decided, as he turned his back to ring the bell and order the car.

When Adelaide Thomson read Paul's letter that evening she sat for a long time looking straight into the fire. Then she went to the library and took *Who's Who* out of the reference-shelf and searched in it. Then she returned to her sitting-room, sat down, read Paul's letter again, and again stared seriously into the fire.

Suddenly her face broke into smiles. 'The darling!' she cried. 'The clever old darling! That must be it! And I thought him so unsympathetic and professional and horrid!' And it was not of Paul Kennington she spoke.

She got up, pink-cheeked, laughter in her eyes, and wrote to Paul:

'DEAR PAUL,—I am so glad you went to see Sir James Howieson. You could not be in better hands, save those of Hoffenlieb. I feel certain you are on the road to recovery.—Ever yours, A. T.

'*P.S.*—Come and see me when you return.'

Nearly two months later Paul Kennington, after having impatiently waited his turn, was shown into Sir James Howieson's consulting-room. He did not sit down, but stood, tall, thin, athletic, brown-faced, and angry, looking straight across the table, over the blotter and the books and the microscope, at Sir James.

'I say,' he began unceremoniously, 'there was no man of the name! There was no one! No one had ever heard of him! There's no such man at all! It was a hoax!'

Sir James looked back into the angry young eyes which met his. 'Well, you're cured!' he said.

'Yes, yes; it came as suddenly as it went! I'll tell you about that after. But Hoffenlieb—there's no such man! *No such man*, I tell you! I travelled days and days in search of him—a regular goose-chase—no one had heard of him! I made a perfect fool of myself; every one thought I was mad! Then I wired to you, and you wired to go on to Neuchattenberg. I took the precaution of wiring to Neuchattenberg first. I say, Sir James, what is the meaning of it?'

'Of the word?' asked the nerve-specialist. 'Hoffenlieb? Well, *hoffen* is the verb "to hope," and *lieb* means "love." I told you many people benefit by his methods without being aware to what they owe it.'

Paul Kennington stared at him for full three minutes without speaking, and then he broke into a hearty laugh.

'My word, sir, you're *great!*' he cried.

Sir James smiled deprecatingly. 'And you're *cured*,' he replied. 'No ill-will? Don't bruit it abroad, that's all I ask! It would be the ruin of my professional reputation. Don't tell any one.' He paused. 'At least'—— he added.

'I won't tell a soul,' Paul replied. And then he also made the reservation. 'At least'—— he murmured.

As he walked down Harley Street he took a pocket-book out of his pocket, and, opening it, abstracted a much-worn letter and unfolded it. He read the postcript first—which, by the way, is what one should always do in reading a woman's letter.

'Come and see me when you return,' the postscript ran.

A hansom waiting for a fare crawled round the corner. Paul Kennington hailed it.

## AN OLD-WORLD GARDEN.

An old-world garden, bright with many flowers
Whose scents remind me of a bygone day.
An old-world place, with cool and sheltered bowers,
Where I may dream the golden hours away.

To the sweet peace that comes from far-off years
I give my soul in glad and eager quest.
Outside those walls my heart knew many fears;
Within, I breathe an atmosphere of rest.

Heart-ease is mine within this garden old,
With crimson glory trailing overhead;
Where fragrant wallflowers clad in green and gold
Look up to greet the roses blushing red.

And gentle hands an old-time welcome give,
With kindness beaming o'er the rugged face,
To tell my heart how good it is to live
Beneath the halo of an old-world grace.

GILBERT RAE.

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SIXTH SERIES.

# A CRITIC IN THE HOUSE.

## HOME DIALOGUES.

By WALTER SHAW SPARROW, Author of *Our Homes, Hints on House-Furnishing, The English House,* &c.

### II.—TO THOSE ABOUT TO BE MARRIED.

MRS AGNEW, aged eighty, sat in her ingle-nook and talked to her friend George Vernon, a young barrister of twenty-five, tall and dark, with a manner of effervescent importance. For George was engaged to be married after a courtship which Mrs Agnew had thwarted for some time.

'I am glad you listen to me, George,' said she; 'because my mind is not old. It does not live in the past, nor does it whine over the present; it just runs straight ahead, like a good road. I understand the story of Lot. It is death to look backwards when we ought to go forwards.'

'Deuced hard, though!' said George. 'When I go forward I generally take off with the wrong leg and come a cropper, as I did pretty often in long-jumping and hurdle-racing.'

'Never mind, George. I think you will do. Your face has character, my boy; and that's what I want for my great-granddaughter Ethel.'

'Is Ethel coming to-day?' he asked with excitement.

'Certainly not,' said Mrs Agnew bluntly. 'You're to have a talk with *me*, George, *and alone*. When an engaged couple meet we get an island of dreams, but not a word of sensible home-talk; and it's a home you two need, not a makeshift jumbled together in hurried half-hours before and after the honeymoon. Ethel, too, is scarcely eighteen. You can't expect much common-sense at that age. Well, then, how do you intend to act? What are your plans, my boy?'

Mrs Agnew looked at Vernon over her spectacles, and Vernon saw that the steady old eyes were moist. 'There's nothing so important as a home, my dear, though most of us to-day love to encourage the jerry-furnishers. Have you noticed that?'

'Well, I've noticed a thing or two; but you can't see much in twenty-five years, you know.'

'Particularly when you divide them between games, sports, and crammed examinations,' Mrs Agnew suggested. 'It was not your fault, my dear. Your education was wrong; it taught you to look upon the world as a playground where all was straight and fair. Yet the world's a great battlefield, where every one tries to put you into the hospital of failure—with perhaps one friend to help you, eh?'

Vernon nodded and laughed. 'It's a hard struggle to-day, everywhere, and in all callings,' said he.

'All the better,' said Mrs Agnew. 'When life was easier most men drank far too much, and their headaches were heartaches to their women-folk. To-day's competition is grim war—a life-and-death fight—with eight millions of starving people, asking for food, as broken camp-followers. Don't be beaten, George; and remember that a good home is a snug fortress.'

Vernon promised that he would do his best.

'Or think you will. You're in love—that's a wise step; you've chosen the right girl—that shows your common-sense; you are to be married in six months, and that's where danger begins.'

'Danger?' cried he.

'Disaster, perhaps. How do you intend to act during these six months?'

'See Ethel in the evenings and grind at business during the day.'

'Very noble of you, George; Ethel will have so much that is practical to teach you. You'll discuss definite plans with her, eh?'

'Why?' said George. 'I'm not going to build a house, you know; definite plans don't come in here, I think.'

'Oh, you'll leave every important thing to the last moment, and then choose in a hurry a bad house, and fill it with slipshod furniture and hideous colours. Time indeed for you and me to talk together!'

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Vernon moved uneasily and looked with ostentation at his watch. 'It's getting late,' said he.

'Very,' replied Mrs Agnew. 'Homes need plans, and yet you talk to me with the inexperience of a schoolboy. Why? Have you taken a house yet?'

'Rather not. To pay half a year's rent for an empty house would be absurd.'

'If the house remained empty it would be absurd, of course. But your duty is to equip the house; it will occupy your leisure for a good six months and more.'

'Hard luck!'

Mrs Agnew chuckled. 'My dear,' said she, 'I'm glad you're stupid in this matter, for that gives me the chance of being useful to you and Ethel. See? I should soon be tired to death of you if you were one of those young men who go right by instinct—like beavers, and bees, and so forth. A beaver is a good architect in his own way, but he always does just the same thing; he has never made a scrap of improvement. That's instinct. If you had the building-instinct I should be unhappy, disappointed; you'd just go your own way and do a commonplace thing. And so, dear boy, I've a surprise for you—a real, good surprise. I've taken a nice little house for you, and paid two years' rent in advance; that's my wedding present.'

Vernon jumped up from his seat, astonished. 'Great Scott!' he exclaimed.

'Don't thank me, George; I thanked myself by doing what delighted me. And it is not a house that you and Ethel will dislike. You've seen it, but fancied it was for me. You remember?'

'Rather,' he replied, looking easier in his mind. 'A stunning little house! What could be better?'

'Good!' and Mrs Agnew laughed to herself. 'And now, George, your work has to be done. You'll need furniture. How will you get it?'

'I've thought of that, Mrs Agnew. Furniture is an investment of capital, and the capital may be used in one of two ways—in a lump sum and all at once, or by degrees out of one's yearly income. The latter plan is easy and practical.'

'Why?' There was a twinkle of malicious fun in her eyes.

'More business-like,' Vernon replied firmly.

'More modern, you mean,' said his friend.

'And very convenient,' he added with decision.

'Your banking account is bad, George, perhaps?'

Vernon lifted his eyebrows. 'I didn't mean that. I'm all right at my bank.'

'Then why not buy your furniture at once and have done with the matter?'

George reflected for a moment. 'Payment by instalment has many advantages,' he said at last.

'One moment, George. Don't speak to me like an advertisement, *please*. Try to be a critic with good common-sense. Have you got common-sense, d'you think?'

That question being hard to answer, the young man smiled awkwardly and held his tongue.

'So you wish to act as a pauper?'

'A pauper, Mrs Agnew?'

'Yes. To pay for things by instalment is to do business like a pauper; it implies that you haven't money enough to pay for them at once. I've never bought a dress by instalment, you may be sure, for I know that easy payments breed long and tiresome after-thoughts. A friend of mine paid for a horse by instalments, and was sick to death of the animal before the last payment bought the tail.'

'Hum!' said George, reflecting.

'Married life by such instalments has no dignity, dear boy. It's horrible to pay bit by bit for many different things at given periods—rent, rates, taxes, dress bills, doctor's bills, insurances, and what not besides; yet you wish to add furniture to the list! Why?'

'I *see*,' said Vernon; but he looked crestfallen. Then all at once he cried, 'Ah yes, of course; good furniture can be bought cheap to-day!'

'Indeed? Poor boy, how your eyes sparkle over the word "cheap"! And yet, what do you mean by "cheap"? Have you ever got a sovereign for seventeen shillings?'

Vernon was ruffled, like a witness under cross-examination. 'I ought to have said "reasonable in price,"' he admitted.

'And what does that mean? You need good furniture by a good maker, and you won't get it for less than the market value. How, then, can it be either cheap or dear? The only dear things known to me are the shoddy, fragile goods which are sold "cheap" to fools.' Mrs Agnew spoke with a snap, as if face to face with all the jerry-furnishers in England.

'You learnt all this from your husband, I suppose,' said George soothingly.

'I've always listened to men's talk,' she replied, 'and put two and two together; and I've noticed that industrialism has killed common-sense. Everybody wants to buy something for less than it is worth, yet everybody yearns to make big profits. How are the two things to be done at once?'

George shrugged his shoulders. 'Fashion,' said he. 'It's custom now to praise cheapness.'

'And custom is reason fast asleep,' said Mrs Agnew. 'Buy good things, and they'll last your life and other lives after yours. Look at the furniture in this room. It belonged to my mother—it was made for her by Chippendale; and in my will I've left it to your eldest boy, George, and he in due time will be able to give it to his children or grandchildren. Such furniture never wears out; it's always young and new.'

'Ah,' said Vernon, 'but I couldn't afford to get furniture like yours.'

'Perhaps not; but you can afford to get good furniture by a living craftsman.'

'Ripping!' said George. 'I'll choose my man when the time comes. No need to worry about it yet.'

'I understand, dear boy. In these days of work at high pressure there's always time to put off doing a necessary thing.'

'How necessary? Surely it can't take six months to make a few sticks of furniture!'

'Listen to that!' cried Mrs Agnew. 'Have you never seen a cabinet-maker's workshop?'

'Never.'

'Then you're not fit to be a husband yet; any Cheap Jack could swindle you. I suppose you know nothing about woods?'

'Not much, I fear.'

'Well, George, woods are like women: you don't always know what they will do next, particularly when you cut them. Woods are full of whimsies, and age does not make them less incalculable; so that cabinet-makers need infinite tact and patience, just like most husbands. Only the other day a craftsman showed me a piece of oak three hundred years old, but was it seasoned through and through? Eh, George?'

'Dry as a bone, I should think.'

'On the surface, yes—just as I am old on the surface. Underneath I'm young-womanish still. And so was that oak; for no sooner was it cut with a saw, as you might cut me with sharp words, than it began to be tricksy. That is to say, when cut into it shrank, so the craftsman had to season it anew and coax it into shape.'

'I see,' said George. 'Good furniture can't be made rapidly.'

'Order yours at once, therefore, and then give attention to other matters. For instance, what colours do you like best for wall-papers and curtains?'

'Bright colours like a cricket-blazer, Mrs Agnew. You know the early Victorian chintzes and papers now in the shop-windows?'

'Why, yes; they're covered all over with trailing roses and other flowers.' The old dame laughed.

'Jolly pretty, too, they seem to me, Mrs Agnew. That's my choice.'

'Indeed? But why? Will Ethel look well against so many flowers printed in staring colours?'

'Don't understand, somehow.'

'Well, George, a room is nothing more than a background for a picture of home-life, and the quieter it is as a background the better it will be as a setting for that picture. Ethel must be more important than the curtains and wall-papers.'

'Oh yes, rather. I begin to see now.'

'Besides, George, all these trailing flowers are in bad taste; they are at standing odds with good sense, because flowers don't climb over curtains or sprawl over the walls of rooms. Good decorative art never imitates nature in that absurd way; it only *suggests* natural forms in a conventional manner that never invites too much attention. Can you remember that?'

'Yes; but I don't grasp what you mean.'

'Yet the principle is quite simple, my dear. Realism is bad in decoration just because it is absurd, unreasonable. You want an example? Well, then, some carpets are covered with roses and with ribbons tied into bows. Why? Do you wish to *tread* upon roses? And are ribbons at all useful *under your feet*? Would you care to walk over a pattern of cupids, or of fishing-boats, or of cabbages and pumpkins? And roses are not a bit less foolish in principle. A carpet might represent a harbour with a fleet of "Dreadnoughts" and not be more absurd than a pattern of roses tied by ribbons into bouquets and garlands.'

'I grasp it now, Mrs Agnew.'

'Fortunate boy! Is it, then, possible for you to see common-sense in our age of yelping advertisements? Study good carpets, anyway, like the real old Persian, and you'll see then how delightful quiet colour in beautiful, formal patterns can be. The other day, in a wall-paper, I saw a tree with parrots in the branches. Imagine that atrocity repeated over your dining-room wall! And in another shop, on some upholstery of chairs, was a rose-bush. Are thorns pleasant to sit upon, George? Tradesmen want us to sit upon many curious things, such as huge poppies, or a cow in a landscape, or a windmill near the seashore, or a garden of peonies. Why, even a toilet-service must have its picture-gallery of realistic fruits and flowers or its aviary of birds. That is why all my things are old. Those curtains were copied from a Sicilian pattern at South Kensington; it is thirteenth century. My carpet is Persian. The wall-paper, you see, is quite plain—just a simple, warm-tinted gray behind the water-colour drawings. And what more do you need?'

'The room certainly is quiet and cosy,' George admitted. 'But I've never thought of these matters before, somehow.'

'More's the pity, my dear. Many persons look at things all through life and never see them intelligently.'

Then Vernon got up and looked uneasily at the clock. 'May I go now, Mrs Agnew?'

'Yes; but here's another hint to take with you. Some colours absorb light; and, for this reason, when the colours in a room absorb many rays of light the brightest electricity seems to have only a feeble candle-power. Remember, too, that colours on smooth surfaces reflect more light than do rough surfaces, but that good textures are more beautiful than smoothness, so that economy and art are at odds here.'

'Interesting!' said George. 'Tell me more.'

'Very well, my dear. A white wall reflects 50 per cent. of light, while a red wall reflects only 15, absorbing 85 per cent. Again, if we contrast dark brown and a light buff or corn-yellow, we find that the brown reflects about 12·5 per cent., while the corn-yellow or buff gives us 45 per cent. Dark greens are bad, giving only 15 per cent., while light-gray greens give 40 per cent.

And so you see that light is absorbed by dark tints and reflected by pale ones, particularly by pleasant-hued whites.'

'What about tinted patterns?' asked George Vernon.

'They are enemies to light, my dear. A patterned paperhanging invariably takes from us more rays of light than a wall tinted in one simple colour. Patterns, too, have another disadvantage. Only experts can use them with artistic success; and even then, George, they may tire the eyes and upset the nerves. Many wall-papers, even by William Morris, are horribly trying to look at day after day; they are as irritating as a tongue that nags. Let the walls be silent, my dear, and remember that rooms facing north and east need lighter-hued papers than do those that look west and south into the sun's gaiety.'

'I see,' said George again. 'We spend less on artificial light when we keep our rooms in pale-tinted colours.'

Mrs Agnew nodded, and then exclaimed, 'Bless me! You've got a pretty taste in clothes, my dear! And what broad shoulders you've got, to be sure! Ah! I like a look of power in a man, and so does Ethel. Good-bye!'

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# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

## CHAPTER V.—THE PREMIER INTERVENES.

ALL the gossips can tell you what happened next. Mrs Hellier carried her niece away to London with her, to the relative at Brixton who had agreed to take them in for a week or two. It is not true that Miss Vicars had the marks of tears on her face when they left; nor is it true that her aunt made the guard lock the door of the railway compartment upon them, to prevent an invasion by the enemy and perhaps a forceful abduction. Undoubtedly, however, the girl went as a prisoner, and it is equally true that her aunt had all the air of a jailer. The actual relationship was all too evident to be disputed.

The stay at Brixton was mercifully brief, but it was in no sense enjoyable. Mrs Hellier's relative joined all her influence to the forces of the enemy, and it was influence of a dangerous kind. She was kindly, motherly, and reasonable.

'Of course, my dear,' she would say, 'I *quite* understand. . . . But the customs of our circles are really made for our protection—for *your* protection. When a girl neglects them she is open to every danger. Besides, we have to consider others—we always have to consider others. In this case you have to consider not only your aunt and her position at Hexminster, but also your own family—your poor dead father and mother. Can you think that they would be happy if they knew of this entanglement? If they *do* know of it, can you think that they *are* happy? Really, our duty to others is greater than our duty to ourselves—it is always greater. And in the end we are never sorry if we have sacrificed our fancies in this way. Never!'

Opposition and persecution were easy to meet compared with this moral sapping and mining, and it was fortunate that its days were not many. On the third day, indeed, Mrs Hellier was given the appointment she had asked for under Garland's tuition, the intimation coming in a formal letter dated from the office of the Agent-General for the Colony of Kingsland, Victoria Street, Westminster:

'MADAM,—The Premier of Kingsland, the Honourable Justyn Morgan, asks me to inform you that he will be able to give you an interview here on Friday next at eleven o'clock. He trusts that this time will suit your convenience.

'The Premier can give you every information in the matter you refer to. He is not aware that the person in question is at present in this country, but there seems to be no doubt that he was originally a native of one of the western counties.—Your obedient servant,

'JOHN ALDRIDGE, Agent-General.'

'There!' cried Mrs Hellier triumphantly; '"a native of one of the western counties." Do we want more?'

'Not much more, certainly,' agreed poor Miss Vicars. 'Don't you think you have enough?'

Mrs Hellier looked up. 'It is for you to say,' she retorted. 'I am going to this trouble, as you know, so that you may be convinced.'

Alison considered. The only thing that came clearly to her mind was the picture of a man leaning out of a window, smiling; but it did something to restore her courage.

'I cannot believe that he is a scoundrel,' she said. 'There may be some mistake.'

'That we shall soon see,' said Mrs Hellier grimly; and forthwith she wrote two notes. One was to Garland, as arranged, and the other to David Morgan, informing him in icy, third-person terms of the Premier's appointment. If he neglected this opportunity he could hardly dare to show his face again, and even the Rector would be satisfied. It did not occur to the good lady that her best course would have been to leave Alison to the tender ministrations of her relative, Mrs Owens. She went straight forward, sailing under a full breeze of resentment and resolve.

At the present time the girl had ceased to make any plans, to build any hopes, and was entangled

in a web of doubt and indecision. Certainly this interview ought to settle something. It should enable her to break the spell which this extraordinary suitor had cast upon her, and should solve her problem without forcing her to decide for or against the wristbands. And she felt, when Mrs Owens was near her, that such a decision would be too much for her strength. She could not say, 'Because you are a poor man's son I must not listen to you;' but she might say with reason, 'Because your record is not clear I must have no more to do with you.' . . . Yet all the while she found herself nursing a foolish desire, a great longing, to rise above this atmosphere of doubt and intrigue and distrust, and to wander with him again down to the Old Mill, to stand at his side in the dream-ship, to hear him talk on and on of everything but Hexminster and its trivial circle. Sometimes, often, she felt her face flush and her heart beat louder as she recalled his quaint wooing from the open window—that plain, homely appeal of a poor man's son; but then she saw his wristbands against the window-ledge, and heard his inane 'Excuse me, miss.' Whereat she shuddered, and sometimes wept.

It was in this miserable mood that she set out on the Friday morning, accompanying an aunt whose carriage was a study in its aggressive decision. Garland had written to say that he would join them in Victoria Street, but as they were a little early he was not visible. Setting her lips firmly, therefore, the lady marched up the steps to the suite of rooms then occupied by the Kingsland Agent-General, her niece following in her train.

It was a brilliant morning, it appears, and the West End was gay with life and colour. There was animation even in the dim interior of that tall building, and the young clerk who took their message smiled cheerfully on the pompous lady and the sober-looking girl behind her. He led them at once to a small waiting-room.

'If you will sit down,' he said, 'I will see the Agent-General;' and he glanced at the clock, as if to intimate politely that they had come early. It was only then that Miss Vicars realised that this was indeed the case. It was still only fifteen minutes to eleven.

'Very good,' said Mrs Hellier sternly. This was to be a day of stern deeds. 'But we are expecting a gentleman to join us. Will you send him here when he comes?'

'Certainly, madam,' answered the young man cordially; and apparently he only vanished to obey, for a moment later Lewis Garland made his appearance, smiling, immaculate, and confident. He had evidently come out on an agreeable errand, and shook hands as cheerfully as if they had met for a trip on the river.

'Your punctuality,' he said, 'is admirable. When the clerk said you had already arrived, I thought he must be mistaken. Have you seen any sign of our friend?'

'No,' said Mrs Hellier coldly. 'I hardly expect to.'

Garland smiled. Miss Vicars felt that she disliked him for the smile and for his general cheerfulness. She felt, vaguely, that she had never liked him so little as she did at that moment.

Turning from the two, she began to examine without interest the furnishing of the room. Everywhere she found examples of the greatness and productivity of Kingsland—panels of polished woods from its forests; specimens of quartz, iron ore, and coal under glass, duly ticketed with their descriptions and locality; choice selections of wool, wheat and other cereals. The waiting-room was evidently intended to serve an educational purpose. On the largest wall hung a great map, which at once reminded her of that evening by the Old Mill. On a large scale, this was the map Morgan had drawn on the wall beside the Mill stream, colouring it with all the rosiest hues that speech could provide wherewith to impress a simple-minded parsonage maiden.

Garland tried to make conversation. 'Have you seen the papers this morning?' he asked. 'No? There is an account of the Colonial banquet at Westminster Hall. It seems that our friend the Premier of Kingsland made the speech of the evening—and, of course, a very favourable impression. He was complimented by the Prince of Wales in very warm terms. It is stated with authority that he is to be knighted before he returns. If he is, he will be received with open arms by the people out there; they worship him already.'

'What kind of man is he?' asked Mrs Hellier, rousing herself a little from her normal condition of self-study.

'A very remarkable man, they say, with the gift of oratory and at the same time the faculty of the successful administrator. He has gripped the imagination of the Australians, and, having done that, can do almost anything else.'

Miss Vicars was a little interested—a little surprised. It was unusual to hear Garland speak so cordially of any one. Then she gathered dimly that he had one of his obscure purposes in view, and disliked him all the more. He was praising the judge in order to give greater weight to his coming condemnation. She felt tired and dispirited.

Then the door opened, and, to the astonishment of all, David Morgan walked in.

It was a tableau of singular discomfort. Garland could not hide his surprise, and Mrs Hellier stiffened into a fierce rigidity. Alison, sitting at the table, gave a start, and her lips parted.

'Good-morning, all,' said the colonist.

He looked from one to the other in a slightly embarrassed way as he closed the door. Apparently he did not quite know what to do with his hands and feet, or where to seek a seat. Garland nodded in curt acknowledgment, and only Alison answered his greeting aloud. She did it in so low a tone that he hardly heard it. Mrs Hellier's stare was of a paralysing nature.

The thing that happened next was amazing in its novelty. He, Morgan, moved to the table at which Miss Vicars sat, and stood within a yard or so. He rested one hand on its edge, showing the wristband emerging beneath the coat-cuff with indecent insistence. It was the gray flannel this time, quite as formidable as the blue. And then he said haltingly:

'The man outside says that we shall have to wait a little while yet. So I have come to ask you if you have decided.'

The others were bewildered, but Alison was thunder-struck. She could not believe that he meant what he said—that here, in this company, he could ask such a question! She looked at his face searchingly; and then gradually, very gradually, the thing lost its amazing strangeness. His look was appeal and challenge curiously mingled; but he was smiling a little nevertheless, and his glance was a tonic to her whole nature.

Before she could speak he went on to explain; and as he had broken the ice, his words came more easily.

'You see,' he said, 'I have to ask you now because in a few minutes you are going to hear the opinion of a man who knows all about me. And I cannot wait till that has happened, because then it will be too late. I beg that you will give me your answer before you see the Premier.'

Mrs Hellier sat in stony amazement. The Scandal had actually reared its head in her very presence! There was a long pause, while the poor persecuted girl felt the truth come home to her heart. The man, she saw suddenly, was making a tremendous claim, and he was making it with a boldness which stirred her in every pulse. 'If you love me,' he was saying, 'you will not need to wait for another man's verdict upon me.' For a moment she closed her eyes and was alone.

'I will only tell you now,' went on Morgan with rugged earnestness, 'that I love you. I think you know it, but I tell you so that these shall hear. I ask you to be my wife, and presently to return to Kingsland with me. I believe I can make you happy. . . . But I think you should answer now.'

It was only at this point—so the gossips declare—that Mrs Hellier realised what was taking place. With a gasp she broke the spell of amazement, and ejaculating 'Alison!' in rising notes of horror, sprang to her feet. But when she would have come between them Morgan moved to forbid her.

'Madam,' he said, 'go back to your seat—and your friend! This is a matter between Alison and myself, and she must decide it.'

It is just possible that Mrs Hellier was transfixed with surprise. This was certainly not the obtuse person whom she had always pictured. Besides, she must have had every faith in the outcome of this most bizarre proposal, this crowning outrage of the great Scandal. It could only end in one way. She did not return to her seat, but stood, panting, just behind her niece's chair to give her moral support. Mr Garland had not moved, but was watching the scene with a colourless face.

Alison stood up. She realised the crisis of her life, beset with some problems which most girls are fortunately spared. But the only man who could help her was here, and it appears that her spirit rose to his call. It had responded to that call before. Looking into his face a little pitifully, she said, almost whispering, 'I think—I think that you are right to demand your answer now. But—but why before these?'

'My dear girl,' said Morgan quickly, 'I had no chance otherwise.'

It was true, and the shame of it passed away.

Well, despite his inferior dress, he was the master in that room. His manner had lost its awkwardness for the time, and his speech its coarseness of finish. Still looking into his face, Alison felt her world right itself, the trivialities falling away. How trifling the gossip of the Hexminster tea-tables and parish circles! How little the judgments of the sleepy old city, with its secluded gardens and its absurd laws of caste! How absurd, too, that she should ever have weighed her money—that trifling sum—in these balances! And, of course, he was right—utterly right. He was asking much, but only according to her own ideals after all. When the Prince comes and calls, the woman must go, delivering her all into his care without cavil or question. And this was only what he was asking her to do, this Prince who had come in flannel. . . . But for a long time, because the flannel was there, she had doubted that he was her man.

For a moment her eyes were downcast as she crept to her resolve, as her heart swung true to its pole. Then she looked up to be encouraged, and gave him her answer. No—not in words, but in a look where the maiden's shy resolve struggled with lingering fear, and hesitation with happiness. He read the look and moved nearer; then she put out her hands, and he clasped them hotly in his.

'Thank God!' he said in a whisper; and after that, heedless of all, he drew her closer, till her hands were upon his breast and her head at his shoulder. And he touched her face very tenderly, throwing back the hair so that he might the better look into her eyes.

'You,' he said, 'and all your faith, and all your hope, and all your love—and'—he smiled—'all your money?'

'Yes,' she whispered.

Then—unutterable horror!—he kissed her; and as she had found a new world, of which he was ruler, it did not matter that the others saw. And after that he released her, and placed her in her chair again, and turned to the others.

*(To be concluded.)*

# POULTRY-FARMING IN AUSTRALIA.

By F. A. W. Gisborne.

IN a recent number of *Chambers's Journal* there appeared an article headed 'The Snare of Poultry-Farming,' in which a most dolorous account was given of the adversities to be expected by the would-be poultry-farmer in England. No doubt the writer's knowledge and experience of the industry justified the warning given. Friends at home have also assured me again and again that the keeping of poultry — save in special cases such as those mentioned in Mr Newte's article—does not pay. And a little consideration of the circumstances seems to support the discouraging verdict, so far as England is concerned. Land there is expensive; rents, taxes, &c. are high, and competition exceptionally severe. The London market periodically engulfs millions of eggs produced and sold at absurdly cheap rates by the frugal peasantry of France, Belgium, and other European countries. Refrigerating appliances likewise enable Continental, American, and even Australian poultry-keepers to supply the home markets with vast quantities of table-fowls, to the further discouragement of the local producer. Add to these disadvantages that of a damp, and during the winter months rather cold, winter, and it must be admitted that there are strong reasons to warrant Mr Newte's discouraging advice to the prospective poultry-farmer in England.

But conditions elsewhere are very different. In the United States, for instance, where the total yearly value of poultry products exceeds one hundred and ninety million pounds, a sum considerably greater than the combined values of all the wheat and gold produced in the country, the industry we are dealing with unquestionably yields handsome profits. Having, however, no personal acquaintance with American conditions, I must leave the Yankee poultry-farmer to vindicate his own calling. But as an Australian poultry-farmer in a small way, after several years' practical experience I have no hesitation in affirming that a very fair living can be made out of poultry provided the qualifications essential to success in all industries—intelligence and industry—be not wanting.

Australia, it may be premised, can claim special advantages for the successful raising of poultry. The warm, dry climate is eminently suitable for breeds, such as the white leghorn and wyandotte, that are the most prolific layers. The mildness of the winters makes it unnecessary to have the substantial buildings and the elaborate heating apparatus which are needed in many parts of America. There is practically no close season for eggs; with judicious management and selection of varieties these can be obtained all through the year. The large production of wheat, oats, maize, &c. renders food plentiful and cheap; and waste meat absolutely necessary to stimulate egg-production is abundant and easily obtained. Of late an ingenious method of converting rabbits, minus only their skins, into a dry meal has been discovered, and 'rabbito,' as the preparation is called, forms an admirable and cheap addition to the dietary of the poultry-yard. The transformation of pulverised rabbit into nutritious eggs combines the double advantage of cheapening food and reducing a most serious pest. Land being abundant and obtainable at very low rates, the intending poultry-farmer in Australia requires but little capital to purchase the five or ten acres he needs for his houses, yards, and a paddock or two for growing lucerne and other kinds of food for his stock. As to markets, cities like Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane consume very large quantities of eggs and chickens, and the demand at the various mining centres is also considerable. The Australian miner, earning from eight shillings to twelve shillings a day, and frequently more, lives like a Sybarite, and would sooner pay threepence for his egg than go without it. A poultry-farm situated near a flourishing mining-town such as Broken Hill or Kalgoorlie, if properly managed, produces the revenue derivable from a very fair mine itself.

So far, also, there is no outside competition to vex the heart of Australian poultry-raisers, no Calais lies next door to discharge shiploads of eggs on the Melbourne or Sydney wharves. The home market is a monopoly of the home producer, and the latter, rather ungratefully, is beginning to make unwelcome forays on the scanty preserves left to his British brother by exporting in a frozen condition considerable quantities of chickens and ducklings to England, where at certain seasons very lucrative prices may be obtained. The trade at present is but in its infancy. At some future time possibly frozen fowl will be as plentiful in England as frozen mutton.

Of course, in Australia as elsewhere good management is essential to success in poultry-farming. Many failures may be found, but in most cases these are due to the fact that the men who failed plunged into an entirely novel occupation on a large scale without any previous experience of it whatever. It is extraordinary to observe how common the impression is that every man is a ready-made poultry-farmer. No sane person would think of engaging in any other kind of business without first undergoing some kind of preparation for it; but not uncommonly the city clerk, weary of dusty streets and dingy office, buys a cottage and plot of land, collects a promiscuous flock of birds of various breeds and ages, turns them into a small enclosure with a ramshackle kind of shed in one corner, and

calls himself a poultry-farmer. After a few months, sad experience conclusively proves to him that success in an unfamiliar calling is not won in so jaunty a fashion as he had expected; and probably, after a year or two of anxiety and disappointment, having lost all his savings, he has to return to his office.

I would strongly advise any one who may think of taking up poultry-keeping as a means of livelihood to obtain, if possible, at least a year's experience on a large and well-managed poultry-farm before he sets up for himself. Should this be impracticable, as it was in my own case, let him begin on a small scale and obtain the assistance of a thoroughly competent man in selecting his stock and laying out his yards, buildings, &c. In all the Australian states there are Government poultry-experts whose business it is to assist in every way those who are engaged in the industry or who wish to embark on it. To one of these officers I am myself indebted for much invaluable assistance.

At the outset skilled advice should be obtained as to the selection of a suitable site for the proposed poultry-farm. Everything may be said to depend on the exercise of sound judgment in this respect. Propinquity to a good market, accessibility, conveniences for obtaining cheap food, aspect—ground sloping to the east should be preferred—shelter from prevailing winds, soil of a light, sandy, or gravelly description, sufficiency of water, all these are matters of the first importance. Before the novice thinks of buying or renting a piece of land for the purpose of keeping poultry, let him invite a competent man who has the qualification of experience to inspect it. Otherwise disaster in some form or other is very likely to overtake him later. This word of caution might also be offered: it is injudicious, as a rule, to buy or rent an existing poultry-farm. No matter what plausible reasons the owner may give for wishing to transfer it to somebody else, there is generally something amiss to account for his desire to sell out. Old fowl-houses and yards are apt to become infected with disease germs of various kinds which are almost impossible to eradicate, the soil is always polluted more or less, and in any case the cost of a thorough purification of the land and buildings would be considerable. The beginner should start on new ground, and above all things be careful that his stock are perfectly healthy.

It is a mistake to start with a number of different breeds. To keep these separate would add largely to the number of buildings and enclosures required, and cause extra work and expense. Two breeds—say white leghorns and black orpingtons—are quite enough, a game cock or two being kept for crossing for table purposes if required. The object to be kept in view in the selection of breeds should be that of maintaining, so far as possible, a regular output of eggs all the year round. It is not profitable to have all your hens laying at high pressure in spring, when eggs are only worth in Australia from eightpence to ninepence a dozen, and all off duty in May and June, when each egg sells at from three-halfpence to twopence-halfpenny. The two breeds above mentioned, I find, answer very well to prevent such alternate feasts and famines. During the leghorn lean months the orpingtons usually lay well, and when they rest their lighter companions take up the task of replenishing the egg-basket. For the orpingtons might be substituted a breed like the wyandottes, which are also hardy in constitution and reliable layers. This point, however, must be emphasised: whatever the breeds chosen, let the beginner be careful that he gets birds of good laying strains. The strain, many good judges think, is of more importance than the breed. Fairly high prices must be paid; for my own original stock of thirty pure-bred birds of approved strains I paid on an average one pound apiece. But mongrels are dear at any price.

As a rule, on the poultry-farm the laying hens should not be kept longer than two years, and chickens intended for the market not more than four months at most. The 'dead-head' devours the profit of the working hen. Sentiment must not be allowed to insist on the preservation of a number of venerable and voracious birds that yield perhaps less than fifty eggs each a year. If the average production of eggs per hen falls below a minimum of one hundred, making allowances for losses and fluctuations of prices, the poultry-farmer will have a disagreeable reminder of the truth of a remark made by the philosophic Mr Micawber. He should aim at maintaining an average of at least one hundred and twenty eggs, which would mean a revenue of about five shillings yearly per hen from eggs alone. Assuming his flock to contain about five hundred birds, on the low basis stated eggs will yield an income of one hundred and twenty-five pounds yearly, to which sum must be added the profits derived from the sale of table-fowl, eggs for setting, and choice birds for breeding purposes. In making general calculations as to rates of profit, however, the fact emphasised by Mr Newte must be considered. If experience prove that one hundred pounds a year can be made with four hundred hens, it does not follow that two hundred pounds a year can be made with eight hundred. On the contrary, after passing a certain limit, the profit derivable from each bird kept, no matter how careful the management, always declines. More than a limited number of birds can never be kept together with advantage; and if we multiply our flocks we must also multiply our yards and houses, and correspondingly increase the cost of management.

The annual laying competition is a recognised institution in Australia, and has helped and is helping greatly to improve the laying qualities of the flocks kept throughout the Commonwealth. The results of recent tests for periods of one and two years respectively carried out at Hawkesbury

College, in New South Wales, under the supervision of the Government poultry-expert for that state, are highly interesting. Over three hundred hens, enclosed in pens containing six birds each, and representative of all the chief breeds—white leghorns preponderating—took part in the competition. The winning pen of white leghorns established a world's record by producing the enormous number of two thousand six hundred and twenty-four eggs in two consecutive years, not one of the six original birds having to be replaced during the full period. The total sum received for these eggs when sold in the market was eleven pounds sixteen shillings and ninepence; so, roughly, each hen yielded a pound's worth of eggs per year, which represented a clear profit of nearly fourteen shillings apiece. The one hundred and fourteen white leghorns that took part in the competition averaged all through but a fraction below two hundred eggs per year for each bird, a conclusive demonstration of the marvellous egg-yielding capabilities of the breed in Australia. Finally, the average net profit derived yearly from each of the three hundred odd birds of all breeds that took part in the contest exceeded eight shillings, although during the larger portion of the full period the price of food was abnormally high. The test, it may be added, was of a thoroughly practical nature, the food being bought at current prices and the eggs sold in the open market.

Of course it will be objected that only picked birds take part in a competition of the kind just described, and that arrangements are subject to expert control. No doubt allowance must be made for these considerations. At the same time it must be borne in mind that at a laying competition returns are restricted solely to the proceeds of eggs sold for consumption. The practical poultry-farmer can usually sell a certain number of choice settings at from five shillings to a guinea a dozen, according to the reputation of his flock; and in addition he derives appreciable amounts from the disposal of stud-birds, table-fowl, &c. Of course, if the greater part of the food required can be grown on the farm at small cost, expenses of keep will be greatly reduced; but this must be borne in mind: the poultry-farmer, unless in a very large way of business, must look after his flock himself. The wages of a single man will swallow up all the profits derivable from at least a couple of hundred hens; and as female hands can do much of the work required on a poultry-farm, an industrious man with two or three equally industrious daughters would find the occupation eminently suitable. Judging by my own experience, the capital required to make a fair start need not be large. Three hundred pounds, half to be spent on stock and buildings, and the other half reserved to pay living expenses until the reproductive stage was reached, should suffice, if house and land were rented. If the beginner wished to own his place he would require at least as much more.

Perhaps, as an illustration of what has actually been done in the way of poultry-farming in Australia, a well-known example of successful enterprise may be cited. Some years ago Mr Samuel Ellis established a duck-farm at Botany, within a few miles of Sydney. His capital consisted of the modest sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, all of which had been borrowed. The original area, consisting of five acres of land almost pure sand, was taken under lease; but in three years the whole, with an acre in addition, was purchased out of profits. At the end of the short period mentioned Mr Ellis was selling from ten thousand to twelve thousand ducks yearly, besides eggs running up sometimes to as many as six hundred and thirty-three dozen per week. Substantial improvements had been made on the property, and ten incubators were kept going to renew the stock, which, besides ducks, included three hundred laying hens. Mr Ellis's balance-sheet, published in the *Agricultural Gazette* of New South Wales, shows the financial results for the third year—a most remarkable record of skilful management:

RECEIPTS.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sale of 2776 pairs of ducks, averaging 4s. 5d. per pair | £613 | 10 | 0 |
| Sale of 11,124 dozen eggs, averaging, say, 11d. per dozen | 509 | 17 | 0 |
| Sale of refuse | 59 | 6 | 1 |
| | £1182 | 13 | 1 |

EXPENDITURE.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Feed | £408 | 19 | 6 |
| Wages | 154 | 13 | 6 |
| Commission on sales, rent, improvements, and sundries | 255 | 8 | 2 |
| Balance—Profit | 363 | 11 | 11 |
| | £1182 | 13 | 1 |

It should be added that operations on Mr Ellis's farm are now carried on much more extensively, and there are other establishments of the kind in various parts of Australia equally large and successful. Ducks, indeed—provided a suitable place with ample supplies of water be chosen—pay better than hens. They are hardier, require less shelter and attention, and sell satisfactorily at an earlier age than the latter. If eggs are wanted, the Indian runner-duck is a better layer even than the leghorn hen, and has been proved capable of laying over three hundred eggs in a single year. I sell about three hundred ducklings each spring, when eight weeks old, at an average price of four shillings a pair; and this, allowing for losses and other deductions, leaves a clear profit of about one shilling and sixpence. Chickens I find to be considerably less remunerative, and they are subject to a much greater variety of ailments.

Speaking as one who knows from personal experience a little about the subject, I can assure English readers of *Chambers's Journal* that in Australia, at least, poultry-farming properly conducted will pay, and pay well. But, as in all other occupations, a certain amount of knowledge, industry, and close

attention to details is required to win success. Where possible, the orchard should be an adjunct to the poultry-farm, for the refuse of the latter greatly increases the productiveness of the former; and hens are indefatigable destroyers of insect pests of all kinds. For persons of delicate constitution in particular no outdoor occupations could be more suitable than those just mentioned.

# THE SIGNET-RING.

### STORY VIII.

### JAN.

NOW I must ask your attention while I tell you as briefly as possible of a journey that followed my nephew's discovery of the Inner Meaning.

This journey proved most useful, indeed essential; and Cecilia's intuition, which suggested it, was remarkable. But many of the details are probably interesting only to ourselves.

You must be told, however, that by a fairly logical process we decided that my great-grandfather was the likeliest person to have written in the ring. There was evidence in his letters to his wife of a certain similar perverse ingenuity; and it was Cecilia's theory that he wrote that sentence for his wife's information. He and his wife had been the last of the Carvells to live at Castle Carvell, which they left for the little house in Warwickshire; and Cecilia, anxious, I knew, to keep my mind off what I have elsewhere called 'The Shadow,' persuaded me to visit St Enns, when I stayed at my people's old home, changed into a much-advertised hotel.

I will not stop to tell you of Miss Potter, who received me, who ruled the hotel, and who first mentioned old Jan. Nor will I say much of the Vicar, Mr Bonaventure, whose far-off worshipper I suspect her to be. But of this he, poor man, is blissfully ignorant, being short-sighted and absent-minded in all except matters relating to the Church. He came upon me first the day after I reached St Enns, and while I stood in the chancel of the old church, staring at a memorial tablet which ran as follows:

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
RICHARD CARVELL
OF
CASTLE CARVELL,
WHO DIED
DECEMBER 14, 1840;
AND OF
CECILIA,
HIS WIFE,
WHO DIED
DECEMBER 15, 1840.
*'This night thy soul shall be required of thee.'*

Bonaventure, like Miss Potter, spoke of Jan, who was apparently a quaint specimen of the 'oldest inhabitant,' and a much thought of, though often unapproachable, source of local information.

I met 'Cap'n Jan' himself two evenings later upon the cliff, and precious little I got out of him then, as you will see. But I must give some detail here, as what I did learn helped to explain things later.

There was hardly a breath of air, and two boats making for harbour, with every stitch of sail set, had their sweeps out to save the tide. Looking down from the height, one could hear the splash and the men's sing-song voices. I watched until another voice nearer hand came from among the yellow cocoa-nut-scented furze-blossom, where a little cloud of blue smoke rose.

'You be company—and then you bain't,' the voice said; 'but for them that goes down to the sea in ships you don't keer a turn o' the head, Uncle Jan. Look at they chaps down along! Toilers o' the deep they be, an' here's Saturday night, an' not five minutes left to pass Dead Man's Comb! "If they miss it!" says I. "Let 'em miss it, an' be d—d to 'em for their slack ways!" says you, in a manner o' speakin', though you says nothin'.'

The name Jan caught my attention. I stepped on a bit and peered over the bushes.

Two men sat there together on the short, springy turf, and directly I saw them it was easy to tell which of them had spoken and what he meant. One, a broad, stout, cheery-faced, little old fellow in a blue jersey, and with a great frill of white whisker meeting under his chin, was watching the flash and fall of the sweeps on the liquid gold far below. The other sat beside him, but faced inland, his eyes fixed, his hands locked about his bent knees. I wondered if this was *the* Jan spoken of by Miss Potter and the Vicar, and I had a good look at him.

He was a much bigger man than his fellow, and very old and gaunt—the wreck of one of those yellow-haired giants that contrast with the shorter, darker type on the Cornish coast. I moved, and they heard me, and he turned cold, light-blue eyes toward me, then away again inland, while the shorter man spoke.

'Evenin', sir!—evenin'! A fine night for the fishin', as any tailor may see; an' here's Sunday comin' upon us like a thief in the night, as you may say. Jack Penberthy out in that there *Mary Jane*, he do lead the choir. But I reckon his thoughts'll be more deep than they be high

to-morrow—eh, Uncle Jan?' But the other paid no attention.

I sat down beside them, looking out to sea, and filled my pipe. The old fisherman who spoke first, and who at once told me his name was Jarge Pethick, and was evidently curious to know mine, was nearest to me. Like him, I faced the sea. It seemed to mark the other man curiously at once, that he should turn his back on both sea and sun. I addressed two or three remarks directly to him; but I had to speak across old Jarge, and that ancient mariner always replied for both.

'Drat that cheeld!' he exploded at last. 'She've been at it again!'

'What's wrong?' I asked.

'My gran'daaghter. She've been at my pockets again, an' my baccy's gone. Well, well! Like enough she'll be tryin' a chew.' He went on hunting his pockets over, muttering queer predictions about the child, that she would be 'wisht' and 'slight, sure 'nuff;' but ceased to worry when I handed him my pouch.

'I reckon the Lord 'll protect the li'le maid,' he said comfortably; and at that the huge bulk at his side stirred, and spoke for the first time.

'Did the Lord protect my li'le maid?' His voice startled me, rattling suddenly out of his big chest like broken thunder.

'There you be, Uncle Jan,' remonstrated the other, 'way back along whichever way your head 's turned, like Dicky Truscott's white mear. Why, your li'le maid 's been safe in Abraham's bosom these seventy years.' But already the old man's face was turned inland again, and he paid no attention.

'You bein' a stranger, as I reckon,' said the stout little man confidentially, loading his pipe most miraculously full, 'maybe I ought to 'polygise for Uncle Jan. Nice an' civil a man as you'll meet from here to Land's End, but he 's got the black fit on un. 'Twill last, I reckon, till the moon do change. No, sir, you don't need to think on his feelin's. Cap'n Jan ain't got none, so far as you 'm concerned.'

'I should guess him to be a great age,' I said. 'He has a right to think his own thoughts and not bother with strangers unless he 's inclined.'

'Seems like as if Death cast for un with too big a mesh,' old Jarge said with a sort of affectionate admiration. 'An' spite o' his size, Uncle Jan 's slipped through the net an' got left. Threescore years an' ten, we 're told, is the years of a man's life. Uncle Jan 's see'd fourscore an' ten this five years, so we do make 'lowances for he.'

'Do you share a boat?' I asked, and the stout little man chuckled at the idea, but promptly begged my pardon if he seemed rude.

'Tis easy to tell you bain't o' this parish,' he observed. 'Cap'n Jan 's a cap'n o' a mine—or used to was. He don't knaw a main-sheet from a main-hatch, I reckon. Neighbours we be—neighbours—an' goin' downhill together, as you may say; though I'm new off the stocks compared wi' he, me bein' but threescore an' fifteen last Summercourt fair. So we comes up here together most days, but looks different ways, as you may see. Every man to his trade. Likewise, "Where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also." I've two boys' bones lyin' out theer these ten years, an' as good a boat as ever left the quay. But Cap'n Jan's work lay theer;' and he jerked his head over his shoulder.

'Where?' I asked.

'In the old mine. 'Tis that way he looks most times. 'Twas closed down years since, when I was a boy. But he worked there for the Squire.—There, an' in Hell's Kitchen, didn't ye, Cap'n Jan, till they was wrecked?'

'Wrecked!' I began to be interested.

'The mine was wrecked when Squire Carvell died, an' then they went to law, an' 'twas shut down, an' the men they were scattered about to other mines. Cap'n Jan here, he went abroad. He h'ain't been back more 'n ten years or so. Seemed to think he couldn't count on more 'n eighty-five years here below, an' wanted to lie in the churchyard by his li'le maid, he do say. So he comed home.'

'How was the mine wrecked?' I asked; and the old fisherman shook his head mysteriously.

'Ah! How?—Tell un, Cap'n Jan.'

'The time had come,' said Cap'n Jan shortly, lifting his head.

'In a manner o' speakin', yes, no doubt,' the little man agreed. 'But that don't explain things to any one that don't knaw what *we* do knaw.'

'And what do you know?' I asked.

'That the Squire was no better than he should be, as the Devil's Kitchen do show to this day.'

The last of the Squire Carvells was 'a *real* bad un,' I was told; as proud as the devil, as wicked as the devil, and as clever. No, not quite as clever, for the devil bested him in the end—bested him, so that he died a sudden and mysterious death; took his soul away in a cloud of smoke, and wrecked his mine and his Devil's Kitchen, and killed his wife, and ruined the house of Carvell. 'They've never held up their heads since that day, so I've heerd,' piped the little fisherman.

'There 's a curse on the brood,' Cap'n Jan said, without turning to us or taking his eyes from the same point inland.

'As for the Kitchen,' old Pethick explained, 'theer it be to this day for you to see—what the devil left of un.'

'Where was the Kitchen,' I asked, 'and what was it for?'

'Hell-broth, I reckon, the Squire made there, let alone other things. You'd see the smoke an' the flames of un all across the bay o' nights. I knawed a lad as said he peeped in one night, an' see'd the devil workin' the bellows. The night the Squire died the place was scat [shattered] all abroad. Next mornin' there was a black hole in the floor like a

ship's hatchway, where folk said Old Nick went down. Passel [parcel] o' stuff, o' course. Still, I see'd the hole.'

'And where is the Kitchen?' I repeated patiently.

'Why, up along, behind Castle Carvell, to be sure.'

'I must see it,' I said, and tried to draw them on to further talk about the Squire; but I failed.

I don't know exactly how the end of our evening was approached, but as night came it grew chill. The old fisherman began complaining about rheumatism, and asked whether, 'as a gentleman,' I had any faith in the efficacy of bee-stings. 'Uncle Jan theer,' he said, 'do swear by 'em.'

Now I was interested, and said so, explaining that a friend of mine experimented with them. I questioned Cap'n Jan as to details; but it was always old Pethick who answered, and who gave a long and exciting account of the involuntary cure of Granny Trethewy, who had not used cold water in any way, either externally or internally, for years, on account of her rheumatics, but who took to the river in desperation after upsetting a hive. The bees pursued her till she ducked.

'She didn't have no rheumatism no more, an' died o' information.—But they don't cure old age or your light-headedness, Cap'n Jan,' he ended.

'Light-headedness!' I repeated. 'I wonder whether I could suggest anything for that.—I'm a doctor, Cap'n Jan. Let me have your hand a minute.'

Now old Pethick sat between us, but I stretched out a hand behind him, and touched Cap'n Jan's wrist as he sat with his knees drawn up and his hands clasped about them. Big veins stood out on the hand, and under my finger a slow pulse beat heavily—beat, and, while I counted it, stopped; missed perhaps three beats, and then began to race. I looked up into his face, and saw the light-blue eyes peering down at my hand. In another instant Cap'n Jan had pulled his wrist free, and rose, and, after standing a moment looking down into my face and cursing, went stumbling off down the hillside.

'Lord! what's come to he? Theer's manners!' Jarge said, scandalised. 'What can un be? He do get worse, specially this time o' year. But we gossipin' away so friendly like!' He sat up, muttering, and evidently hesitating whether or not to follow.

'At his age people often get peculiar,' I said. 'It's no use taking any notice, is it? How about your rheumatics?' and I got him to settle down again before I manœuvred him back to the Carvells, saying that I found these stories interesting.

''Tisn't much I do knaw, sir. Cap'n Jan could have told ye if 'twasn't for his tantrums,' he explained regretfully. 'But 'tisn't a thing he do care to talk on seemingly—specially this time o' year.'

'Why specially this time of year?'

''Tis the time his li'le maid died, an' he sets it down to Squire Carvell's account.'

'How on earth?' I asked, pretty much startled.

'Oh, 'tis just a passel o' lies likely,' old Pethick allowed; 'but 'twas the talk o' the parish when I was a boy. Likely there'd ha' been trouble for the Squire, high an' mighty as he was, but he died.'

'Tell me what you know,' I said, handing over my pouch again, and gradually I coaxed something like this out of the old fellow.

'Had a li'le devil shut in a box, had the Squire, but seemingly couldn't right control un. Times he'd do good, times he'd play the very mischief. 'Twas so with Cap'n Jan's li'le maid. She an' me was much the same age. I mind her with a girt splash like blood all acrost one side o' her face. I've heard Cap'n Jan say her mother saw Thomas Carew the keeper, after the poacher shot un in the face. I don't knaw. But the Squire he comed along one day, an' he see'd that mark. "I'll cure un," says he in his pride; an' Cap'n Jan's wife'd take the cheeld up to the castle, an' the Squire he'd hold the li'le devil in the box to the cheeld's face. Cure un he did, for the time, same as Naaman the leper. Then, whether the devil an' the Squire fell out, or whether the Squire got a spite against Cap'n Jan, folk didn't rightly knaw; but the poor cheeld's face began to fester, an' then to come away, same as that same li'le devil fed on it. She died at last, an' Cap'n Jan's heart broke (he was a widow-man already), an' he left the place an' went abroad. But, a few weeks later maybe, the Lord took on the job, or the devil came for his own. The Squire was down here alone, I reckon. The castle was closed; the Squire's lady was out o' the country, money bein' scarce, 'twas understood. He was toilin' away in the devil's kitchen. They said he could make gold. You could see the fire was lit an' the blast was on. I've heard tell o' folk watchin' it from the fishin' that night, an' sayin', "Here's the Squire home again, at his old tricks." At last there was a roar an' a screech, an' the devil took his own.'

'An explosion, in fact,' I suggested.

'Oh, o' course. We don't believe nothin' nowadays,' said old Pethick cynically. ''Tis a strange thing, though, that the mine was scat that same night, an' a good mile betwixt 'em.'

'So it was,' I agreed; and we strolled down through the shadows together, Jarge gossiping as we went, without getting very much attention from me.

To see Cap'n Jan again and coax him into a better frame of mind would be the next thing to do.

I never saw Cap'n Jan again, or, at any rate, when I did he was past coaxing.

The next day, after I had called on Bonaventure, and had got the promise of his intercession, I met with an unlooked-for difficulty. Cap'n Jan cleared out, vanished without warning—without a word, apparently, even to old George, his neighbour.

I hung about for a few days, getting odd bits of information, or misinformation, and then an old friend wired, begging me to take charge of his practice.

Then I took a train north, and thought as little as possible of the ring and all connected with it for some weeks.

*(To be continued.)*

## SOME TAYSIDE WINTER VISITORS.

WINTER winds and winter storms alter the whole aspect of Tayside, and the bird-population likewise undergoes a change. It is long since the summer birds flew southwards, and now—

**The north wind doth blow,**
**And we shall have snow.**

The entire face of the countryside is altered, and the conditions of life are therefore different; the birds band together more, and search over a much larger area in quest of food. During a severe and prolonged frost wildfowl are forced to leave their inland retreats and to congregate at the mouths of rivers and on the estuaries. The birds usually found on the high ground descend to the lower, and there is a general shifting of quarters.

The first real winter visitors to arrive are the redwings and fieldfares, coming from Scandinavia and their far northern nesting-grounds. Both these birds are somewhat like a thrush in appearance, the fieldfare especially resembling the missel-thrush; but neither has ever been known to breed in Britain. Curiously enough, the redwing is usually the first bird to suffer from really severe weather; and, in spite of its coming from the northern part of the Continent, it seems to be less hardy than its fellow-immigrant the fieldfare, and even than our native missel-thrush and mavis. During a protracted frost large numbers of redwings are often found starved to death.

The snow-bunting, although a few pairs are resident and breed in the Highlands, is not usually to be seen in this district until the advent of winter, and is most abundant during severe weather. The brambling is a regular winter visitant whose movements seem to be largely dependent upon the food-supply.

Cross-bills are not uncommon, though their movements are highly irregular; whilst the long-tailed and other tits band together in small parties bent on foraging expeditions. All through the winter months the different tits are very prominent, as also is the chaffinch. The local birds of the last-named species are reinforced by large parties from their northern breeding-area. The fact of large numbers of cock-birds being seen together in winter led the great Linnæus to christen this bird *Fringilla cœlebs*.

Down from the hills come the golden plover, to join with the lapwings; whilst the starlings feed and roost together in great numbers.

During these winter days one is certain to see many and various ducks. Widgeon, pochard, and golden-eye are regularly to be noticed, along with tufted duck, mallard, and teal, and occasionally the common wild swan (*Cygnus musicus*).

Even though the bird-watcher can no longer idle in the woods to watch for his favourite feathered friends, winter is by no means an uninteresting time in the bird-world; there is always the chance of a glimpse of some rare visitor driven from the north, whilst the absence of foliage makes it far easier to 'spot' the new arrivals. By the kindly offices of a feeding-tree or table one may entertain most of the avine countryside, and so become initiated into much of their private life.

As summer is the time of blossoms, so autumn is the time of berries, and Nature then provides her feathered children with a rich repast. Autumn, however, lasts but a short span, and then comes the rigour of winter, with all its attendant hardships, when one cannot help longing for the day when one may be able to echo the words of the sage: 'Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come. . . . Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'

## OIL-RAISING BY A NEW SYSTEM.

By FRED. A. TALBOT.

SINCE the United States first demonstrated the vast possibilities of oil for generating heat, light, and power, other countries have sought to develop their own resources in regard to this type of fuel. Oil is to be found in practically every country, but in fluctuating quantities, at varying depths, and of different gradea. When the commodity is in abundance, fairly fluid, and there is considerable pressure behind it, its extraction from Mother Earth is a very simple matter, the great difficulty being to harness the oil as it rushes from its underground store, so as to collect the output. In some districts, however, the oil can only be obtained by dint of great labour and expense, and under

such conditions the cost of extraction has a vital influence upon its commercial value.

This is particularly the case in regard to the Galician oil-fields. Here the outer crust of the earth imprisons vast deposits of valuable oil, which have to be brought to the surface through bore-holes in much the same manner as water is raised. Under such circumstances it might be considered that Galician oil could not hold its own against the enormous quantities spouted into the air in other countries. Such, however, is far from being the case. The Galician oil is in very great demand throughout Europe, and the oil-country is a bewildering maze of wooden pyramidal towers which dot the landscape thickly for miles around, while the thousand and one white spouts of steam issuing from the boiler-houses testify to the activity of the industry.

At the present moment the oil-industry of the Old World is deeply concerned in the development of a highly ingenious and simple system of raising the viscous liquid which has been devised by an Austrian engineer, Herr Bruno Leinweber. To such an extent is this the case that the efforts of the inventor are being severely taxed to meet the demands on all sides, for it is generally realised that he has evolved a revolutionary process which promises to supplant all methods now in vogue in the mining of liquids.

Some years ago this engineer, who has made a deep study of oil-raising methods, was striving to develop some more simple and efficient means than those in operation to facilitate and cheapen the cost of bringing the oil to the surface. He set to work in his laboratory. Numerous brilliant minds had attempted the solution of the self-same problem before, but with disappointing failure. At last a very simple idea occurred to him, and he resolved to try it. He built a small model, and its results quite surpassed his most sanguine expectations. He thereupon got into touch with one of the European oil-mining companies, unfolded his idea, and sought to carry out a practical experiment.

'I don't ask you to permit me to experiment upon a pit which is at present giving a good yield. Give me an old bore-hole—one which you have abandoned as not paying to work—and I will make it profitable by my process.'

There was no harm in meeting these peculiar wishes of the inventor, and a pit was placed at his disposal. He returned to his workshops, prepared the designs for a plant to fulfil the prevailing conditions, had it erected and transported, lock, stock, and barrel, to the snow-covered fields, and rigged it up straight away over the disused bore-hole. In the course of an hour or two after his arrival his apparatus was at work and was bringing oil to the surface.

This was in itself a decided development. That a machine could be built, carried intact from one point to another, and set to work in a few hours was something distinctly new in oil-pumping engineering. Hitherto such a task had involved the transport of boilers and a mass of other cumbersome mechanism which required days to set up, demanded a gang of skilled workmen, and was by no means an inexpensive enterprise.

The conditions under which the first practical experiment was made were extremely difficult. The country was in the icy grip of winter, labour was scarce, the roads were rough, and there was no mechanical power available in the inaccessible corner of the Carpathians, so that the apparatus had to be driven by manual labour. The oil in the pit was frozen and resembled fruit-jelly. With the available energy of the human engine, fifty minutes were occupied in filling a single barrel with oil. From the cursory point of view such a result did not seem very promising; but the inventor carefully calculated that with an efficient steam raising device such as is used in other parts of the country, his apparatus would successfully bring to the surface one hundred thousand pounds of oil per day. As a rule, inventors are prone to exaggerating the possibilities of the fruits of their inventive faculties; but no such charge could be raised against Herr Bruno Leinweber, for now that he has been able to get the system at work under general power conditions the above estimate has been exceeded by nearly 50 per cent.

What is the basis of this remarkable invention? It is the acme of simplicity. The idea, shorn of all accessories and mechanical attributes, consists in passing an endless band running over a roller through the oil within the bore-hole, and upon the return of the upward side of the band to the surface squeezing it between rollers and driving out the liquid which has been absorbed by the band. The possibility of this method of raising liquids can be very easily and satisfactorily proved by any one. Take a piece of thick string, tie the ends together, pass the upper part of the loop over a roller, and allow the lower part to trail through a basin of water. When the roller is revolved, carrying the band with it, one side of the band when it emerges from the basin will be found to be saturated with the liquid, which it has sucked up while passing through the water. If the soaked band after it has emerged is tightly pressed the water will be squeezed out. In time the basin can be completely emptied by this means.

The simplest type of machine evolved by the Austrian inventor to turn this idea to commercial practicability is well adapted to inaccessible oil-fields. A substantial timber stage is erected above the bore-hole, the endless band descends the pit, passes through the oil until it reaches the lowest point in its travel, then bends round and ascends. Upon emerging from the bore-hole it passes over a guide-pulley and then between two rollers which drive out the oil with which the band became

saturated in the pit. Issuing from the mangling rollers, it passes over other guide-pulleys, and re-descends into the bore-hole. The band being endless, the action is continuous, a constant stream of oil flowing from the mangling-rollers all the time the machine is running and the lower portion of the loop of the band is trailing through the oil in the pit.

Such is the simplest form of machine, which can be driven by hand as if it were a winch, or by a belt from the fly-wheel of a steam-engine. Practically no attention is required, as there is nothing to get out of order, and the oil as it is squeezed out falls into the trough in which the lower mangling roller revolves, from which it can be led off into barrels or tanks. No complicated mechanism whatever is requisite, and the power-drive can be of the most primitive form it is possible to conceive. The yield of oil at the pressing-rollers is to a very great extent dependent upon the speed at which the band is driven, for it is obvious that the greater the length of band that can be passed between the rollers per second the greater is the volume of oil obtainable in the same time.

In order to facilitate the soaking action of the band it is essential that it should be so made as to offer the maximum of absorption. This is accomplished in an ingenious manner. In the first experiments the inventor took an ordinary flat hempen rope such as is used in collieries for winding purposes, and on the outer face had it coated with shag like the pile of a carpet. The width of this coating, as well as its thickness, can be varied according to the limitations of the diameter of the bore-hole, but in the oil-fields of Kryg it was about three inches wide by a third of an inch thick.

'When the arrangements were completed for the practical test of the apparatus at Kryg,' narrated the inventor, 'I hurried forward the erection of the plant. The situation of the oil-fields in this district is very remote and wild. The nearest township is miles away, and the roads are of the roughest. I therefore urged that the apparatus should, if anything, err on the side of solidity and strength, as I did not relish the liability of a breakdown on the oil-fields, more especially as it was the depth of winter. When erected I subjected it to repeated severe tests in the workshop so as to make sure of everything, and then packed it for transportation intact. The endless band was made from three lengths of rope sewn together by means of an ordinary cobbler's sewing-machine, as the bore-hole in which it was to be tested near Maryampolski was about eight hundred and seventy feet deep. That shows how easily any repairs can be made should the band break.

'In due course we reached Maryampolski, and Mr W. H. MacGarvey, the chief engineer of the oil-company who had allowed me to use a disused pit, assisted me in the setting up of the machine. The pit for which it was designed was unavailable, so I had to resort to one one thousand seven hundred feet deep. The bore-hole was nine inches in diameter, which was the dimensions for which the rope had been prepared. As, however, I could not wait to get a new and longer rope, I had to make the best use of that designed for working to a depth of eight hundred and seventy feet.

'The climatic conditions were all against us. The band, which was laid out on the ground, became frozen and clogged with ice and snow, so that in lowering it into the pit we had to proceed slowly and carefully. As a result this operation took one and a half hours. Then, again, we had no steam-power available to drive the winding-rollers, so we had to press one of the mechanics into service, taking turns ourselves with the windlass. Under these conditions we could only impart a travelling speed to the band of about eight inches per second, and the yield at the pressing-rollers averaged about four ounces per foot of band; but, considering the difficulties against which we were contending, I considered this very satisfactory, as did also Mr MacGarvey. A few days later we succeeded in rigging up an old, primitive system of steam-drive which enabled us to get up a greater speed on the band, and the results were proportionately greater.'

Since that time the system has been subjected to more exacting tests on the Galician fields at Boryslav; and, owing to the more congenial conditions prevailing, the inventor's claims concerning the possibilities of his apparatus have been more than substantiated. The preliminary trials at Kryg suggested many happy improvements which have been incorporated, and now the system is working to a depth of four thousand three hundred feet.

The immunity of the process from breakdown, the facility with which repairs can be effected when such are requisite, and the fact that no skilled labour is necessary are three vital factors which have impressed engineers in these oil-fields, in addition to the high efficiency of the apparatus. Lowering the band is a very simple matter. The two ends are connected together, and the whole wound round a drum. As the winding-engine rotates the band is unwound and lowered into the hole, its own weight serving to facilitate descent. Should the band snap from any cause when running, an automatic device instantly stops the machine, and the upper end of the band is made fast. The other end is then wound up until regained, the two ends connected together again, and the band lowered. The complete operation can be effected in an hour or so, whereas in the ordinary plants a breakdown may stop operations for days.

Should the shag become badly worn at certain places, thus impairing its absorbent qualities, it is only necessary to stop the machine, and, without

withdrawing the band, sew fresh pieces of shag to the rope at the affected parts. Similarly, in the event of the rope wearing here and there, the faulty sections can be cut out while the band is in the bore-hole, and new pieces spliced in. Everything connected with the invention is reduced to the limit of simplicity.

The method of lowering the band is very interesting. First a cap is placed over the mouth of the bore-hole. As, however, the latter is highly charged with gas, provision has to be made for the escape thereof, so there are pipes connected to this cap. But the oil-borers do not waste the gas; they lead it to a pump and force it into a tank for use. The cap is then fitted with a lid provided with slots just wide enough to permit the band to pass through freely, and also what are called 'oil-strippers,' which skim the oil collected on the side of the band, and which cannot be reached by the pressing-rollers. It will thus be seen that as much oil as can be retrieved from the upcoming oil-logged band is secured. The gas, which is allowed a free travel up through the bore-hole and escapes through the special pipes in the bore-hole cap, is led subsequently to the furnaces to raise the necessary steam for driving the machinery. The band can be lowered to a depth of three thousand nine hundred feet in twenty-three and a half minutes, so that very little time elapses between the fixing of the plant above the bore-hole and the commencement of oil-raising.

In the latest type of machine the inventor has simplified the mechanism still further. Instead of passing the band over a nest of guide-pulleys and through special pressing-rollers, he now employs only two disc-wheels. The upper is of large diameter, while the lower is considerably smaller, and they are disposed rim to rim so as to secure practically a friction-drive, and also to act as the pressers. The upcoming oil-logged band upon issuing from the bore-hole passes over the lower disc-wheel and then round the upper disc, from which it drops straight into the bore-hole again. The pressure exerted upon the band in passing between the two discs forces out the oil, which falls in a continuous cataract into the conduit leading to the storage or barrel-filling department.

The apparatus has conclusively demonstrated its value to the oil-district. At one bore-hole where the existing plant was raising forty-four thousand pounds of oil per day the Leinweber machine was erected, and after working two days it augmented the yield of the pit to sixty-six thousand pounds for the same working period. In another pit the yield has reached the huge total of one hundred and forty thousand pounds per day, and even this by no means represents the limit possible therewith. In fact, it is conceded that it offers a means of hauling oil to the surface in greater quantities per day than is possible by any other known mechanical means.

The invention is applicable not only to oil-raising but to any case in which it is desired to raise a liquid or a fluid charged with organic matter. For instance, it can be used to convey acids which are so deleterious to metal pipes, and offers a cheap and easy means of clearing old workings and shafts charged with water. In the latter case, if the water is heavily impregnated with gravel, sand, or other material, it can be cleaned from the band as it emerges from the pit either by means of a water-flush or steam-jet. For working at extreme depths a wire cable is substituted for the hempen band, as it is stronger and lighter, and it is faced with the absorbing carpet-shag in the same manner as the hempen band. Several of the Galician bore-holes are now being fitted with this oil-hauling process, and its use will be extended to other parts of the world where similar conditions prevail, as the plants have been inspected by engineers from various countries and received favourable commendation.

## A RHYME OF MOUNTAIN-WALKING IN JAPAN.

One blissful day of every week,
Be sun or cloud about them,
I must the woods and mountains seek
I cannot live without them.

Food (which a little kerchief fills),*
A book, are all I need there;
There is a savour of the hills
Which hallows all I read there.

I climb until the bamboo-grove
Lies whispering below me,
To seek the pines which call above
And all the way will show me.

And human sights the pathway yields,
Whichever way it follows;
The peasant tills his terraced fields
Amid the mountain hollows.

Though sun or rain the landscape fills
With peace and health for guerdon,
The blue-clothed woodman of the hills
Beareth his fragrant burden.

Nor know I any penalty
Attached to these pure pleasures;
Just gifts untaxed they seem to be
To those who count them treasures.

And ever with the present bliss
The happy faith is blended,
That that which lights these glad hours is
Not finished when they're ended.

For by these scenes, when feeling strain
Of worldly things' insistence,
My soul becomes upright again
Remembering their existence.

L. A. Rawlings.

* It is a convenient custom in Japan to carry any kind of parcel tied up in a coloured kerchief.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

CIRCUMSTANCES have conspired in different ways to bring it about that the principality of Wales seems to loom much larger in public interest and importance than it did but a very few years ago. This is not to suggest in any derogatory way that it has not always been regarded as of great consequence when considered as a separate part of the kingdom, or that the doings of its people have not been looked upon with special curiosity and admiration. But in a very peculiar and characteristic manner the Welsh people have preserved a quiet independence, a certain aloofness, a feeling of nationality, until at the present time they seem to be exerting their strength as a people more than they have ever done previously in the modern era. Although at the first glance the suggestion may appear to be a little exaggerated, it is almost certainly true that now the Welshman is more Welsh than the Irishman is Irish or the Scot is Scottish. The sentiment of blood and clan is stronger in him, and he is more impervious to outside influences. Yes, that is the explanation specially. Wales in her quietness and contentment, her demeanour of reserve, her generally cold and unsympathetic glance upon what is outside the principality and its interests, is less susceptible to influences from the outside, less liable to any absorption in a common and unsectional society of Britain, than any other part of the whole. For all the flavour of separate nationality that the Irish and the Scotch bring with them to London when they come here, a far larger proportion of them become, as we may say, completely Anglicised in time, or perhaps not so much Anglicised as sunk in the London blend of cosmopolitanism, than is the case with the Welsh, who cling together more, support their patriotic societies and institutions in London more thoroughly and universally, and more frequently display a lifelong close attachment to the land of their fathers. When thorough Welshmen meet each other in London it is the common and recognised as the proper thing for them to converse in the Welsh language, and this is so much the habit with them that sometimes, forgetfully, they will fall into Welsh for a few sentences in a mixed company. In this and many other ways is the fire of national spirit kept aglow, and you may see it sometimes burst into a great flame when there is some special cause or excuse for Welsh rejoicing in the Metropolis, as when a Welsh Rugby football fifteen comes and gains a victory. Then you may sometimes see large groups of Welshmen suddenly and spontaneously formed in the open street, and in their peculiarly sweet and silvery tones they will sing, with a deep fervour and with a certain melancholy as of those who are far away, a well-loved national song. The outsider who looks on, being generally of duller, more phlegmatic, more matter-of-fact temperament than those Welshmen, is sometimes moved sentimentally by these displays of racial pride and feeling, and sees much to admire in them. In Wales there are things being done all the time having the object or effect of preserving the national individuality, notably the annual celebration of the Eisteddfod, which has no counterpart in England, Scotland, or Ireland. Any success in the outer world by Wales or by a man of Wales serves to fan the national fire; and it is a sound proposition that the career of Mr Lloyd George in statesmanship has done less to bring Wales to a fuller idea that she is an integral part of a whole, that she is not so much Wales as a part of Britain, than it has to strengthen her Welshness, as it were, and increase her sense of being the separate entity. In this matter it may be said of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he is very representative of the Welshman not only in many characteristics of manner, but even in appearance. Mr Lloyd George's type of features is one that recurs over and over again in almost every small community of Welshmen, and it is one that is never encountered among the men of any other race. It is no exaggeration to say that there are hundreds of people in Wales who at a

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very short distance might be mistaken for the Chancellor by those who had seen him on only a few occasions. The essence of the individuality of facial feature, the stamp of the typical Welshman, lies in the flat and square-cut forehead, the thick and overhanging eyebrows in straight alignment with each other, the very bright and keenly penetrating eyes constantly screwed up a little, the prominent cheek-bones, firm chin, usually the plain black moustache, and the thick black hair. The general effect is one of strength and reserve, and also of fervour and a genial kindness. The thoroughly typical Welsh features, which are as peculiar to their own race as are those of the Red Indian or the Hebrew, are certainly excellent and pleasing to look upon, and for all his reserve they predispose us towards confidence in the man.

* * *

The Welsh are a people of tremendous energy, earnestness of purpose, and strength of character; but yet, bearing within them so many of the necessary elements of success, they are said to fail conspicuously—and there is the support of some leading Welshmen for the suggestion—to produce the genius as they might be expected to do upon a general consideration of their opportunity and their ability; and it appears all the more remarkable when we reflect that of all peoples inhabiting northern latitudes there is none of such keen temperament, so well imbued with tight-strung emotion. It is particularly the temperament that should produce some dazzling results, and yet the suggestion has been made that, admitting to the full the splendid quality and career of some of the sons of Gwalia, and considering that quite likely the average of intellectual merit among the middle and upper classes is at least as high in Wales as it is in other parts of Britain, the race in proportion to its numbers has produced the genius —save on the poetic side—much less frequently than those other parts have done. This may be thought to be all the more surprising when we let the fancy dwell on the fine features of their native land, and on the peculiar fascination and influence exercised by its hills and mountains on all but the dullest souls. The contemplation of mountain views, as we know, stirs the emotions and forces the inspiration as nothing else in nature will. They quicken the imagination by the realisation of immensity and the vastness of the unknown and of time, of the transcendent authority of the Almighty. The mountains and the sea do this, and the mountains more than the sea, because of their greater variety and the solemnity of their stillness. The hills and mountains of Wales are not so lofty, but in their smallness they have a peculiar strength. There seem to be a pathos in them, the great beauty of a certain sadness, a particular suggestion of ancient time that are not so well exerted by rougher and grander peaks. The air about these little hills of Wales seems to be laden with music and with passion, and it does instil them into the people of the land. And the country ever seems to be imbued with the spirit of romance, and on every hand there are ruins and remembrances of legend and antiquity. It is a country that has inspired the genius of many others—writers, artists, musicians, foreigners—who have wandered there from far away. In Flintshire, less sought out by holiday-people than other parts of Northern Wales, there are some of the most beautiful and stirring scenes, and but lately I stood by a stream that winds through the magnificent Leete, and learned that Mendelssohn himself when resting there had been moved to the creation of one of his most splendid songs which he called 'The Rivulet.' For the last two or three years the outsider, the general tourist or holiday-maker, has been bringing himself to know far more of Wales than he ever did before, and he is appreciating the rich beauties of the country exceedingly. Wales is being opened up to the public as never previously, and a new era in her revival seems to have begun, this being one of those circumstances referred to at the beginning as tending to make the principality seem of larger interest and importance than it had done. But on the point of the failure of the country to produce the great genius in proper numbers—if there has been such a failure—some may profess to find an explanation in the clannishness and reserve of the people and a certain weakness in the spirit of rivalry which they entertain towards others. They are more ambitious among themselves than they are for themselves against others. And it has been said also that the Welsh women, charming as they are, possessed in a marked degree of some of the best qualities of womanhood, having the domestic sense in them cultivated to a most abnormal degree, are less stimulating to their menfolks than are the women of some other nations, their simplicity of taste and idea and their lack of ambition being largely responsible. Many powerful arguments, however, may be brought against this suggestion and in vindication of the strength and power and encouragement of the Welsh woman; and although Bulwer Lytton may not have written rightly when he said that no man ever did anything worth remembering until he cared no more for women than he did for an old hat, the men of a race should be able to make their successes for themselves, as great men have always done, while genius has been as often hindered by womanly influence as it has been quickened by it. As a factor in the consideration of racial achievement such influence should perhaps be neglected. But without giving any further thought to this question of genius and accomplishment, it should be realised, and will be better as time goes on, that there are many features of the Welsh character which are pleasing to a high degree, very beautiful, very delightful. Welshmen, perhaps, are not generally popular to a full average extent among other peoples, but that is certainly not so much because of any demerits of theirs, although that has almost naturally come to be regarded as the reason, as

because of their own reserve, and their exaggerated disposition to keep in close association with themselves alone. There is no friendship which is warmer than that of the Welshman when it is fairly established with him, and no loyalty to such a friendship that is firmer. And there is no hospitality which is better than that which you may gain in Wales. Those who, not being of her, have known Wales longest and most intimately like her best and love her people most.

* * *

All these considerations are naturally suggested by the chief of all the circumstances tending to raise Wales at the present time to a place of higher interest, to make her a subject of more special contemplation and study, than ever before—namely, the royal determination that there shall be a formal and highly ceremonial investiture in Wales itself of the young Prince of Wales, who is the eldest son of the sovereign of the realm. This will take place at Carnarvon Castle next July, in the month following the Coronation, and without a doubt it will be a most impressive State pageant. It will be a great day for Wales, the greatest celebration of her nationality that she has ever known, and for it she will be more Welsh, more of the separate entity in the kingdom, than she has ever been. Carnarvon Castle will be an ideal scene for such a celebration; but Wales is a country of excessive and innumerable jealousies, and they have been exerted in the matter of the choice of this scene. Perhaps there was good excuse for them. An English Prince of Wales has never yet been invested in the country from which his title is taken. It happened that, although the first Prince was born at Carnarvon, he was grown to manhood before he received the title, and it was at Chester that the Welsh chieftains paid their homage to him. Several of the subsequent Princes were invested at Westminster. Now that the ceremony is to take place with great display in Wales, it is natural, perhaps, that there should have been some dispute as to the right of Carnarvon to the high distinction. With her historic past and her great traditions, there are many very famous localities in Wales, famous for their association with events of great consequence. Owen Glyndwr planted the red dragon in the streets of Cardiff, which for commercial importance and extent of population is by much the chief city of the country. Then there is Monmouth, which was the birthplace of King Henry V., and Pembroke, where the seventh Henry first saw the light of day. The times of Hywel Dda are recalled to patriotic and educated Welshmen when Carmarthen is mentioned, and the beginning of Owen Glyndwr's great revolt took place at Corwen, in the county of Denbigh. Generally the southern part of Wales has seemed to bulk larger in history than the northern; but it is in the north, at Carnarvon, that the investiture will take place, and it is Cardiff, in the south, that has felt most jealousy in the matter. However, there can be no doubt of the wisdom of the King in accepting the suggestion of the special and well-qualified committee who gave close consideration to the matter, that by tradition and historical association Carnarvon is best qualified. We may be sure that the Welsh people will see that the ceremony lacks nothing in form and dignity, in grandeur and in colour, in remembrance of the greatness of the past of the country, in significance of the patriotism of the people. Wales will have her day of days next year, and the year will be the year of Wales.

* * *

We are drawing on to the deep winter season. We have changed some of our clothes and several of our habits and customs, and have in general adopted the winter way of life, with its certain limitations and its various and agreeable compensations. It is a fairly common sentiment that, though a season may have gone, there are reasons for hailing with some pleasure the advent of a new season; and it is one thing that has indeed to be said jointly to the credit of the British climate—so much abused, and never with better justification than in recent times—and the temperament of the British people, that life in these islands is really made very bearable and pleasant at all times. The Britisher's capacity for adapting himself to circumstances, which has served him so well in his grand exploring and colonising enterprises, is constantly displayed on the smaller scale in his plain life at home. And among the other things, we have of course changed our public outdoor games to suit the new season; and the chief difference between the public games of the cold and wet and uncomfortable months and those of the period when it is or should be pleasant to sit on wooden benches in the open is that the former are much the more popular with the people who do the sitting, and are vastly better attended. It is just at this time of the year, in fact, when the summer cricket is well forgotten, and all its incidents and excitements have been consigned to the limbo of past history, and we have settled down thoroughly to the eight months' season of football conducted in large part amid the rains and winds and frosts, that we wonder and are amazed yet more than we were a year ago at the extraordinary popularity that this form of entertainment has gained with the masses of the British public. For each year does indeed see this popularity increase, and the taste for the show is being established and cultivated every winter in places which had hitherto been free of it, so that in a very little while it may be impossible to discover any centre of population, however small, without its professional Association football, organised by a limited company, and attracting thousands of people to witness the matches on Saturday and other afternoons. It may be safe to say that there are ten times as many regular football spectators now as there were ten years ago, and the rate of increase is so

rapid that the case must be regarded as a serious one, demanding the close consideration of sociologists and all those who are interested in the national welfare. Think of this, that on the second Saturday of the present football season, when the weather was still fine and warm, when cricket was still being played, and the conditions were still excellent for outdoor recreations such as cycling, walking, tennis, bowls, and so on, there were two hundred and thirty thousand spectators in attendance upon only ten of the leading games of football in England, nearly a quarter of a million people standing shouting, shrieking, exciting themselves most abnormally, and sometimes behaving in a way it were better they had not done, while watching the evolutions—possibly clever of their kind—of a number of men paid and specially trained for the purpose. At one of the places of comparatively recent attachment to this entertainment there was the largest congregation of watchers; that is to say, at one match at Oldham, in Lancashire, there were in attendance nearly forty thousand people, who among them paid the sum of nine hundred and twenty-two pounds for a performance lasting an hour and a half. None of us, whatever our disposition, is permitted to be ignorant of any of these matters, for rather more space is given to them in the morning newspapers on Mondays than is given to the record of the proceedings on the Stock Exchange and the reports of the state of the financial and other markets throughout the world. Headlines in much larger type than is vouchsafed to those surmounting intelligence of foreign affairs of high importance or of some great achievement in art or science force upon us the information that Chelsea have gained some 'points' or that Sunderland have had hard luck in being beaten by a goal, that MacBrown has been brilliant at half-back, or that Smithers has been a serious disappointment in the centre.

* * *

Now it is clear that, for good or ill, this thing has already become a big and important feature of our national life, and that soon it will become a much bigger and more important feature. It demands serious consideration and analysis, and needs to be examined in a critical manner. Here and there one hears occasionally a mild word of disapproval uttered; but it is followed by an overwhelming rebuke, for the *vox populi* is for this amazing spectatorship. And that being so, politicians and other publicists, who are mostly opportunists in these days and hypocritically kow-tow to the democracy on every convenient or unavoidable occasion, vouchsafe to the entertainment a certain smug and unconsidered approval. Members of Parliament and candidates for membership will 'kick off' on special occasions, and they will present cups and medals to successful sides, and will frequently commit a grave offence in comparison by recalling the old idea that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton! If these gentlemen have the opportunity they may not lack the courage after some future war which may settle the fate of Europe for a century to suggest that it was won on the football-grounds of Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, or of Glasgow and Dundee! One thing certain is that Germany, which has been mentioned in connection with this future war, marvels at this vast spectatorship in Britain, and most warmly approves of it, just as she approves of any mistakes in policy—as she may conceive them to be—which are committed by our Government. This kind of thing is not done in Germany or anywhere else on the Continent, and if there were a tendency towards it in the Fatherland it would most certainly be suppressed. We may be very sure of that. So clearly there is a call for the serious consideration of what must be admitted to be a most serious matter. It is really so serious that there is no extravagance in the suggestion that a Royal Commission might very properly be appointed for its complete and thorough consideration. Before this commission there would be a heavy weight of evidence given to the effect that this spectatorship is a good thing for the masses of the people who make it; that it is an innocent enjoyment (which could not be denied); that by keeping the hundreds of thousands, the millions even, out of doors in the open air it promotes health (which is very doubtful, considering the conditions); and that it keeps them out of the public-houses (which it certainly does for an hour and a half, but draws them in for discussion of the football situation in large numbers both before and after). It would be most difficult for the advocates of the spectatorship to prove that its popularity has led to any diminution of the consumption of ales and spirits among the working classes on Saturday afternoons or any wiser and more careful application of the weekly wages of the worker. And it is not as if the evil—if it is an evil—began and ended on the Saturday afternoon. The spectators' thoughts during most of the week are filled with this subject, to the exclusion of most others. And it is all excused for them in the quasi-sacred name of sport! If they played it would not be the same thing; if they had ever played it would not be quite so bad; if the players were of their own place, and were unpaid, there would be better justification for it than there is; if the management of the whole business were simpler and purer, and there was no betting and gambling, there would be less to urge against the system. One of the questions put to the commission would be, 'What should be the alternative?' What need is there for any alternative? And another question would be, 'How can we reduce it?' In the same way that we reduce other things that we consider wholly unnecessary and perhaps bad—by putting a heavy tax on it. And the tax-money might be given to the strengthening and encouragement of the Territorials, and in that way we might even find an alternative.

# THE HEXMINSTER SCANDAL.

CHAPTER V.—*continued.*

THE silence was awful. Garland had apparently not lost his composure, but had turned to examine the map upon the wall. Mrs Hellier's face was pallid, but she had passed the point of violence some time back. She was a woman who had never learned how to swoon, and at that crisis she was sorry for it.

'Mrs Hellier,' said Morgan bluffly, 'if this scene has not pleased you, it is your own fault. You gave me no other opportunity. There is this benefit, however—that you now know all without having to be told. I ask your sympathetic attention for my promised wife.'

The lady glared at the brute ineffectually.

'I must leave you for a few minutes,' he went on, 'to get my papers for the—trial.—Alison, do not let anything trouble you. I will see you again immediately.'

She smiled without speaking. Taking up his hat, he opened the door and closed it behind him. The three were left together.

Presently Mr Garland turned and glanced at Mrs Hellier. Then he looked at the clock and saw that it was five minutes after eleven. It had taken only such a little while to turn their world upside-down. He concealed his feelings with some success.

'The matter,' he said quietly, 'has to some extent been taken out of our hands. Do you think we can do anything more?'

'We will have the truth, at least!' was the painful reply from a woman whose state of mind was truly pitiable. Whereupon he nodded, and decided to wait. There might still be some compensation in store, and he felt that he needed it.

Miss Vicars heard the question and answer, but did not notice them. It was too late now, and her faith was too new and too great to be easily shaken. A strange medley of thoughts passed through the girl's mind, all tinged, no doubt, with rose-colour. She had found the essential, and must resolutely forget the trivialities. This man had come and had found her soul almost sleeping, and had called to it and awakened it. . . . She would never let it fall asleep again; indeed, with him at her side it could not do so. And that two thousand pounds would be a great gift to give him after all; it would help him to a good business, and might prove to be the pedestal of his fortunes. As to the wristbands—well, they were not so very terrible; she would persuade him to wear linen. . . . Of course this would be a great and everlasting scandal now. For the future, many events in Hexminster would be dated from the year of 'that Miss Vicars' affair.' But, after all, what did that matter? . . . Then the old people on the Green—would they be pleased? She thought they would. . . . In a way, she had always liked them, and now she would soon love them. Their hero had become hers. Why, it was in their cottage that she had met him.

Then she came back to present things as a footstep approached the door. But it was not David Morgan; it was an elderly, gray-bearded gentleman with a slightly important air, who came into the room and looked at them curiously.

'Mrs Hellier?' he asked, turning at last to that lady. 'The Premier will see you now.'

'We are quite ready,' she said stiffly; and she prepared to prevent any attempt on Alison's part to make an escape.

The old gentleman considered. 'I am the Agent-General for Kingsland,' he said pleasantly. 'I gather that you want particulars with regard to the David Morgan affair. The Premier, I should say, is the only person in England just now who can give them. As it happens, it was by his efforts that the attempted frauds were exposed and prevented.'

'So we understand,' said Garland politely. 'That was why we applied to him.' And he glanced at Alison's face.

'Very good. Then will you kindly follow me?'

Alison was a little uneasy that Morgan had not returned, but concluded that he was probably awaiting them in another room. Accordingly they followed their guide down a corridor to a door at which he paused impressively. Then, seeing that they were all mustered around him, he tapped gently and pushed it open.

This room was flooded with light and sound, for it looked out, through tall windows, upon Victoria Street. The Premier stood gazing out into the street, his back to them and the door, erect and frock-coated, and apparently a man still under the middle age of life. The Agent-General advanced only half-way to him.

'Sir,' he said pompously, 'Mrs Hellier and her party;' and then turning, 'The Premier of Kingsland.' And with that the old gentleman, amiably inclined to magnify his Premier as well as his office and himself, moved back to the door and vanished. And after a moment the Premier turned and came towards them.

As he moved Miss Vicars started. His face was in shadow, but every motion seemed to thrill her to the heart. Mrs Hellier was again silent in the paralysis of astonishment. It was an unpleasant day for that poor lady. And Garland, taken utterly unawares for once, muttered something which need not be printed.

The man who stood before them was dressed now in the ordinary dress of an English gentleman—

always the last test of a man's fitness to wear it, and never so absurd as when worn by the unfit. But there was no unfitness here, and Alison saw instantly that it was the one thing this man had needed. Erect, strong, and masterful, he gathered all their dignity to himself, so that, meeting him anywhere in the street, you would have turned to say, 'Now, I wonder who he is.'

He advanced quite slowly till only the table was between them, looking, not at Alison, but at her aunt and Garland; and he spoke in a calm, level tone that had no hint of coarseness in it.

'I am the Premier of Kingsland,' said David Morgan simply.

. . . . . .

The interview was, no doubt, a little confused, and no two stories are in perfect agreement. It is true, however, that Lewis Garland was extremely angry, and shouted that it was a trick—a scoundrelly trick. But the Premier disposed of him quickly.

'When I began to be prominent in Kingsland,' he said, 'I found another David Morgan in the public eye—the man who has since distinguished himself by his frauds. So I took the name of Justyn Morgan, the name of the street in which my business was. I do not blame you for your mistake—any one who did not like me might have made it; but I feel a genuine contempt for the man who, to gratify an ancient schoolboy spite, tried to give pain to an old father and mother whose faith in their absent son was their whole existence. For that, sir, if I were not the Premier of Kingsland, I would flog you!'

Garland was astounded. It is even claimed for him that some trace of shame appeared in his face.

By this time Mrs Hellier was coming to herself—a self very much shattered and broken in spirit, but with a dawning perception of the course to pursue. There were some popular principles not unfamiliar even to the select circles of Hexminster.

'I am afraid,' she said, 'that—that I have been misled by—by—*this person*.'

Admirable woman! The Premier smiled and touched a bell. Immediately the cheerful young clerk opened the door.

'This gentleman,' said the Premier, 'wishes to be shown out of the house.'

And Garland went. At the end he strove to recover his self-command, and, though he did not speak again, his departure was fairly creditable. When he went he passed for ever out of Mrs Hellier's circle.

The three were left alone, and Mrs Hellier, exhausted, sank into a chair. For a few moments David Morgan and Alison stood looking at one another. Then he came nearer and drew her aside.

'It was not to deceive you,' he said; 'it was to prepare a surprise for my father and mother. But after I had seen you I felt that I must make you love me in spite of my clothes. I thought that I could help you to do it, and that it would be good for you to do it. Are you sorry that you did it at last?'

How was it possible to be sorry? 'And those wristbands,' she whispered, 'were a part of the play?'

'I saw that you studied them,' he admitted, 'and perhaps I made them rather more conspicuous'—

She could only laugh then. When she laughed her mouth, as I have said before, was an exceedingly attractive one. The Premier glanced at Mrs Hellier; but by this time that good lady had risen so nobly to the necessities of the moment that she had gone to the farther end of the room and was gazing out into the street with vivid interest. So, being only human, he drew the girl nearer.

'*Excuse me, miss*,' he said.

And knowing that no one observed them, she excused him with charming and glorious willingness.

. . . . . .

It is now a matter of history that on his recent visit to the Old Country the youngest and most distinguished of Colonial statesmen—I have called his colony 'Kingsland' for various reasons—received the honour of knighthood. It was an acknowledgment of his services to the cause of Imperial Federation and Defence, and a token of the favourable impression he had created in the highest circles. But there were certain romantic circumstances connected with his visit, and these, getting into the papers, gave the country an innocent sensation for fully nine days. By a peculiarly happy arrangement, the knighthood was actually conferred just two days before the date of the Premier's marriage, and it was as Sir Justyn Morgan that he met his bride at the altar of the ancient Cathedral of Hexminster.

It was naturally a great day for the old city, for there was quite an influx of Colonial statesmen, and British Parliament people, and newspaper people, and other people of every other kind. The Rector officiated, according to promise, for once taking precedence of all the Cathedral clergy, from the Bishop downwards; and, judging from the light in his face, that was certainly one of the happiest days in his life. On that day the sealed gardens echoed to strange voices, for even the tall gray walls could not keep out the ring of laughter and rejoicing. At the ceremony itself two old cottage-folk sat in a front seat, their countenances all aglow with pride and wonder, and every one treating them with respect and consideration. It was their faith, the Premier declared, that had spurred him on to his high achievements.

Afterwards, one day, Sir Justyn and Lady Morgan—it is difficult to recognise poor Miss Vicars here—went to the National Schools, where the Premier gave an address to the children; on which occasion, it may be said, Mrs Hellier occupied a front seat in a double circle of Hexminster notables with undisguised goodwill and personal gratifica-

tion. She had long ago forgiven that appalling letter. A little later the bustle and stir died away, and the old city fell back into its accustomed stillness.

But the tokens remain. Walking through the Mill fields the other day, I saw the Canon looking at those of them which are engraved upon a sycamore-tree. The Canon was formerly called the Rector, and it was his prominence in connection with the great wedding that brought him this tardy promotion.

'Ah, sir,' I said, 'you are thinking of yesterday's scandal.'

'Yes,' he replied thoughtfully, 'yesterday's, and to-morrow's, and all the other to-morrows' as long as the old world shall swing in its orbit. But,' he proceeded, 'it was not a scandal. That was a great mistake from the beginning, quite apart from the blunder in regard to identity — which was a comedy. There was a man who had sought his life-companion at the ends of the earth and failed to find her; but when his filial constancy brought him home, he came upon her standing waiting for him on the threshold of his father's cottage. Was that a scandal?'

He required no answer, but went on joyously:

'And there was a woman, gentle in spirit and meek, who could yet rise so bravely above the cramping conventions about her that she could prove true to the ideal she had found, even though it came disguised in homespun. Was that a scandal?

'No,' continued the Canon finally, as we turned from the tree. 'A romance, perhaps—but a scandal, never!'

THE END.

## POSTAGE-STAMPS SUPERSEDED.

THE introduction of postage-stamps effected a marvellous change as regards the posting of letters. Formerly letters had to be presented singly at the post-office 'window' when the office was open, and the postage had to be paid in cash, the amount being marked on each letter. Letter-boxes or 'receivers' into which letters could be dropped were not then required, as the letters were retained by the official who marked the postage. The use of stamps, however, changed all this, and the subsequent mode of posting—simply dropping, as at present, a stamped letter into a letter-box—formed a marked contrast with the foregoing. Were it not for stamps, too, we could not have our convenient pillar-boxes.

For other reasons, also, stamps have proved a great convenience; but owing to the recent invention of a stamping-machine for giving 'paid' impressions their use is likely to be largely reduced in future. This, indeed, has already occurred in New Zealand, where the machine has been for some considerable time in operation; and if it should be generally adopted, which is not improbable, the use of stamps in merchants' and other offices where large quantities are required will soon practically cease.

At present the postage of inland letters, &c.—if the amount reaches at least twenty shillings—can be prepaid in cash at certain post-offices in the United Kingdom, on compliance with certain further conditions, some of which are as follows: Except as regards the Metropolitan and the larger provincial post-offices, two clear days' notice, exclusive of Sundays and public holidays, must be given in writing. The letters must be chargeable with a uniform rate of postage, and must be presented in bundles each representing a postage of five shillings. They will then be impressed with the 'paid' stamp, which secures their free transmission. The New Zealand machine gives a similar 'paid' stamp impression, and its use obviates all the trouble caused by the above conditions, and saves the time of the sender of the letters and of the postal officials as well. One letter can be dealt with at a time as well as a thousand, and at whatever time may be most convenient. Nothing besides the impressing of the 'paid' stamp is necessary, and when the letters are posted they are treated exactly as if they bore postage-stamps. The manner in which the postage represented by these 'paid' impressions is checked and collected will appear in the following account of the 'evolution' of the machine.

Like all inventions which have reached the stage of practical utility, it underwent many changes since its initial inception. The original idea was a 'penny in the slot' machine for use outside post-offices and at pillar-boxes; but after being tried for some time it had to be abandoned, owing to the fact that foreign coins, tokens, discs of lead, washers, &c. were used. The machine has yet to be invented which will differentiate between such articles and the bronze coin.

An advance immediately followed in the form of a coin-freed machine—a most ingenious invention—for office use, &c. On the insertion of a sovereign the mechanism was unlocked, and impressions of a halfpenny and penny to the value of twenty shillings could be obtained, when the machine automatically locked itself pending the insertion of another sovereign. This proved such a convenience to business people that the idea naturally occurred to increase the number and value of the impressions given, and the invention then reached its third stage.

The new machine on the insertion of a sovereign would give impressions of a halfpenny, penny, two-

pence, threepence, fourpence, fivepence, and sixpence, until the sovereign was exhausted, when the machine closed automatically. So perfect were these machines that, say, the dial showed that nineteen shillings and tenpence had been used, and the user wanted to get a sixpenny impression, the machine would give the impression, lock itself, and debit the fourpence to the next sovereign! After it had been thoroughly tried by the post-office department, and found to work satisfactorily, the Postmaster-General declined to give authority for its general use, his principal reasons being the fact that the clerks in the post-office would have to handle so much cash when collecting the amounts put through the machines, also the danger of burglary.

The inventor then evolved the present machine, which, while it includes all the advantages that were possessed by the former ones, entirely disposes of the objections referred to. After severe practical tests and a critical examination by experts, the Postmaster-General not only granted permission for its general use, but had it adopted in various departments of the public service.

Unlike its predecessors, the present machine requires no coin to operate it. It gives impressions of a halfpenny, penny, threepence, sixpence, and a shilling, and as each impression is made its value is automatically recorded on a dial in front of the machine, which is plainly visible. This dial records up to four hundred pounds, when it again starts at zero. The four hundred pounds, however, is also recorded on a main dial which is not visible except when a departmental officer chooses to open the machine for the purpose of reading and checking the records. Some of the machines are constructed to record up to four thousand pounds, and then the dial automatically resets at zero. The machines are found in the offices of almost all the leading merchants, &c., in New Zealand, and it is stated that since the first was put in use their success has been unquestioned.

A further advantage they possess is that in the event of the non-delivery of a letter it can be returned unopened, as the number of the machine, which appears on each stamp impression, gives an index of the sender, who presumably is the owner of the machine. It is claimed, too, that they absolutely prevent fraud, save time, keep a reliable record of the postage account, and generally are such a convenience as to be an indispensable adjunct in every mercantile office.

The machines can only be purchased from the proprietary company subject to the Postmaster-General's approval in each case. When a conditional purchase is thus made the name of the purchaser is furnished to the post-office, and such inquiry regarding him as may be considered necessary is then instituted. Should the result be satisfactory assent is given and the machine is delivered. The key, however, is at the same time handed over to the post-office, where it is retained in order that the records made simultaneously with the process of stamping, which appear on the main dial inside, may be periodically examined for the purpose of having the postage collected. There is only *one* key, so that no person other than an authorised postal official can have access to the inner dial. It cannot be stated exactly what the result of these safeguards for the protection of the postal revenue has been, whether they have proved entirely effectual; but as the Postmaster-General recently wrote to the proprietary company that 'the machines continue to give satisfaction, and are also a great convenience to the users,' it may be presumed that he is satisfied with them. I am certain, however, that if they should be adopted in this country further safeguards would be insisted on. It would obviously be a very serious thing to sanction the use of, say, a thousand machines representing a total of four hundred thousand pounds of postage, or even the use of a hundred representing forty thousand, without some security against the bankruptcy or insolvency of the users, or the failure, from whatever cause, to produce the machines for the examination of the records. This, however, could be provided for by requiring a payment in advance of, say, one hundred pounds (one-fourth of the capable yield of each machine), prepayment of a similar amount being also required—on the previous one becoming exhausted.

There would be the further danger of a machine or machines getting into improper hands, and being used without the knowledge or sanction of the post-office department. Letters prepaid at post-offices and impressed with the 'paid' stamp there, as already explained, are dealt with exceptionally; but it would not be possible to treat exceptionally letters stamped by the machines, as they would be posted in the ordinary way, and consequently those coming from an unauthorised one could not be detected. This difficulty could, however, be overcome by the post-office department purchasing the patent and manufacturing the machines, thus becoming the sole source of their supply. There are some other ways also in which the postal revenue might possibly be affected, and these would have to be considered; but I feel certain that the experienced officers of St Martin's le Grand would have but little difficulty in instituting such safeguards as would effectually protect it.

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### A NEW HIGH-SPEED TELEGRAPH INSTRUMENT.

SOME interesting experiments are now being made with a new telegraph instrument designed by two German electricians, Siemens and Halske, which may prove a formidable rival to the systems of Wheatstone, Murray, and Baudot. The principle follows somewhat the idea of Pollak and Virag, who a few years ago introduced an instrument in which the movements of a telephone diaphragm, through the medium of a mirror, caused a ray of light to record telegraph signals upon photographic paper in a dark chamber. The Siemens-Halske apparatus consists of a perforator, transmitter, and receiver. The perforator has a typewriter keyboard, each depression of a letter perforating a wide paper band. The band is then passed through the transmitter, in which is a disc enclosed in a miniature 'dark room,' and moving at the rate of from one thousand five hundred to two thousand revolutions per minute. On the disc are cut the letters of the alphabet and the numerals. As the symbols from the perforated band synchronise with the letters on the disc, a spark in the 'dark room photographs the letters on a narrow sensitised paper slip, which is led into a developing bath and two fixing baths, with the result that a permanent printed record is obtained. The instrument can be worked at a speed of three hundred words a minute.

### ELECTRIC FURNACES.

If electric current be passed through two pieces of carbon rod whose ends are nearly touching, the electricity will jump across from one to the other, and we have what is known as an electric arc. The latter is intensely hot; in fact, an electric arc gives the highest temperature obtainable. This feature is taken advantage of in the arc lamp, in which a brilliant light is given by the glowing ends of the carbon rods. Similar results would be produced with metal rods, excepting that the ends would melt away too rapidly for lighting purposes. Again, the passage of electric current through metal produces heat, varying in amount according to the size of the metal and the volume of the current. Thus if a large current be passed through a small metal rod the latter may even be melted. In the electric furnace we have carbon rods as in an arc lamp, but they are of enormous size and placed farther apart. When the furnace has been filled with scrap metal to be melted, current is turned on and flows from one carbon rod to the other through the contents, the metal being heated up by the electricity passing through it and also by arcs which form where the pieces are not properly touching. This effect goes on until all the scrap metal has been melted. Electric furnaces are now being extensively used for the refining of steel, and they are also being applied to the smelting of pig-iron where cheap water-power is available. One important feature in connection with steel-refining by the electric process is the possibility of using low-grade raw material for the manufacture of the best steels. Hitherto good ores have been needed for making high-grade steels, and as the English supply is nearly exhausted we have been largely dependent upon Spain. The electric furnace will enable inferior ores, of which we have an ample supply, to be used for making the best steels. Many of these furnaces are now in operation for the manufacture of steel, and as the process is less costly than by the old methods, their use is likely to become almost universal. Another application of the electric furnace is the melting of steel for castings, the metal being much more easily run when melted in this way. So much is this the case that steel castings have been made for aeroplane fittings only one twenty-fifth of an inch in thickness.

### POWER FROM THE SUN AND WIND.

The address of Professor Fessenden to the Engineering Section of the British Association has aroused widespread interest owing to the magnitude and novelty of his proposals for utilising the heat of the sun and the force of the wind for generating power. Obviously power must be stored in either case, as both of these sources are intermittent and uncertain in character. Electrical-storage is rejected in favour of a novel system of water-storage, consisting of a reservoir at the ground-level in conjunction with a shaft sunk to a great depth and provided with another reservoir at the bottom. In order to store power by these means, the water in the lower reservoir is pumped to the surface, to be run back through a water-turbine whenever the power is needed. The professor advocates this system in connection with a combined installation of wind and sun power, an example being worked out for the production of about three thousand horse-power continually. The apparatus for utilising the heat of the sun consists of a tank containing a thin layer of water at the bottom, and covered by wired glass so as to be steam-tight. The sun's rays are stated to be powerful enough to boil the water under these conditions; hence steam is generated, and can be used in a low-pressure turbine. Power from the wind is developed by a number of large windmills mounted round a circular frame which can be made to turn so as to face the wind. Each windmill drives the usual vertical shaft from which the power is transmitted by wire ropes to a central power-shaft. Powerful pumps are installed for pumping the water from the underground tank to the surface reservoir, these pumps being driven by either the sun-power steam-turbine or the wind-power central shaft. At the lower end of the storage system—

one thousand feet below the ground-level—water-turbines are driven by the water flowing back from the surface reservoir. Powerful dynamos are coupled to these turbines, the electric current being brought to the surface for transmission to factories in the vicinity or at a distance. It is not clear whether Professor Fessenden advocates 'sun-tanks' for this country; presumably this part of the scheme is only applicable to certain portions of the globe where the sun's rays are more powerful and less intermittent than in the British Isles. It is interesting to note, however, that a sun-tank six hundred and fifty feet square is capable of producing over a thousand horse-power for seven hours a day throughout the year. There is nothing impracticable about the windmill and water storage scheme. It is simply a question of how the cost compares with that of power produced by steam or gas engines. In this connection the following comparative figures are given for generating one hundred thousand horse-power: for one horse-power, per annum—steam, four pounds; gas, three pounds; sun and wind, eighteen shillings; Niagara, fifteen shillings; some water-powers (under exceptionally favourable conditions very few exist), ten shillings. It is more than probable that these figures are too high for steam and gas as regards this country, whilst the volume of water-power which can be produced at the cost specified is extremely limited; in fact, very little water-power is available at a lower cost than it can be generated at the British coalfields. A variation of the above scheme is suggested in the form of windmills upon high cliffs on the coast, where water can be pumped up direct from the sea and run back into it. Old mine-shafts also form another means of utilising water-storage at a low cost. Experiments are being tried with a sun and wind power installation with water-storage at an old copper-mine, so that we may expect to have definite figures to go upon in the near future.

### THE USES OF MUSEUMS.

Sir Ray Lankester has said that the public galleries of the Natural History Museum in London have been arranged more distinctly with a view to the edification of the public than those of any other museum he knows. It may be pointed out that the corresponding section of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh is not a whit behind it in this respect. Commenting on the proposal for a new city museum in Birmingham, the professor hopes that it will not contain the usual unsatisfactory series of badly stuffed exotic animals, birds, and reptiles, and trophies of South Sea Islanders' clubs and spears. It should, he thinks, contain first-rate specimens of the living and extinct fauna of Warwickshire, and specimens of foreign animals, carefully selected, to compare with them and throw light on them; also local prehistoric and antiquarian specimens. Further, he commends the suggestion that it might contain specimens of the insect-pests of Warwickshire crops, as also of the minerals from which the manufacturers of Birmingham draw their metals, and should exhibit the stages of their preparation. The *Spectator* recently asked why we should not have open-air museums like that at Lyngby, near Copenhagen, with its area of ground set apart for the erection and preservation of old country buildings doomed to destruction, examples of weaving, thatching, and carpentry, with old-fashioned farm implements. Also, why not an open-air museum such as Sweden has in Skansen, which is laid out in woods, paths, ponds, and gardens, with exhibits of cottages, farm-buildings, belfries, charcoal-burners' and Eskimo huts, a maypole, and old carriages; also a Lapp encampment? This is done to a small extent in many town museums, but much that was characteristic and interesting is disappearing every year, leaving no trace behind.

### CONCEALED COALFIELDS.

In view of the comparatively early exhaustion of our existing coalfields, which has been predicted to be in about two hundred years, especial interest attaches to the discussion upon concealed coalfields in the Geological Section of the British Association's meeting at Sheffield. According to Professor Kendall, who opened the proceedings, the coalfields of England are cut up into basins which are partially covered by newer rocks. The South Wales coalfield is almost completely exposed, whilst the Lancashire basin is covered in the middle but exposed round the rim. A belt of magnesian limestone conceals half the basin of the Yorkshire and Derbyshire coalfield, and its full extent has yet to be discovered. Borings at Haxey, Thorne, Selby, and Scunthorpe have proved its existence beneath these places, and the professor stated that they were getting near the eastern edge; hence the Yorkshire coalfield did not extend under the North Sea. With new industries continually arising, many of which demand cheap power, our reserve of fuel must become of more importance as time goes on. At present power can be generated at our coalfields at a cost which compares favourably with that in other countries where water-power is available; but should the price of coal increase in this country, as it inevitably will if the supply falls short, our industrial supremacy may be seriously threatened.

### NEW SYSTEM OF SEA-DEFENCE.

The great difficulty with concrete-work for sea-defence is the development of cracks owing to sinking of the ground, frost, or expansion and contraction from differences in temperature. To overcome these drawbacks, a covering of especial concrete slabs has been devised by a Dutch engineer. These slabs are about eighteen inches square, and are laid on a prepared bank having a slope of about one in four. Each slab is grooved round the edge to fit into its neighbour, so that no separate slab can sink or lift by itself. Every alternate slab has a ferro-concrete peg of considerable length driven through a

hole in the middle and deep into the bank beneath, the whole surface being thus held down. In positions where considerable waves are likely to be encountered, a framework of ferro-concrete beams is laid down over the paving as a protection. This concrete facing will give way to any slight settlement of the ground, whilst the cost is less than one-fifth of that incurred for the stone facing which was previously used. The system is now being introduced into this country, concrete sea-defences of this type having been already constructed on the Essex coast.

### A NEW METAL.

The coming of the aeroplane has produced a demand for a metal which combines the strength and toughness of steel with the lightness of aluminium, which are qualities invaluable for many other purposes provided that the metal will not rust or corrode when exposed to the weather. Such a metal has recently been discovered by Mr H. B. Weeks, the chief chemist to the well-known battleship and gun builders, Messrs Vickers, Sons, and Maxim. The new alloy, which has been patented throughout the world, is only slightly heavier than aluminium, whilst it is as strong as ordinary steel, and can be rolled into sheets or drawn into wire. These qualities, together with the absence of any tendency to rust or corrode, have not been commercially produced hitherto, and duralumin, as the new metal is called, will no doubt be extensively used in future where conditions demand the especial features alluded to above. Duralumin is to be manufactured near Birmingham, where a factory for this purpose is nearing completion.

### MOVING A CHURCH TOWER.

In order to lengthen a church in Belgium, the tower has been moved bodily some thirty feet. This tower measures thirty-three feet square by a hundred and thirty feet high, and weighs nearly three thousand tons. A track consisting of five rails was laid down, and the tower, which rested on cross-beams, was pushed along it by screw-jacks in eight days, only eight workmen being employed. Many buildings have been moved in a similar manner, but this is the first attempt to move a structure of these dimensions and of this character.

### NEW ALLOY IN MAKING CUTLERY.

The discovery is announced of a new alloy for use in making cutlery by Mr Elwood Haynes, of Kokoma, Indiana. In a recent address before the industrial section of the American Chemical Society, Mr Haynes stated that after years of experiment he had been able to make an alloy of cobalt and chromium which rivalled the finest quality of steel in hardness and durability. The most remarkable property of this combination, however, was said to be its resistance to corrosion, being only equalled in this respect by gold and the metals of the platinum group. Although his discoveries had not been placed on the market, Mr Haynes felt confident that the new alloy would eventually supersede steel in the making of tools, cutlery, surgical instruments, and delicate experimental apparatus. Of many experiments made in this connection one was with a high-speed lathe. Steel tools were melted about the points by the intense heat caused by the friction, while the edge of the chromium cobalt tool remained as sharp as could be desired. Tests with the highest-speed lathes failed to destroy its point.

### THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST AND BEAUTY.

The work of this Trust increases in importance, and its last report chronicles the acquisition of several places of historic interest and beauty. By so much has the public been enriched and a check given to vandalism. Recent acquisitions are about eighty acres of the Leigh Woods, overhanging the banks of the Avon, in Bristol, the gift of Mr George Wills, which have been vested in the Trust. This includes the whole of Nightingale Valley, beloved of artists, with fine oaks and silver birches and the rare small-leaved lime. The higher part affords fine views of the Clifton Downs, on the opposite bank of the Avon. Bristol has, therefore, another valuable asset to add to previous possessions in the beautiful Durdham and Clifton Downs. Cheddar village, at the foot of the Mendips, in Somerset, is famous for its cliffs, caves, cheese, and strawberries. A property in Cheddar Gorge, in which a stone quarry is situated, has been purchased by public subscription. Quarrying will cease in about a year hence, so that the risk of the destruction of these fine cliffs is removed. The cottage at Nether Stowey, Somerset, associated with the poet Coleridge and his friends Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, their patron Joseph Cottle (the Bristol bookseller), and his benefactor, Thomas Poole, has also been acquired. Here some of Coleridge's most memorable poetry was written, and here he found 'Nature looking at me with a thousand looks of beauty and speaking to me in a thousand melodies of love.' Morte Point, on a dangerous headland, commanding views westward from the neighbourhood of Ilfracombe, on the Devon coast, has been presented to the Trust as a memorial of Sir Alexander and Lady Chichester. The Goswells, a property on the Thames near Windsor, which was to have been used as a building site, has been rescued from such a use, and the famous view of the Castle from the Thames will still be obtained. In the Lake Country rights of navigation over a large part of Derwentwater have been purchased. The Princess Louise has purchased the view-point of Grange Fell, Borrowdale, and gifted it, through the National Trust, to the public in memory of the late King. In addition, the right bank of the Derwent, in Borrowdale, for more than a mile, has been purchased. The Ruskin monument on Friar's Crag, Derwentwater, is also in the charge of the Trust. Among other places purchased by public

and private subscription are Barras Head, a piece of cliff-land at Tintagel, North Cornwall, commanding fine views of the magnificent pile of rocks on which stands King Arthur's Castle. The old post-office in Tintagel has also been taken over. Then, amongst other possessions held on behoof of the public are Brandlehow Park estate, on the west shores of Derwentwater; Gowbarrow Park and Aira Force, on Ullswater; Clergy House, Alfriston, Sussex; and Barrington Court, Somerset. It is wonderful how, with such a limited income, this society has been able to do so much. The secretary is Mr Nigel Bond, M.A., 25 Victoria Street, London, S.W., who is always glad to hear from those in sympathy with the movement.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

# THE SIGNET-RING.

NINTH STORY.

## THE RETURN OF THE CONNOISSEUR.

I HAVE said that I had to leave Cornwall on the summons of a friend, who begged me to take his practice for a month. He asked it as a special favour.

The month was uneventful, and what followed began with a letter which I received two or three days before leaving my friend's house. It was short, written in an uneducated, shaky hand, and the spelling was shaky too; but the letter was very much to the point. It said that if I came again to St Enns, and asked at the quay for Jan Treweeke, he would see me, and tell me what was 'in the ring.'

Now, I was quite sure that I already knew everything 'in the ring.' There was the stone, with its crest and motto, and there was the sentence scratched inside the circle. Still, if he would talk at all he might be most useful; and I sent a note, as short as his own, to Jan, saying that I already knew what was 'in the ring,' but would see him in a few days; and I wrote to the hotel engaging rooms. I also wrote to Bonaventure, asking him if he would give me the pleasure of his company at dinner. A big stick of blue sealing-wax lay on the desk where I wrote. I used the sealing-wax, and sealed the three letters with my ring.

A week later I turned up at St Enns, and went straight to the hotel. Going in, I caught Miss Potter yawning and contemplating some asters and chrysanthemums dispiritedly in her little office; but she quite brightened up on seeing me.

'Things *is* dull,' she admitted—'*har*, I mean. Yes, I've given you bedroom and private room "ong sweet," Nos. 25 and 26. I turned the only other visitor out for you.'

'Why did you?'

'Don't like 'im,' said Miss Potter briefly. 'Quiet man, too. Hinstinctive hantipathy, *I* s'pose.'

'A very hard thing to get over,' I agreed; 'but I'm sorry. Now, I want to have a nice dinner at half-past seven for two. I expect the Vicar.'

'Fish, p'r'aps,' she said. 'Nothin' else any use.'

'Why?'

'All Souls',' said Miss Potter, glancing at a calendar, '*and* Friday.'

I suggested a menu that might suit the Vicar, and was going to my room, when Miss Potter coughed and detained me.

'Sorry to have spoke my mind about Mr Smith,' she said, 'if he 's a friend o' yours.'

'Mr Smith?'

'Yes,' she said. 'No. 25 and 26 that was, No. 15 for to-night. Goes to-morrow. I thought he knew you, somehow. Mr Eustace Smith of London.'

'I don't remember,' I said.

'Military-lookin',' Miss Potter suggested. 'Short, stubby red moustache. I opened your letter engagin' rooms when he was standin' where you're standin'. Quite polite about clearin' out for you, I *must* say. Friendly with the Vicar too. Mining expert, I think.'

'I don't remember,' I repeated, and went upstairs.

Later I strolled down and stood in the shelter of the porch sniffing the salt air. Behind me I could occasionally hear Miss Potter and some one else discussing the menu for our dinner. It seemed to me that the fish and omelette received a disproportionate amount of attention.

Outside, the rain fell steadily, and had driven most folk indoors. But peering out, I could see lamplight gleaming on a wet sou'-wester. The man who wore it looked so big and broad that I at once thought of old Jan; and Jan it was, who splashed through the rain and shadows across the street to me and peered into my face.

'You 'm here,' was all he said, but I heard him draw a long breath, as if of relief.

'I 'm here, Cap'n Jan,' I answered, holding out a hand, which he took no notice of. 'What have you got to tell me? Will you come in and have a glass of beer?'

He shook his head, still staring, and then straightened himself with sudden energy. Old as he was, he looked for the moment to be a strong

man still, and I judged him to stand an inch or more over six feet.

'A Carvell you be, sure enough,' he said softly.

'I never deny that, Cap'n,' I replied, laughing. 'Now, what do you want to see a Carvell about?'

'What did you want to see me about a month past?' he retorted with a chuckle.

'For a gossip,' I suggested. 'If any man here knows anything about my folk, you're that man, Cap'n.'

'I'm that man,' he repeated softly. 'What else do I remember an' think about all these years, up along in the Devil's Kitchen, or down along in the old works? So long as one o' the Carvells lives, an' I do live, it's me they should come to for a gossip. Oh, I've a lot to tell 'e;' and he moved away, looking back at me over his shoulder.

'Where are you off to now?' I asked.

'We'm goin' up to the Devil's Kitchen,' he said confidentially. 'Theer we'll smoke an' talk over old times. 'Twas me tended fires for the Squire up along—him an' me—night after night. It'll all come back to me sittin' up theer.'

'But not to-night, Cap'n,' I said, looking out on the wet street.

'An' why not to-night?' he asked coaxingly. 'Old I be, an' frail. There's no time like the present. I mind what the Book says: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."'

'Oh, I mind that too,' I agreed. 'It's put up to the old Squire and his wife in the church, you know.'

'I do knaw.' He looked back at me and nodded. 'None better, though I bain't no worshipper theer. Many's the time I've read it.'

'Well, we'll risk putting it off,' I said. 'I might hasten my end by a chill, Cap'n. Besides, I've got your friend the Vicar coming to dinner with me.

'You'm feared!' he suggested in a voice suddenly malignant.

'Afraid! I! Yes, of rheumatism, nothing else,' I said. 'D'you think I'm afraid to meet the ghost of the old Squire, Cap'n Jan? Why, he could tell me more than you could.'

'Nine to-morrow night,' he said.

'Oh, a ridiculous time!' I protested. 'Come here then, and tell me what you can while you try my 'baccy by the fire.'

But he shook his head obstinately, and said there or nowhere. 'I mind things best theer,' he repeated doggedly, and added, 'Theer's money in it.'

'Well, I'll meet you at nine to-morrow night,' I said, laughing, 'if it's fine. If it's not I shall sit by the fire, and you can join me if you choose.'

And he tramped away without replying to the 'Good-night' I shouted after him.

It seemed to me that night that, in spite of my pressing the dishes upon Bonaventure more than I usually care to do, he made the dinner very much of a Barmecide's Feast. But over the fire afterwards, critically testing a good cigar about which I had begged his opinion, he warmed up.

Then, stirring the fire to a good blaze, as I heard the rain beating against the windows, I asked him to hear my errand. I sketched the main facts about the signet-ring, which he took from me and examined with the loving interest of an antiquary, sitting at the opposite side of the fire, while I talked, with my feet on the fender and my back to the folding-doors that led to the bedroom.

I had given him some idea of what had happened up to the time of the Scamp's triumph in original spelling, when I began to feel chilly, and turning with a shrug, found that the folding-doors were not quite together. I crossed the room and closed them, and then returning to the fire, I went on talking with my back against the mantelpiece. I remember there was a pause in my summary of events, while Bonaventure, tempted astray by the winged horse, led the conversation to Venice, Florence, and Rome, and gave glimpses of a curious store of information about life in the time of the Borgias, the honest man's disgust at their general behaviour being quaintly mixed with the antiquary's delight in intimate knowledge of the times.

He checked his dissertation to ask for the snuff-box, which I had not yet shown him. I had it in my pocket for that purpose; and, explaining that I generally kept it about me, I handed it over.

Still leaning against the mantelpiece, with my back to the fire, I showed him, with the snuff-box and ring, how I came to read the scratches; and, the night being still young and neither of us in a hurry, he worked the thing out with a pencil on a half-sheet of paper with evident enthusiasm, speculating boldly upon what it was that was hidden up Avon.

Suddenly some recollection seemed to trouble him, and he sat with the ring in one hand and the box in another, frowning perplexedly at me.

'I think you said that you're the head of the family now?' he asked.

'Of the very small and unimportant family,' I agreed. 'There are only my younger sister and the Scamp beside myself.'

Bonaventure frowned still more perplexedly. 'I am in an awkward position,' he said at last. 'I think you will find that some one else may claim to have an interest.'

'In what?' I asked, laughing.

But Bonaventure could not explain. 'There have been inquiries made of me similar to those you made, and previous to yours,' he said. 'They were private, and I am hardly at liberty to talk of them, I think. I expect that often happens where there is any prospect of valuable results.'

'I see none here,' I said, 'unless Cap'n Jan can discover them;' and I told him of my engagement for the next night.

To my surprise, he took this matter quite seriously, and said he thought I should not go.

'Oh, I'm going,' I said.

'Without presuming to dictate'—— he began angrily, and then checked himself. 'Oh, well, you're not one of my parishioners,' he said; and I laughed, and asked him what were the limits of his authority over them, which he didn't quite seem to like.

'Well, at nine o'clock you'll go, then,' he ended. 'Mind you wrap up sensibly. It'll be cold.' He stooped over the fire, rubbing his hands as though he felt colder in anticipation; and I too felt chilly and noticed a little draught.

'That confounded door's open again!' I said, and, crossing to the folding-doors, I found the halves unlatched and the draught pretty strong. Looking into the bedroom, I could see that the window was open. Without fetching a lamp, I crossed the room and closed the window. Then I went back to Bonaventure, persuaded him to light another cigar, and kept him chatting as long as I could persuade him to stay.

The next day was fine. I got some lunch from Miss Potter, and went for a long walk along the coast, taking a little note-book with me to follow a favourite method of mine for puzzling out any matter thoroughly.

By the time I had done with my note-book and eaten my sandwiches I was ten miles from St Enns.

I turned and went back at a good pace, and stopped for nothing until a small rascal of a boy got in my way at the hotel door. His appearance in my path was so sudden that I bowled him over, and heard a big, white, hard head thump most unmistakably against a pillar of the veranda.

'Be you Dr Carvell?' he asked as I picked him up, paying no attention to my question whether he was hurt.

'Yes,' I said.

''Tis eight an' the old shaft for to-night,' he said slowly and loudly, 'not nine an' the Kitchen.'

'The deuce it is! Who are you?' I asked, peering down at him, and seeing a stolid, round, fair impish face, with light eyebrows and a shock of white hair.

'I'm Bill. An' 'tis eight an' the old shaft for to-night, not nine an' the Kitchen. An' you was to give me a shillin'.'

'Was I?' I asked, pretty much amused. 'All right, Bill;' and I handed him a shilling. 'Now tell me'—— But at this moment there was a shrill whistle from the shadows across the road.

'That's all!' the boy said, and dived into the dark.

I went into the hotel, laughing at myself for having handed over the shilling before I had done with the boy.

'The old shaft,' which, of course, could only mean the disused mine, was a long mile from the hotel along the hillside. I did not start for it until eight o'clock, being obstinately determined not to have my dinner spoilt for Cap'n Jan's convenience, and tolerably sure that he would wait for me.

The lights of the town lay below me on my right, the hotel behind and on my right, the Devil's Kitchen above and on my left. As I went forward and upward under the stars I got on to rougher, uncultivated ground. The turf-and-stone banks on either hand became broken, and at last ended on the open moor, strewn with boulders. Twice I stopped, thinking there were steps behind me, and guessing that old Jan too was late for his tryst. But when I stood quiet I heard nothing except the wind whistling a little, and a dog or two barking from a couple of far-away farmhouses.

I stumbled on until I got among the great grass-grown heaps which represented the refuse of past mining-days. Here again I was almost sure that I heard some one, though at some distance back. I was sure that the sound came from at least fifty yards behind me, in the direction in which I was now staring. But while I peered, and just as I was fumbling for matches, I heard a movement at my back, felt a heavy blow on the side of the head, and fell.

I do not know how long it was before I recovered my wits, but it cannot have been long. First I lay with shut eyes, and wondered why my head ached so much. I tried to rub it with my right hand, but that was under me and I lay on my back; and I could not move my left either.

I thought this was nightmare, and I tried to wake, but the pain in my head and arms seemed very real, and at last I remembered my errand up to the moment at which my matches had gone out.

I opened my eyes and found myself staring up at wooden beams; I tried to move again, and felt both arms and legs fastened. I thought Jan had outwitted me after all, and I cursed myself aloud for having been fooled by a half-witted old fanatic. At my outspoken reflections on my own imbecility some one near began to laugh with evident enjoyment, and the laugh sounded louder as I tried to rise and fell back again very giddy.

'It wouldn't be fair to let you go out of the world thinking yourself even a greater fool than you are,' a voice said quietly. 'Is there no one but that old lunatic who might be pleased to meet you? There's no such terrible hurry. Lie quiet and think about it.'

I lay and tried to think, but I was sick and half-stunned, and the floor or whatever I lay upon seemed to heave under me.

I heard the voice curse me, muttering that I

oughtn't to die yet; and presently a flask was thrust against my teeth, and I was almost choked with raw spirits. That had its intended effect, however, for I coughed and gasped, and struggled to a sitting position against a wall.

I was in a large shed or shelter, at one time stables, I fancy; but I paid very little attention to the place. I was far more concerned with the man who had brought me there, and who now sat back on his heels in the shadow, and stowed away his flask in a pocket.

'My friend,' he said, 'I began to think I had hit too hard. What a terrible pity that would have been!'

He had put a small bull's-eye lantern on the ground near me and between us. The light was full in my eyes, and was very dazzling and unpleasant. It shone upon a bicycle which leant against the wall near by; but I could not see anything of the man behind it. Then he put forward a hand, a long, well-kept hand, to test a cord about my ankles, and the light fell upon my own ring on his little finger. Further, it fell upon a finger crooked at the terminal joint, and I said 'Mearns!' before I had meant to say anything.

'Ah! our memory stirs, does it?' he asked, bending a little forward. 'Now, rouse it a bit more, or I'll rouse it for you. D—n you! where's that box of yours that you were showing the parson last night?'

I looked at him blankly and tried to gather my wits. Then I took a deep breath, and instead of answering, put all my strength into a long, high-pitched 'H-e-l-p!'

It was as long and loud as I could make it; but Mearns made it shorter. He threw himself straight at me without rising. He upset the lamp and it went out; and for the next few seconds we tumbled together on the floor, I rolling from side to side and shouting, he silent and searching for my throat.

He found that very quickly, and there was no more shouting for me. I choked instead, open-mouthed; and a handkerchief, packed and crammed in until I lay dumb, with wrenched and distended jaws, was almost as agonising as the hand.

Then he relit the lamp, panting and cursing softly to himself. This time his very evil countenance was plain to see—Mearns's, or Calthorne's, or the Honourable Charles's, only neither clean-shaven nor dark-bearded, but with a small, stiff red moustache.

It was only now that I noticed my coat and waistcoat were off. They lay on the ground near me, and some of the pockets were showing, turned inside-out. Now I understood what Mearns meant about the box. He had been hidden somewhere, no doubt in my bedroom, while I showed it to Bonaventure the night before, and had expected to find it on me. My ring he already had, and he sat twisting it on his finger as he considered me. As for me, I did my best to stare defiantly; but I doubt whether a face has much power of expression while the mouth is wide open and stuffed to the lips with a pocket-handkerchief.

For a few minutes I glared and he considered, and then, 'Curse it!' he said; 'I've made a mistake. Why the devil didn't I let you go to meet that old fool, and hear what you had to say to one another? I could have tackled you afterwards if it was any use, instead of bringing you here.'

Then he sat quiet again for a minute or so, and afterwards held his watch, apparently a gold hunter, to the lamp. I could see quite well that it was twenty minutes to nine.

'Now,' he said, closing it and returning it to his pocket, 'I want that box of yours, and I'm going to have it. Nod, and I shall understand that you'll be sensible, and tell me where to find it.'

I shook my head violently from side to side until he lashed out a violent kick that sent me rolling to the wall like a bale of cloth. He then followed up and silently kicked me back again, and sat down to consider in the same place as before.

'The point is, my dear friend,' he said quite quietly, 'I have an idea—a thing you seem never to have possessed, though you've had most infernal good luck till now! Your ring is what I wanted most, because I didn't get all those scratches right on a certain evening. Still, I've a fancy for the box too. Now, shall I chuck you down the shaft at once, and go to hunt for the box, which can no doubt be found in your bedroom? Or shall I go and see if old Jan can be fooled as easily as yourself? Or shall I'——

He sat quiet a little longer, and then rose, still talking softly. 'My dear friend,' he said, 'my very dear friend, forgive my language; but I fear I have the catch phrases of these canting Methodistical parts. I am not going to tumble you down the shaft. If I return without that box you will wish I had. I have no time to argue with you now, as I fancy I can keep your appointment for you, on the chance of humbugging the worthy Cap'n. Besides, I'm afraid he must be made accountable for your disappearance. The parson knew you were going to meet him.'

I had just worked some of the handkerchief out, and I idiotically began to rave. He kicked out, and, catching me under the chin, jerked my head back so violently that I lay half-stunned, and dimly fancied my neck dislocated.

When I began to listen he was talking quite quietly again. 'Let you down on chance of not finding the thing after I've done with that old fool. If I *don't*, my dear friend, I assure you I shall come back. If I *do*, why, I shall leave you alone possibly—give you a run for your money. You may live some hours—long enough to repent of having been such a bumptious fool.'

He left the shed for a couple of minutes, and then came hurriedly back, and, stooping to catch me by the collar of my shirt, dragged me out under the stars. Presently I lay face up, looking at them and thinking confusedly that I should not

see them again, while he busied himself with something close at hand.

Then a sudden cold at the back of my neck shocked me, for I thought it was a knife; but it was nothing more dangerous than an iron hook. He got the point through the neck of my shirt, and seemed to work at a windlass recently oiled. But directly the tackle took my weight off the ground my shirt tore, and I fell again, while Mearns cursed, always softly. Then he stooped and slipped the hook under the cords about my ankles.

'It will be very interesting,' he said in my ear, 'to see whether I have forgotten how to make a sound knot. I mustn't waste more time. If it doesn't hold I shall feel that your luck lasted till the end.' And in another few seconds I was swinging head downwards.

I have no idea how long my journey took. I have a firm belief that between the shaft's mouth and the bottom I lost something of vital force that can hardly return. I have wondered since whether men on the scaffold or under the guillotine do not sometimes die before the drop or the knife falls. At any rate, since that time when I swung and jolted head-first down the shaft through the darkness I have always had a sympathy with cowardice which I never had before. So much must always depend on the conditions of the moment and the vividness of one's own imagination.

I splashed into a pool at the bottom, and thought I was to drown, but it was only an inch or two of water, and the shock roused me.

The hook lost its hold when my weight left it. I rolled on to my back, and could see a star or two twinkling over the shaft's mouth.

Then, while I lay trying to face the inevitable decently, a sudden noise began up above. Some one was there besides Mearns, for I could hear smothered exclamations and trampling feet and blows. Suddenly there was a dead silence, then confused scuffling noises again, and then the stars above me were blotted out for a moment as something fell splashing into the darkness beside me, and, just missing my shoulder, lay quiet.

My first thought was that now I should be finally silenced by things thrown down on me, and I rolled away from this, and then hung on a little slope, shuddering at the sudden idea that another movement might send me crashing down to some lower tunnel.

At last, nothing more being thrown in, I began to wonder, and to work my way back, rolling over and over, until I felt myself at the edge of the puddle again. Here I lay helpless, facing a new suspicion and afraid to make it a certainty. Probably Mearns had been surprised by some idle person attracted to the place by my shouts, and had silenced him too. I had not the nerve to settle this at once. I lay shivering and miserable, half-pitying, half-envying this poor wretch, who at any rate had died fighting and died quickly.

But it might be no one, and at any rate I must know. Rolling into the puddle, still with my hands lashed at my back, I suddenly felt myself against a warm body, and, shuddering away from it again, lay gasping and staring up at the two or three stars with a feeling that the sight of them was the only thing that kept me sane.

Then at last I edged over, and lying with my back to this thing, I groped about with my hands for any evidence I could get. I presently had it, for I found a pulseless wrist and a hand already growing cold; and groping my way over that hand, I felt it to be a left hand with a signet-ring, and a little finger crooked at the last joint.

Mearns had indeed come back.

*(To be continued.)*

## VALLENCY VALLEY, NEAR BOSCASTLE, NORTH CORNWALL.

Let us to the valley go
Where ferns and shrubs and wild flowers show,
Dainty speedwell, giant fir,
The lofty pine and cypress burr,
Stately foxglove standing high,
The golden cinquefoil trailing nigh,
Pollard-elm and copper-beech,
And lowly shrubs which upwards reach.

We will in Vallency see
The creeping moss and willow-tree,
Campions and valerian red,
The honeysuckle widely spread,
Bracken, fern, and purple heath,
The spider's web and filmy sheath,
Bryony-leaves with trembling rings,
The dragon-fly's bright sapphire wings.

We will in Vallency hear
The murmuring streamlet flowing near;
Shallow pools reflect the light,
And aspens quiver, gleaming white.
Alders kiss the purling stream,
Young lovers stoop beside to dream,
In flowing brook they beauties trace,
A mirror both of joy and grace.

We can in Vallency hear
A deeper note that God is here.
Whispering in the passing breeze,
It echoes through the leafy trees.
This gracious influence divine
Comes stealing in your heart and mine,
Removing memories of strife,
Thus sweetening toil and daily life.

Ethel Warhurst.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

*1st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

*2nd.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

*3rd.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

*4th.* Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EDGAR WARRISTON.

By A. STODART WALKER.

## CHAPTER I.—A MAN OF MARK.

EDGAR WARRISTON had arrived in Sydney with the diplomas of Bachelor of Medicine and Master in Surgery, and had proved an attractive addition to the public and social life of the city. He possessed qualities of account. He had a manner which captivated by its charm; he gave a distinct impression of strength and sincerity. But those who were attracted by his kindly nature and were exhilarated by his active wit and genial adaptability were to learn that these assets were not the main capital upon which his fame was to be built. Within two years of his arrival in the colony Warriston was known as one of the most brilliant men of science in Australia, and the nature of his investigations—the cause and cure of malignant disease—was such as to earn the sympathy and interest not only of the academic authorities but of the general public. Some early contributions to the medical societies secured for him an entry into the hospitals, although from the first Warriston refused to take part in general practice or to be paid for his medical services. This determination caused no little surprise, for it was evident that Warriston was not a rich man. He defended his point of view by maintaining that he wished his work to be free entirely from the suspicion of mercenary considerations. It is difficult for the world to believe wholly in unselfish points of view, so it did not surprise Warriston when he found that a motive was attributed to him not entirely altruistic.

Edgar Warriston was tall, broad-shouldered, virile in appearance. He was not exactly what would be called a handsome man. What detracted from the distinction of his features was a certain incongruity in colouring, and the fact that his rich, deep-toned auburn hair suggested the impression of a dye. Drawing-room tea-tattle gave it as an opinion also that his eyebrows were not quite natural. Otherwise there was little to dispute in his looks. His nose was straight but broad, his mouth generous, his chin firm; he had large, luminous, and steady eyes; and, in contrast to his fair brows and hair, his lashes were unmistakably dark. From the medical directory the public gathered that he was thirty years of age, but he looked older. There were lines about his eyes and mouth which indicated experience beyond his years. When he spoke it was with alertness and vivacity; his face lighted up quickly with the fire of his mind. But at rest it was an inordinate gravity that controlled his features. Some called the expression tragic, and many hours were spent by the gossips in attempting to find a theory for the problem suggested. But despite many letters home to the Old Country they could learn nothing beyond the fact that Edgar Warriston had graduated in medicine at Edinburgh. He seemed to have neither relations nor friends.

Warriston had been five years in Australia, and had become one of the most distinguished men in New South Wales, when there came, to alter the mechanism of his days, the not original circumstance of love. Muriel Bouverie had recently arrived in Australia with her father, Sir Ashley Bouverie, one of those impoverished English landlords who had come to the Antipodes to discover a means of restoring their financial ruin.

Muriel was in many ways a remarkable girl. She was impatient of the small views of life. Her own ideas often appeared outrageous, but on analysis it would be found that the only outrage was the fact that they were ideas and not merely echoes of oft-disputed but really indisputable commonplaces. For such a beautiful girl to possess brains seemed eccentric, to say the least of it.

They had met at Government House. Intellectually mate had called to mate, and within a few moments of their introduction they had plunged gracefully into an atmosphere of understanding. The girl found the man stimulating, individual, speculatively brave, unconventional, and strong; and

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the man was quick to acknowledge the crystal clearness of her vision, her splendidly detached judgment, and her great human heart. Muriel Bouverie had a clever face, a broad but not too lofty forehead, graceful but not overarched eyebrows, nose just retroussé enough to give character. Her mouth was small but sensitive and flexible, her chin subtly moulded but strong. In the words of Captain Wingfield, of the Governor's staff, 'By Jove, Harry, Miss Bouverie has a dashed fine figure! Eh, what?'

The acquaintanceship between the two matriculated into friendship and graduated into love. Wise enough to see the drift of their lives, the man for a time avoided every opportunity of meeting the girl. But their world was small and instincts were strong, and soon the retreat was turned into a direct encounter and a surrender. The tale of love was swiftly told and as swiftly reciprocated. The obstacles in front of them were frankly admitted. Both Warriston and Muriel Bouverie were poor. The man was honest enough to state this factor as being of importance, and the girl had forethought enough to admit that it was not beneath consideration. The personal wants of a man of science are not many, yet the income possessed by Edgar Warriston was so small that few could believe it possible that a man so presentable could live on a little more than three hundred a year. Long before he drifted into an admission of his love for Muriel Bouverie he had confided his financial position to her, freely and frankly, and it was only when Warriston realised that the girl appreciated the issues at stake that he allowed himself to speak that which he regarded as the most sacred and most responsible confession of a man's heart.

Circumstances ordained that the removal of this obstacle was to be forced upon him from an unexpected quarter. With a swiftness which startled him, he was to be hurled from his quondam heaven to a state of mind bordering on despair.

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### CHAPTER II.—BLACKMAIL.

EDGAR WARRISTON had submitted the results of five years' investigation to the scientific authorities. The lay press published a summary of his remarkable deductions, and within a week his name was blazoned throughout the world as a great pioneer in the effectual treatment of malignant disease. Not that the preliminary contributions had put the coping-stone upon his researches; but the medical world was quick to recognise the vital and epoch-making importance of Edgar Warriston's dissertation on the pathology and therapeutics of disease.

Congratulations poured upon him. Honours were offered—degrees from universities, national and civic recognition. Warriston accepted the tributes gratefully yet humbly, and with characteristic modesty declaimed against any over-estimation of his work. But he felt happy and elated. The result of his labours would surely be that he would be offered such appointments as might enable him to approach Muriel Bouverie's father with a definite suggestion.

Edgar Warriston was seated at his desk. Before him lay a bundle of letters and telegrams from friends in the colony and strangers throughout the world. As he read he would occasionally raise his head and allow his thoughts to reach forward into the future, and to search backwards into the past. In the latter instance the lines about his mouth were emphasised and the shadows grew deeper beneath his eyes.

His thoughts were interrupted by the entrance of his landlord.

'Mr James Wylie,' he announced.

Warriston rose. The name was unfamiliar, but the man who entered had not slipped the memory. The use of a false name suggested mischief, and Warriston's face grew curiously white. Standing before him was a loosely built man of some forty years, whose bloodshot eyes and flabby, congested face, ugly mouth, and discoloured teeth conveyed a general impression of chronic dissipation. He looked at Warriston with a quizzical, half-impertinent expression which seemed to say, 'You didn't expect me, did you now?'

'Mr James Wylie!' said Warriston.

The man laughed nervously and took a chair.

'I thought if I were announced as John Williams you might not want to see me,' said the new-comer, with a snigger.

'And why not?' asked Warriston calmly.

John Williams felt ill at ease. He was fully aware that he was dealing with a man stronger and more self-controlled than himself.

'Because of the past,' he said, looking up with the forced reliance of the bully.

Warriston leant back in his chair and toyed with his pen.

'Let us understand each other,' said the doctor. 'I am not such a fool as to believe that this is merely a formal call, the desire to look up an old acquaintance.'

'Friend,' corrected the stranger with a smirk.

'What is it you want?' asked Warriston impatiently.

The man felt remarkably uncomfortable. He had long rehearsed the possibilities of this interview. Yet all his schemes seemed toppling to pieces in the face of this calm, masterful opponent, who held so great a control of himself. 'Your question sounds unfriendly,' he retorted with an air of martyrdom.

'Because I am quite convinced that your visit here is not of a friendly nature,' said Warriston confidently.

'There you are wrong,' protested Williams. 'My one desire is to let you down as easily as possible.'

'Ah!' cried Warriston, leaning forward and looking at the man with scorn. 'Then I was right. It is blackmail.'

'Blackmail is an ugly word.'

There was a pause, and the two men faced each other, the weaker man eager to strike but fearing his opponent, the stronger waiting patiently to hear the worst.

'I need not remind you,' said Williams after a while, 'of what happened in East Africa six years ago.'

Putting a hand into his pocket, the man drew forth two papers. He laid one of these down upon the desk; the other he opened slowly, Warriston watching his every movement with seemingly careless eyes, though every nerve was strung with expectancy.

'I have here a statement which, if you will permit me, I will read to you,' commenced Williams.

Warriston nodded his head but did not speak.

'In January 1861 two Englishmen, Edgar Warriston, a medical practitioner, and John Maxwell, landed in Sofala, and for three days stayed at the inn of John Lewis Williams. On the days in question the said John Williams was away, and the inn was in the charge of his housekeeper, Mary Porter. At the end of the three days the two men left and journeyed up-country. A month later Edgar Warriston returned alone and stayed for one night at the inn. On this occasion Mary Porter was laid up with fever; but John Williams had returned, and received his guest. The next day Edgar Warriston left Sofala. Two years after the said John Williams was visiting up-country, and while staying at the hut of a native learnt there a strange story. It appears that the native was an accidental witness of a quarrel that took place between two white men, in which a shot was fired. He further stated that on the day of the quarrel one of the men came alone to the village in which he resided, and next day returned to the coast.'

The man paused and looked up at Warriston; but the latter showed no signs that he was realising the fact that a terrible secret had been brought to light.

'A very plausible story, no doubt,' said Warriston laconically.

'There is, however, a climax,' continued Williams. 'Some eighteen months after the incidents related the native came across a skeleton, and near to it a stained and blackened piece of linen, which, on being cleaned, was discovered to be a handkerchief, and in the corner were the letters "E. W."'

John Williams paused. He was confident he had a strong man in his net. All his nervousness had vanished and his face was rich with the expression of an advocate who is satisfied that his pleadings were irrefutable and convincing. He looked up at Warriston, who no longer smiled.

'I admit,' said Warriston after a moment's silence, 'that you possess excellent enough evidence on which to build a very happy hypothesis. But the motive?'

'Ah! I am coming to that,' said Williams confidently.

It was evident now that Warriston was surprised, interested in a way that he had not previously been.

'When the two men were staying at the inn at Sofala it seems that Edgar Warriston had made certain approaches to Mary Porter. This appears to have aroused a sense of justice in John Maxwell. More than that, between Mary Porter (who was a woman too refined and attractive for such an environment) and John Maxwell an affection seems to have sprung up, which ended in a scene between the two men, in which blows were struck, and in which the words, "By heaven, Maxwell, I'll do for you one of these days!" were used.' Here Williams paused, then added slowly, 'He did.'

A curious silence filled the room, while two men faced a problem from different points of view. Warriston felt strangely old. With a swiftness that he had at times thought possible but hardly probable the blow had been struck at him, and although he did not betray the fact, he was staggering under its fierceness. All his day-dreams seemed dissolving before the call of a cruel reality. He had mental images of his great work and of his great love, and the pictures of these, turned awry by the fantasies of the present revelation, gave him acute mental suffering. Yet, though the pain was great, his self-reliance and confidence were not shattered. Awaking from his meditations, he turned swiftly to the man before him.

'I suppose this visit here,' he said, 'is to name a price for your silence.'

The quality of the words were cheering in the ears of John Williams, whose face betrayed a confident sense of victory.

'Yes, that is so,' he answered with remarkable keenness.

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### CHAPTER III.—A FRAUDULENT COMPANY.

JOHN WILLIAMS was surprised at the ease with which he had conducted his campaign. Altogether, circumstances had really convinced him that he was in for a run of luck.

Putting the first paper into his pocket, he unfolded the second document. 'What I ask,' he said with an air of patronage, 'is not much. I am floating a company, and I wish you to be interested in it.'

Warriston's lips betrayed his judgment of the man. 'As I have to pay a price, and not you,' he said slowly, 'I presume the company in question is a fraudulent one.'

Williams raised a hand in protest. 'Fraudulent is not a pretty word,' he cried. 'Like all companies, it is of course speculative,' he added with the air of a frank but honest broker.

'For the subscribers, yes, but not for the venders,' added Warriston.

'If you will glance over the engineer's report you

will see that the mine which I am floating sounds most attractive,' said Williams with a touch of serio-comedy.

Warriston lifted the paper and turned a sheet rapidly to find the name of the engineer who was willing to supply the necessary fire to set the fuel ablaze. Turning, he took from a shelf a book of reference, and ran his eye down a list of the accredited engineers of Australia. He paused at the name Macpherson.

'There is an R. R. Macpherson,' he said, 'but not R. P. Macpherson. Is the error accidental or intentional?' he asked.

'The names are very similar,' said Williams, wiping his lips with the back of his left hand.

'I see,' said Warriston. 'The idea is a subtle one. Now, Mr Williams, what part do you propose that I should take in this great adventure?'

'I wish you to honour me by becoming the chairman of the company,' said Williams with deliberation.

'Might I inquire what benefit such a step would confer upon you?' asked Warriston.

Williams shuffled in his chair for a moment, then turned to his interrogator. 'Even a short residence in the city,' he said, 'has convinced me that you are one of its most respected citizens.'

Warriston presented the man with a bow of mock gratitude for the tribute.

'From inquiries,' continued the company promoter, 'I find that not only is your moral character held in high esteem, but that you also possess a reputation for insight into business matters that you might have used for your own betterment had you so wished.'

'I am indeed flattered to hear it,' said Warriston ironically. 'From what you say I gather I am a noble and gifted man, but rather a fool. But,' he added, straightening his shoulders and throwing down the prospectus, 'I need not trouble you to waste your energy in explaining further. Let me take up the tale. From what you have said, I am to infer that if my name appears in your prospectus the public may be led to believe that this mine is a sound concern; and, as the world is governed very much by names, you expect a large subscription on the part of that section of the community which, you state, rates me in such a generous fashion. I presume also that it will be necessary for me to communicate with my banker and instruct him to put my name down for a certain number of shares.'

'That will be necessary so as further to convince the public,' said Williams, tingling with delight at the easy flow of their confidence.

'It seems all very simple,' said Warriston. 'Unfortunately I am a poor man, and any allotment of shares for which I might ask could only be of a comparatively trivial nature.'

'Just enough to convince the public,' said Williams, 'that such a poor man thinks so highly of the scheme as to subscribe at all.'

'A very wise suggestion on your part,' said Warriston with evident enthusiasm; 'but,' he added, 'suppose I refuse?'

'This first paper will be handed over to the police.'

'And then?'

'Oh, well'——

'Yes, oh, well!' echoed Warriston. 'If I refuse, you say this paper goes to the police. The result of such a step might not be very agreeable to me or my friends. Let me admit that.'

He paused to allow his thoughts to concentrate on the ideas which were to prompt his actions.

'Yet, after all,' he said, 'though your delightful paper may be awkward reading, how can you prove it to be anything else than a very creditable work of fiction?'

'Oh, easily enough,' answered Williams. 'I am not a bad witness for a court of law; but I have a better. There is Mary Porter.'

'It might not be so easy to secure her presence,' said Warriston quickly.

'It is secured already,' answered Williams. 'Mary Porter is in Sydney, and is my wife.'

A flame seemed to light up the clouds of Warriston's brain, but he did not betray the fact. He saw clear lights ahead, but to the plotter before him his face told something quite the opposite. Williams gazed upon an expression of dejection and despair. He little knew how fine an actor Warriston had been and was.

'If that be the case,' said Warriston, 'I am prepared to consider your suggestion. But I must have time.'

'To fly?' cried Williams suspiciously.

'Neither to fly nor to bolt,' answered Warriston.

'It would be useless if you attempted it,' said Williams with a sneer.

'You need not trouble yourself,' said Warriston calmly. 'You will find me here whenever you wish. This is Monday; come and see me again on Thursday. In the meantime I shall keep this prospectus of yours.

'There is no need of that,' said Williams hurriedly and in evident fear.

'Much need. If I am to help you I shall have to be well primed with my facts,' answered Warriston, unlocking a drawer and placing the prospectus therein.

Williams looked at his victim with an air of suspicion. He had a feeling as if some counter-stroke were disarming him, but he could say nothing. When he rose to leave he was oppressed by a sense of want of confidence in his own capacity to play the cards.

He had been gone but a few seconds when Warriston rose, and, passing over to the door, stood listening. In a few moments he heard the outer door close. He turned, took up a hat, and stepped out of the room. He gained the street, and caught sight of the slouching figure of John Williams in the near distance. He followed cautiously.

### CHAPTER IV.—A MISSING MAN.

HE Bouveries dined at eight; but twenty minutes before that hour Muriel, dressed for dinner, sat in the drawing-room. Edgar Warriston was to dine with them, and it had become an understood arrangement between him and the girl that he should arrive early, so that they might snatch an opportunity for mutual confidences before her father and the other guests appeared.

Muriel, in a high state of excitement at meeting the man she loved and whom all men honoured, grew restless as the clock ticked its way towards eight without Warriston being announced. For though the girl's feelings had passed the restless and feverish stage of uncertainty, yet she had lost none of the glamour of her early awakening into the thrilling passages of love. Strong, reliant, and trustful, she still possessed in her constitution much of the eternal child, and resented any interference with her purposes.

Eight o'clock struck and a door opened. She turned with an impulsive movement, and the arrival, Robert Seton, was amused to catch the look of disappointment which betrayed itself in the girl's face.

'Yes, it is only me. Excuse the grammar,' said Seton with a smile, as he came forward to greet his hostess.

Robert Seton, Warriston's friend, was the leading solicitor of Sydney, a man of weight in the councils of the colony; a level-headed, hard-working, determined Scotsman.

Ashley Bouverie came into the room, and a moment afterwards Edgar Warriston was announced. While the two men immediately turned upon him congratulatory greetings, Muriel Bouverie was quick to discern that her lover looked tired and spiritless, and that an expression new to her peeped out, despite its owner's attempt to conceal it.

Warriston's belated arrival had been intentional. After the incidents of the day he had deliberately avoided any *tête-à-tête* with the woman he loved, and who had loved him long before he had guessed the truth. The future before him, evidently so brilliant, had suddenly become obscured by the blackest of clouds, and his impulse was to avoid any further stoking of the fires of love. A sense of justice to the girl prompted the feeling. He had no wish to drag her into the mesh of his misfortunes, and he was now speculating on the means he should take to save the woman he loved from sharing in the disaster which confronted him. For in a flash all his dreams seemed to have come to nought. The mills of God had ground slowly, and they were grinding exceeding small. As he had walked to the Bouveries' house this quotation had been on his lips, and had served as a sort of chorus to his thoughts, which, after being busy with a solution to this impasse of his life, had become fatigued and saddened. He felt very old and worn.

At dinner he called to his good spirits, but though they responded by occasional spurts of vigour, yet they refused to usurp the slackness of his vitality. Usually brilliant and illuminative, his remarks were halting and even commonplace.

Muriel came to his assistance by a gift of even excessive cheeriness, which carried the conversation beyond the rocks.

As the dinner progressed Warriston's mental load seemed to grow lighter, and he entered into the conversation with alertness and individuality. Yet even when he spoke of his own work Muriel missed something. She observed a certain reluctance to look in her direction; a want of belief in his eventual triumph was even more discernible.

She began to find a theory for the change, and she was generous enough to admit that his want of optimism may have influenced his feelings towards her. He would not like her to marry a failure; and, more than that, a failure might make marriage impossible. The very thought of such a possibility drove the blood from her heart. It was so painful a conception that she there and then vowed that nothing would stand in their way.

'By the bye,' said Seton, 'I have a case in hand just now which may interest you. A client of mine has left all his fortune to a man for whom we shall have to search the world to find him.'

'Who is your friend?' asked Warriston.

'He was a certain Henry Bourchier,' replied Seton, 'who died leaving half a million of money to a nephew, of whom I can only learn the fact that he left England six years ago, and has not been heard of since.'

'What is the nephew's name?' asked Warriston casually, hiding the tenseness of his nerves.

'John Maxwell,' answered Seton.

Warriston laid down his fork and took a wine-glass into his hand. He raised it quickly to his lips and emptied it. A horrible feeling of nausea crept through his system. His wits were keen enough, however, to discover that Seton commanded the attention of the table. The butler had refilled Warriston's glass, and once again he brought the wine to his lips. He was a temperate man, but tired and wrought nerves called for stimulant.

'He was last heard of in Sofala,' continued Seton. 'It may be a very hard job to find him.'

Bouverie smiled. 'I don't think,' he said, 'that there ought to be much difficulty when half a million is at stake. You may even have half-a-dozen John Maxwells claiming the legacy.'

'There will not be much doubt in that direction,' said Seton. 'I have a very elaborate description of my man. It seems that my client Henry Bourchier quarrelled with his nephew years ago, and that no communication had passed between them since the rupture. Both John Maxwell's parents are dead, and he was their only son. There is a curious condition to the will. It appears that the said nephew studied medicine in Edinburgh. He seems to have been a clever and gifted boy, but failed to pass his

final examination. The condition is that he should return to Edinburgh and take his degree, and apply himself to the study of malignant disease.'

The strange coincidence struck forcibly upon the party, and Muriel Bouverie turned her eyes upon her lover, betraying her anguish at the thought that the one man who seemed destined to solve the riddle of that disease should not benefit by the windfall.

'Your client,' she said to Mr Seton, 'may be a forgiving and ultimately generous man, but he may be enforcing an impossible limitation. John Maxwell may be able, with such a bait, to obtain his degree, but it is only one man in a thousand who possesses the necessary qualifications to reach the end desired.'

'I should fancy six years of knocking about the world,' said Bouverie, 'will have blunted the edge of any scientific keenness the young man may have possessed.'

'The chances are that the man is dead,' said Warriston, 'or he would have been heard of before this.'

'I intend, of course, to institute inquiries in Africa, and shall advertise in most of the English and American papers,' said Seton.

During the conversation the thoughts of Edgar Warriston travelled to John Williams, the one man who was able to offer a fairly definite solution to the problem. Warriston asked himself the question as to how far it would pay John Williams to interfere in the matter. All the possibilities, fears, and safeguards of the case chased themselves through his brain. He drowned his sense of disaster with a keen intellectual study of an impasse that, despite its personal application, appealed in a subtle sense to his capacity for research. He applied to a matter which might be one almost of life or death to him the same qualities of mind which he had brought to bear on questions which meant life or death to his fellow-men. So keen became his joy in the game before him that for the moment he lost sight of the giant shadow which trailed across the picture—the shadow of the person of Muriel Bouverie—a shadow which had been till to-day the very light and *plein air* of his living picture.

Then from his flight into an area of speculation he came with a thud to earth as he escaped from the land of dreams to face the real. His sense of right, his sense of honour and of pity, told him that his own safety was small as compared with the happiness of the woman he loved. How was she to be protected? How was she to escape the pain of disillusionment, the awakening from what she would be compelled to recall only as a beautiful dream? He could not, if he would, keep her in a state of ignorance which would only accentuate the terrors of the revealed truth. That truth she must face at once. But how?

*(To be continued.)*

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# PEDIGREE-HUNTING.

By W. P. W. Phillimore.

THE pedigree-hunter has often been jested at for his meticulous searching after the details of the life-history of people who have long since passed away, and whose chief claim to remembrance may be no more than that they once were members of the family whose history is being investigated. The satirist Juvenal long since asked, of what use are pedigrees if in face of the household hearth we lead evil lives? But that appropriate question does not imply that we should despise genealogy.

Genealogy, the history of families, has been very appropriately described as the natural extension of the fifth commandment, 'Honour thy father and thy mother.' Those who possess an honourable parentage and honourable ancestry may well be proud thereof, so long as they also seek to lead honourable and useful lives and follow for themselves the maxim, *Noblesse oblige*. Pride of family is closely akin to personal self-respect. He who regards his own reputation will naturally be jealous of the reputation and good credit of his own immediate kindred and of his ancestry; and though a man may profess that he cares nothing for genealogy, it will often be found that such carelessness comes of ignorance of his family, and that when once his latent curiosity has been stirred he will frequently exhibit a keen interest in the subject.

As a rule, the knowledge which the average man has of his pedigree is exceedingly limited. Perhaps it will not be wrong to say that not one man out of ten could give off-hand the names of all his grandparents, and that a still smaller proportion could name their great-grandfathers or accurately name their uncles and aunts and their various cousins even in the first degree. We may thus easily recognise the difficulties which will confront the average man when, either for business reasons or from intelligent interest, he commences to investigate the ramifications of his family-tree. The reader may therefore be glad to have some hints as to the steps which have to be taken in pedigree inquiries.

Our own personal knowledge of our kindred must be the basis upon which to build up the family pedigree, and we shall naturally begin by making such notes of our various relatives as our own recollections will supply. It will be best to commence by setting down on paper in tabular form a statement giving the names of all relatives with whom we have been personally acquainted or of whom we have been told. Obviously the extent of such a pedigree will

vary much with the compiler. An elderly man who has known his grandparents and is himself a grandfather may be able to write out a pedigree of five or six generations, with the names of many nephews and cousins; while a young man obviously is likely to enumerate far fewer kinsmen. In addition to those whose precise kinship we can specify, there will be others who we have been told are relatives, such as second and third cousins, though in what way related we may not be able to define. These should be noted down together with all particulars known, thus: 'My grandfather had a cousin, Mrs Edwards, living at Faringdon, who called upon him with her two sons, boys about twelve and thirteen, when I was staying with him at Cirencester in 1870.' Or again: 'My mother had an uncle, John Smith, whom she visited at Stow-on-the-Wold about 1875, taking me with her. It was his ninetieth birthday. There lived with him his two daughters, one named Drusilla.'

It will generally be possible to make many such disjointed notes of family history, often with little biographical reminiscences which later on may prove to be of value not only in themselves but as affording clues to the earlier history of the family. Obviously, in the instance just given, if we stop short in our knowledge of the grandfather's place of origin, it is clear that we may find further information some time or another if we pay a visit to Faringdon or Stow-on-the-Wold.

When our own personal knowledge is exhausted, inquiries must be made of older members of the family. An aged great-aunt in this way may prove a treasure, and conversation with her may bring to our knowledge many relatives past and present of whom we never before heard. Note down at once the information she may give, and if opportunity allows check your notes with her on some future occasion, when quite possibly she will supplement them with further details, and maybe the names of relatives who escaped her recollection on the former occasion. Sometimes, besides relatives, the recollections of aged friends or neighbours may be similarly utilised.

After our own personal recollections and those of the older members of the family and others have been exhausted, inquiry should be directed to any written records in the possession of any member of the family. Sometimes it will be an old Family Bible or a note-book in which have been jotted down various memoranda of births, marriages, and deaths which otherwise might prove not easy to ascertain. Careful copies should be made of all such notes, and all available information at once transferred to the outline pedigree. Inquiry should be made for the existence of any deeds in the family. Often there will be a collection of these going back a century or more in the case of those families who have been property-owners, large or small, for any long period, and all such parchments and papers should be carefully examined, and all personal information, whether apparently relating to the family or not, ought to be abstracted. Inquiries should also be made for any portraits, and permission obtained for photographing them. Until the second half of the last century family portraits are few in number, for obviously the expense of oil-paintings, and even miniatures, was prohibitive for any but comparatively well-to-do people. The only inexpensive method of portraiture was that of the silhouette, a profile cut out of black paper, occasionally relieved with a touch of gold shading. These quaint substitutes for portraits can be readily reproduced for the family history. For the last sixty years we must look chiefly for photographs. These also ought to be utilised, and even old, faded silver-prints are not to be rejected, as often they will appear to greater advantage when engraved in half-tone or collotype than in their original form.

Signatures of the various members of the family should be collected whenever opportunity offers, and reproduced. Without subscribing to the fanciful delineation of character from handwriting, signatures have a certain evidentiary value in indicating the educational position of a family, and obviously possess great personal interest, especially when no portraits exist, for often they are the sole remaining trace of the writers' individuality or handiwork.

Mourning-rings, once very fashionable, will occasionally be met with, and they will usually give the date of death and age of the deceased.

After all such evidence as can be supplied within our own family limits has been exhausted, extraneous sources must be examined. First of all we shall inquire whether any one has been working in the same field, for it is quite likely that a pedigree of the family may exist somewhere in print. The *Genealogist's Guide*, by the late Rouge Croix, Dr Marshall, will answer the question at any rate to the date of the last edition of his most useful index. If such a pedigree be found enshrined in the pages of some county history or in some collection of genealogies such as the *Peerage* or the *Landed Gentry* of Burke our labours may be much lightened, and we may have only to elucidate minor points, and to continue it to our own time. Other printed books such as directories will give isolated facts useful when we come to piece the genealogy together. But the principal sources of information for any extensive genealogical inquiry must always be the public records. These are so numerous that it is possible for us to deal with only a few of the more important classes. As to the records to be consulted, something depends upon the social position of the family; it might be hopeless to expect much information from wills and Chancery suits if we are dealing with a family whose ancestors half a century ago were farm-labourers, and in such a case we must as a rule be content with the meagre information which the parish register will give us. But let us presume that our family is of somewhat higher rank, yeomen farming their own lands, the tradesmen of the county town, or of the professional classes, men of

the middle rank of life, not wealthy, but still possessing some small means necessitating deeds and settlements in their lifetime, and wills at their death to dispose of their savings. Our task in such case is rendered much easier.

We have already dealt with the information to be gathered out of our own circle, some of which will consist of disjointed facts needing information to enable us to put them in their proper place.

Perhaps before we go to the parish register we shall do well to visit the village church and churchyard, and find out what tablets and tombstones still remain. These records in stone, which may go back for a couple of hundred years, in some districts even more, will often supply us with information that we cannot hope to obtain elsewhere. Let us imagine that we are seeking out the pedigree of Mr John Smith. The parish register may tell us that John Smith was buried 17th May 1770 and nothing more, and that another John Smith was buried on 3rd September 1785. But these two bare facts will not help us to construct a pedigree. A visit to the village churchyard may show us a slate headstone with some such inscription as this: 'In memory of John Smith of Blackacre in this parish, Yeoman, who died ye 17th day of May 1770, aged 73 years. Also of Mary, his relict, who died 30th Jan. 1781, aged 75 years. Also of John Smith, Jun., only son of the said John Smith, who died 3rd September 1785, aged 36 years. And of Betty, widow of John Smith, who departed this life 27th Oct. 1853, aged 95 years.' This at once gives us two generations of Smiths, with definite dates and ages. But there is nothing to show that these two John Smiths are ancestors of our friend Mr John Smith until we refer to our notes of his conversation about his family, and we find this: 'My grandfather, Thomas Smith, died in 1890, aged seventy. I knew an old great-aunt, Mrs Jones—I understood her to be his sister—who once in conversation mentioned to me that her grandmother lived to be ninety-five.'

Evidently we have here a clue. Betty Smith of the tombstone, who died in 1853, aged ninety-five, is presumably the grandfather's grandmother of our friend. With this to guide us, and the knowledge that the great-aunt, Mrs Mary Jones, was born about 1830, and that her brother, the grandfather, Thomas Smith, was born about 1820, we may make a search in the register of baptisms, or ask the rector to do so for us. This done, we find that Thomas Smith and Mary Jones were children of one William Smith of Longfords, linen-draper, and Esther, his wife. Not only these, but the names of divers other children of William and Esther are duly entered as christened, the hitherto unknown great-uncles and great-aunts of John Smith. Turning again to our notes from the tombstones, we find one to 'William Smith, of this parish, died July 30th, 1840,' with no other details by which to identify him. Let us now examine the burial register. That tells us that William Smith of Longfords, linen-draper, was buried 3rd August 1840, aged sixty, and the mention of his age at once suggests another reference to the baptismal register, which we shall find states that William Smith was son of John Smith and Betty, his wife, evidently the nonagenarian great-great-grandmother of whom great-aunt Mary used to talk. As before, a search for a few years on either side of the date 1780 gives us the names of William Smith's brothers and sisters; and if we look at the date 1697, the year in which, according to the tombstone, John Smith the elder must have been born, we find his baptism also entered, showing him to have been the son of one Timothy Smith. So far our searches have been to good purpose, for, aided by tradition, the tombstones, and the parish register, we have established a clear pedigree of eight generations, if we include our friend Mr John Smith and his own little sons.

At this stage we come to a standstill, for the registers before 1690 are missing, and apparently nothing more can be learnt locally. But we need not despair, for elsewhere there are many sources of information which will enable us to trace back for at least a hundred and fifty years earlier the pedigree of the Smiths, besides adding much of biographical detail to the life-history of the various members of the family. We need not further illustrate in detail the various steps necessary to complete the searches, but we may now mention for the reader's benefit some of the principal sources of information open to him should he also be taken with a desire to learn something more of his ancestors than the bare name of his grandfather.

The missing registers of the parish may be found copied more or less completely in the Bishop's Transcripts preserved in the cathedral town of the diocese, where, too, should be preserved various volumes recording the issue of marriage licenses, which records may often supply the missing surnames of various grandmothers and great-grandmothers. The wills in the Probate Registry must be carefully looked at, for than these there is perhaps no more important source of information available for the genealogist, who in respect of these records, as also of parish registers and marriage licenses, enjoys facilities which to his predecessor of only thirty years ago was largely a mere Utopian hope. Thus lists of the wills in very many Probate Registries down to 1800 have been printed by the British Record Society during the last twenty years, and before many more years go by it is probable that we shall have alphabetical lists of most of the various collections of wills still extant in England, as is already the case in Scotland down to the year 1800. And many hundreds of parish registers have also been printed, and can be bought at less expense than a single visit to the parish might entail. Further, a very large number of volumes of indexes, calendars, and abstracts of many important classes of the public records have been printed either by the old Record Commissioners or else under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. It is impossible here in a short article even to give a summary of

them, and we must be content with referring the reader to such manuals as Sim's *Handbook for the Genealogist* (still excellent, though now a good deal out of date), Rye's *Records and Record-Searching*, Phillimore's *How to Write the History of a Family*, and Bird's *Guide to the Public Records*, from which may be gained many useful hints as to the innumerable classes of public and private records out of which he may gather information about his kindred.

The pursuit of genealogy is one which tends to become a very engrossing hobby, and it is one which may be pursued by any man, even though he be possessed of but moderate means. Such a one, if he has any natural aptitude for careful research, is sure to derive much pleasure from genealogical pursuits. Always some new facts are being discovered, some missing link is found, some problem still remains to be solved. And when the pedigree of his own surname has been approximately completed, there will be the genealogy of the various female lines of descent and the families of his collateral kindred to form a happy hunting-ground for his further investigation.

One final hint may be given. The pedigree-hunter should seek to give the results of his labour a permanent form, and should collect his facts together in an orderly method in book-form, so that they may be readily referred to whenever occasion arises. Better still, if he see a chance of printing the pedigrees he may have compiled for himself they will be permanently preserved, and obviously will be available for a far wider circle than is possible so long as his collections remain in manuscript. Only he must not delude himself with the idea that his book of family history can be a source of profit to him. Fortunate will he be if his subscription list covers his printer's bill. His reward must be a natural satisfaction at seeing his labours take a finished and permanent form, coupled with the assurance that they will surely be appreciated and valued in the future by his posterity and kindred, and even it may be by a yet wider circle of readers not limited to this land.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS, Author of *The Cruciform Mark*, &c.

STORY X.

## THE SNUFF-BOX.

WHEN I had discovered who lay beside me I did what I could to give him a chance for life. This was very little, consisting merely in gradually pushing the body out of the puddle, and then trying to put some warmth into both of us by lying near him. I fancy it was done by force of professional habit or instinct, and am sure that I cannot claim any credit for the effort. It benefited me alone. It kept me occupied for a while, and the exertion stirred my blood.

When I had done all that I could, and knew that a dead body most certainly lay beside me, my imagination got the upper hand, and I became quite unreasonable. I suddenly took the most awful fear of the Thing, and could not bear to be near it. I rolled away as far as I could, and then lay for a while in the darkness, facing the place where I thought it to be, with an insane dread that sooner or later I should feel it pressing against me once more.

It was some time before this condition passed off, and ever since I have felt that I know what panic means. When I had myself in hand again I tried to occupy my attention by thinking of what to do, but there was nothing cheering about that. I could not get the handkerchief from my mouth or move the cords from my wrists or ankles. No one knew where I was, or was likely to search for some hours; and, lying there without coat or waistcoat, cold and wet through with the standing water, I thought it likely that a few hours more would bring me to the condition of that which lay somewhere in the darkness not far away.

Hour after hour went, and I was wondering whether I deceived myself or whether the sky at the shaft's mouth was really showing the first gray touch of dawn, when a sound set me for a moment shaking again. It was only a dog howling somewhere above me, a most uncanny noise. But when I got over my first moment's start I rejoiced. I was sure that I knew the dog, and that it was not for me he lamented. But I blessed him most sincerely, and I vowed, lying there in the dark, that if ever I lived to reach the surface and to see him, he should have a good master and a good home all his days.

It seemed hours yet after that, and nothing more happened. Sometimes for a while the dog was quiet, and then his voice sounded farther off. I was sure, however, that he would not go, except to attract some one's attention, and at last I heard a voice shouting down the shaft.

It shouted, paused, shouted again, and then, getting no answer, the searcher went away. Long afterwards it seemed as though some one was there again; but about that time I lost consciousness altogether.

I recovered, to find myself on the four-poster of my room at the hotel, with a local medico and a nurse dressing a scalp-wound. That and some severe bruises due to the kicks I had endured were all my injuries. But for a few days I was kept to my bed, and was allowed to see no one but

Cecilia, who hurried down to me, and a magistrate, a local worthy with a strong Cornish accent, who took my deposition.

I was not encouraged to ask questions, and indeed for some days I was not greatly interested in anything. Bonaventure, I learnt afterwards, called every morning to ask for me, and was the first visitor allowed by Cecilia into my room. At first he was only allowed to stand and smile and nod, and give me a sort of silent pastoral benediction. But the day that Cecilia and the medico, who did not conceal his adoration of her, got me to an arm-chair by the fire, my interest in things revived, and I made Bonaventure stay and tell me all he knew.

It was Bonaventure who had found me, after searching all the night through; and I interrupted his story at the very beginning to stretch a rather limp hand across the fire and grip his.

He coughed a bit awkwardly, muttered something to the effect that he had always enjoyed roaming at night, and then went on: 'Finding you—er—contumacious on the matter of meeting poor old Jan'——

'Why "poor"?' I asked, and Bonaventure stopped again, and stared short-sightedly across at me, and then at Cecilia, who sat near by with some sewing.

'Jan is lying in hospital, much worse hurt than you are,' he said at last. 'Indeed, I was with him last night and this morning. I assumed that you knew. I will tell you what we suppose about him, in due course, if your sister will allow me.'

'Go on,' I said.

And Bonaventure continued, with a glance at Cecilia as much as to say that he thought himself under her orders. 'Finding that I could not persuade you against meeting Jan,' he said, 'and being conscious that, after all, my concern might be needless, I ceased to discuss the matter, and decided to take another way with you. Accordingly the next night I went out in good time, and going up to what tradition calls the Devil's Kitchen, I waited there.'

'If then,' I remarked, with as dry a manner as I could assume, 'Jan had met me, and had given me any valuable information, you would have had the benefit of it.'

The Vicar flushed angrily, and, straightening his thin figure, glared at me in silence. Then, hearing a chuckle which I couldn't repress, he beamed. 'To be so rude,' he said, 'you must be feeling much stronger,' and went on: 'I waited until ten, rather anxious, but not knowing what to think of it or what to do. At about ten I went to the hotel and asked for you. They could only say that you had gone out, leaving no word of your errand, and I waited in your sitting-room until twelve.'

The Vicar stopped and rubbed his big chin meditatively. 'I am afraid,' he confessed, 'that I am not very alert. There is a young—er—lady here as manageress, a Church-member, a most worthy girl, as very likely you are aware.'

'Miss Potter,' said Cecilia, looking up at us. 'Most reliable and most kind. We must try to find something really nice for her when we're in town, Dick.—She's a dear, isn't she, Vicar?'

'I think her most praiseworthy,' said Bonaventure, 'and most practical. She insisted that you would be angry if I did not take some supper, and brought some here herself. I gave her a hint of my anxiety, and of your having expected to meet Cap'n Jan, though I said no more. It was Miss Potter who suggested that in that case we ought to know whether the Cap'n was in.'

It seemed that Miss Potter's practical suggestion had roused the Vicar thoroughly. He went on to tell me that he called at the house where Jan lived, and, not finding him, roused several men to search the country for both of us.

He himself, having despatched parties along the shore and the cliff east and west, had suddenly remembered Cap'n Jan's fondness for the old mine, and climbed to it alone. The dog's howls warned him of trouble, and took him to the shaft's mouth. Sure that some one was there, though he got no answer to his shouts, Bonaventure brought up the first search-party he could find. He himself went down the shaft, and took me out, and the disfigured body of Mearns after me. It was not until they were carrying me down the hillside that one of the party stumbled upon Cap'n Jan lying battered and dazed only just off the cart-track.

'He is not likely to get over it,' Bonaventure ended. 'He lies semi-delirious, muttering to himself, and picking at the bedclothes; and how much of what he says is fancy and how much is fact we can't tell.'

'He won't live if he is like that,' I agreed. 'I expect he followed me to the shaft, and went for Mearns in the dark, mistaking him for me. What does he talk about?'

'How much of what he says is fancy and how much is fact one can't tell,' Bonaventure repeated mechanically. I suddenly had the notion that he had been going over this formula often to himself.

'What does he talk about?' I asked again.

'I am sure you will remember,' Bonaventure persisted, without paying any attention, 'before this happened that I said I did not think the old man responsible for his actions.'

'He won't live to be held responsible by us, if that's what you mean,' I said impatiently. 'What does he say? We must judge for ourselves as well as we can what's true about it.'

'I am in a perplexing position,' Bonaventure continued, rubbing his chin and looking askance at Cecilia. 'The man being in this semi-delirious condition, is a lucid interval to be expected?'

'You thought him cracked before,' I reminded him in most unprofessional language, 'and you knew him a great deal better than I did. I have seen a case recorded when a second knock balanced the effects of a first. But that was mere statement, and isn't old Jan's case, anyway.'

Bonaventure still hesitated. 'His statement may

be worthless,' he said, 'and there was no mention of the seal of the confessional. Still, I was there in my capacity as priest, and he may have assumed—— But what he said is certainly of interest to you. I am anxious to do right.'

He stopped, and bent over the fire, frowning disconsolately at us both, and Cecilia came to the rescue.

'If there's anything you think Dick ought to know,' she said, 'he'll promise not to use it against the old man.—Won't you, Dick?'

'I don't suppose I could hurt him, anyhow,' I said, 'if what the Vicar says about him is near the mark. Besides, what Jan says is hardly evidence. Anyway, I promise.'

And Bonaventure went on. He told us that Jan generally lay quiet, staring at the ceiling of the ward, and saying nothing, even when spoken to. At times, however, he grew restless, and, constantly tossing in his bed or even trying to rise, he would talk incessantly. At such times his thoughts always wandered along the same track, and all his chatter was of his 'li'le maid' and the Squire—hopes and lamentations for her, blessings and curses for him.

'His fits of talkativeness always end in threats,' the Vicar said. 'Then he lies still, as if either he were tired out or thought something was finished. It seems all very real if you watch and hear him. That is my excuse for telling you. Last night I went to the hospital, and thought he seemed different. On speaking to him I made sure, at any rate, that he knew me, and I asked the doctor's leave to talk to him alone.'

Bonaventure paused again, and looked appealingly at Cecilia. 'Ignorance and superstition are responsible for a good deal,' he said. 'We cannot judge'—— But Cecilia, not trusting herself to speak, bit at a thread with unusual decision.

'Whatever really happened,' Bonaventure went on, 'happened as the result of grief and superstition. Jan's mind is firm on certain points. He is obsessed. He says that your great-grandfather had a charm or devil hid in a silver box, and that, whatever it was, for his own purposes he used it to kill the child, pretending to cure. This being made clear to Jan a few days after the little maid's death, he set out for Warwick, the Squire having gone to live there, to save money, as Jan puts it, for more devilry. The fact probably was that he let this place for money to continue experiments connected with the mine.

'Jan says he watched the house day and night, and one evening followed the Squire up the river, and assaulted him and left him for dead, thinking that he heard some one coming. In the early morning he crept back, wanting to get the charmed box, which the Squire often carried. He could not find the box or the ring, which he wanted too, though he found the Squire dead some hundreds of yards nearer home than he had left him. He says that he threw the body into the river, made his way west again, wrecked the mine, and sailed for America two days later.'

'Supposing all this to have happened,' I said, 'what has he against me?'

'He called you "the last of the brood,"' Bonaventure explained. 'He knew the ring first, and then saw a family likeness. He seemed to think it really a meritorious act to be your executioner. Having told me all this, he began to babble disconnectedly again about the Squire and his child, and what was in the ring, until he fell into a stupor. This morning he lay dumb, and took no notice of me or anybody else.'

I lay back and listened, and wondered how much of this was fact and how much an old man's delusion.

'I suppose,' I said, 'that if we go carefully through old family papers we may find some evidence about the Squire's death. But I expect that things were neglected, because his wife died so soon after, and my grandfather was then only a child. I'm going to look at the inside of the snuff-box, though. I meant to do that sooner.'

And Cecilia, forbidding me to move, went and fetched it from a drawer in my bedroom.

'Now!' I said, shaking it. 'Sometimes I have thought lately that the box might be what was hidden. We know that he thought a lot of it. It's conspicuous in his portrait, and it was well known among the folk down here. I think it would be useful to see what's inside.'

'Rappee,' said the Vicar.

'Very likely,' I agreed, 'and all the yarns about it are legends. We Cornish are superstitious still, and I suppose we were worse sixty or seventy years ago. But we must look at this all the same. Vicar, since my sister won't let me stir, may I trouble you to ring? I think a sardine-tin opener would do what I want nicely.'

The Vicar paused with his hand upon the bell, and, with more plainness of speech than I expected from him, said 'Goth!' and didn't offer to retract.

Cecilia gave a little shriek and caught away the box, looking daggers at me above it. 'You'll want to break up your ring next,' she said, 'and you call yourself a Carvell!'

'I do,' I agreed. 'I think the old Squire would sympathise. I fancy he was a very practical man, though he mortgaged this place and lost the money. You're right, too, Cecilia. If I find anything out of the common inside the box I'll get the stone taken out of the ring and see if anything lies behind the winged horse. For what did Jan say to me?—he'd tell me what was "in the ring." He said, too, "There's money in it."'

'That was only to tempt you out,' Cecilia objected. 'He meant to treat you as he treated that other man;' and she shivered, and, I could see, would have come and given me a hug but for the Vicar.

At that moment a servant answered the bell, and

I asked her to beg for me from Miss Potter a sardine-tin opener, or any other finer tool that would open a metal box.

The girl went, and Cecilia repeated her argument that old Jan had to invent some tempting suggestion to decoy me out.

'That may be true,' I allowed; 'but, on the other hand, what I say may be the fact. Perhaps he thought I knew something about the ring before, and that I should want to know more still. He might even have meant to go so far as to tell me something interesting and true. He would remember that dead men tell no tales. Mearns was pretty frank, because he thought what he said would go no farther than the shaft, after he had done with me.'

'Don't!' said Cecilia; and at that moment the door opened again, and I turned to see what instrument Miss Potter had provided for the box.

It was nothing of the kind, but a message from the little hospital asking the Vicar to come at once.

We looked at one another, and as he rose I rose too.

'Have a carriage round, please,' I said to the girl. 'Anything that will get us quickly to the hospital. Run!'

And the girl ran, while Cecilia and the Vicar protested.

'We must see to the box some other time,' I said, slipping it into my pocket; and in a wonderfully short time I found myself well wrapped up and hurried toward the hospital in an ancient fly.

What I hoped for was that Jan had some conscious or more or less lucid interval, and meant to give Bonaventure more details, and would perhaps even answer one or two questions. If there was no chance of that—and I knew it to be most improbable—I thought there might be something said even in delirium that I could make use of later. For the mind tends at such times to leap long intervals of time, and to wander at random through scenes that once made a deep impression.

Well, I was to be disappointed; and indeed once I stood beside the bed and looked down on my old enemy, I was not greatly inclined to worry him about any earthly affairs.

The young house-surgeon, clothed with a little brief authority, and so a trifle more full of dignity than later seems essential, was most obliging, and regarded me with interest as not only a *confrère* but also an interesting case. He led us into a ward where the usual arrangement of screens marked the seclusion given to those who will soon be shut off altogether from earthly disturbances.

There old Jan lay on his back, his mouth a little open, his eyes closed. One saw that the hospital bedstead was barely of a size to let him stretch his great length.

I stood by while the house-surgeon spoke without getting any response from him, and then Bonaventure knelt beside him and spoke close to his ear.

'Here I am, Jan,' he said. 'You sent for me—the Vicar. What do you want?'

Still not a word, not a movement to show that he knew any one was by him.

'Let him be, Vicar,' I said. 'He is probably unconscious, and will just slip away.'

I spoke in an ordinary tone, but my voice seemed to travel farther than the others into the shadows amongst which the old man groped. His eyelids quivered and lifted, and his weary old gray eyes rolled and rested on me, and to my astonishment he even half-smiled.

'Ah Squire!' he said quite distinctly, 'I bain't feared for 'e. My li'le maid'—— and one big, knotted hand gently touched the counterpane once or twice, as it might be stroking a child's head.

That was all. The eyelids dropped again, the hand lay still on the counterpane, the face became vacant and lifeless, though breathing continued.

I left the Vicar at the hospital, being sure that nothing more would be got from Jan, and I drove home, wondering at the almost friendly feeling which I had for the old man. After all, one did not know how long ago he had ceased to be responsible for his actions. It would ill become a medical man to want revenge on a monomaniac, and undoubtedly that night he would be beyond our jurisdiction. Besides, one could not help being touched by the love which had lasted so long for his 'li'le maid.' I came home thinking without any vindictiveness of all these things; but on the way I stopped the carriage at a working jeweller's, and to spare Cecilia's feelings I got the loan of a neater tool than a sardine-tin opener, and took it back to the hotel.

Bonaventure had promised to call later with any news there might be from the hospital, and I was determined to look into the box with him and Cecilia before the evening ended.

I lay down for a while to please Cecilia, and tried to sleep; but no doubt my visit to the hospital had made me restless, and a rising wind which beat in from the sea, bringing the sea-roar with it and rattling the old windows, disturbed me. In the end Cecilia got a big fire made up, and I was lying on the sofa in front of that, and speculating with her, as we had done before, about Mearns, when Bonaventure returned.

'Still alive,' he said, 'but that's all. They say at the hospital that he might be like that for some hours yet. I came in to tell you, in case you were sitting up for me.'

'Come and warm yourself,' I said. 'It is a bad night. Miss Potter is going to send you up something to eat at once. It's ready.'

Bonaventure protested that he had said he would go back to the hospital, but I had another card up my sleeve.

'You shall go after you've had some food,' I said; 'though I am sure the old man won't speak again. Meanwhile I'm going to open the box.

We were only waiting for you;' and, spreading out a clean sheet of paper on the table, I began to cut the box as neatly as I could along the line of soldering.

The silversmith's tool was sharp and the metal not very hard. I went to work slowly, not wishing to let the point slip into my left hand. But presently I had a long, narrow incision made, through which a few grains dropped from the inside on to the paper as I turned the box to carry the incision round.

'It's not snuff at all,' Bonaventure said sharply; and snuff it certainly was not.

I looked for a moment, and then went on with my operation in silence, and soon had the whole contents of the box upon the table.

There was very little after all. A few grains of colourless crystals were scattered on the paper, with nothing particularly remarkable about them. I could detect no odour, and when I cautiously took up a single crystal on the tip of a finger and tasted it there was only a faint, slightly bitter flavour. I couldn't think it familiar, but still the taste seemed to suggest something. I closed my eyes and leant back, tasting again and trying to follow the suggestion to its source, while Cecilia and Bonaventure sat watching. The opening of a door downstairs let the wind whistle through the corridors and pipe at our keyhole. I listened to it, and my attention was distracted from the half-familiar flavour. Try as I would, I could not follow the hint with any concentration. There were voices below, steps hurried along the corridor, and there was knocking.

'Come in!' cried Cecilia, and the door opened at once, and let in a blast of wind, and showed Miss Potter standing in the doorway.

'A messenger, if you please, from the hospital to say that the Vicar needn't go back. Cap'n Jan died suddenly a few minutes after he left, and said nothing.'

However surely Death may be coming, my experience is that one always feels a little shock at his announcement. There was something rather dramatic, too, about Miss Potter's sudden entry, together with the blast of cold air from the street below—a blast which puffed out our lamp on the table and set the fire spirting with flame. In the half-darkness I heard Cecilia give a smothered exclamation, while Miss Potter stammered apologies, and beneath the two women's voices ran Bonaventure's, reciting prayers, I was sure, for the dead man's soul.

This confusion only lasted for two or three minutes, while Miss Potter ran to the top of the stair and called down for the front door to be shut at once and a lamp brought.

But when the light came it showed what else had happened. The wind that had blown out the lamp had done more, and we all three seemed to discover this together, and stared at one another without a word. The sheet of paper on which my hand lay was swept clean, and obviously all the contents of the snuff-box had been blown into the fire. So the only two channels through which information had seemed possible were destroyed once and for all.

*(To be continued.)*

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# THE MORALS OF THE ROUND TABLE.

## MALORY'S 'MORTE D'ARTHUR' COMPARED WITH THE 'IDYLLS OF THE KING.'

By Canon DAWSON.

MALORY'S *Morte d'Arthur* is everywhere cheaply on sale, and the inference is that it is largely bought. Whether it is widely read is, of course, another matter. But Sir Thomas Malory ought to be read by all who love the *Idylls of the King*, if only that they may understand how wide a moral breach there is between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

Sir Thomas Malory wrote in rough times for rough men and love-lorn but not very literate ladies, and he wrote what they liked to read. He reflects the popular muscular Christianity of the fifteenth century. His book is a book of Christian knights and ladies doing what they supposed to be noble and Christian deeds. It may be taken for granted that his representation of Christian chivalry was generally accepted and admired by his readers. That being so, we can only wonder and be thankful at the extraordinary change which four hundred years have wrought.

When the *Morte d'Arthur* was published King Edward IV. was on the throne. The last lines of the book were written in 1470, King Edward IV.'s ninth year. The Wars of the Roses (1450–71) were going on while Malory was romancing on the wars of Arthur. Brave and gracious Jeanne d'Arc had been burned at Rouen in 1431. Jack Cade and his revolt reduced London to panic in 1450. The battle of Barnet, at which Warwick the King-maker was slain, was fought in 1471, just a year after Malory laid down his pen.

The *Paston Letters* throw much light upon the inner life of this century. We gather from these letters that people were outwardly very religious, and that every respectable person was expected to be so. They were both pious and punctilious. A brother addresses his brother as 'Right worshipful and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother;'

and he concludes his letter by praying that the Blessed Trinity may preserve him in all honour and prosperity. But all this was consistent with a very loose conception of moral virtue. The most popular virtue was pluck. Physical courage covered a multitude of sins. Knights still ran jousts for their ladies' honour in Malory's day. A Paston letter of 1440 describes a knight who had sailed from Spain into England, a gallant figure with a 'kerchief of pleasaunce' enwrapped about his arm—that is, with a handkerchief broidered by his lady—and who proclaimed himself ready to run a course with a sharp spear against any gentleman for his lady's sake.

Such encounters were full of mutual goodwill, but were, for all that, merciless and deadly. Moreover, the rules of chivalry were easily thrown aside. Violence, robbery, and murder were every-day happenings. The weaker party had always to look out for himself on the road, chivalry or no chivalry. A Paston letter of 1450 tells how Sir Robert Harcourt met his enemy Sir Humphrey Stafford by the way, and at once smote him 'a great stroke on the head with his sword.' Whereupon Sir Humphrey's son rode to aid his father, and was immediately knifed in the back—all, as the writer says, 'in a paternoster while.' Several other similar atrocities are recorded in the same letter, all without any note of reprobation, yet the letter ends piously with the prayer, 'The almighty Jesu preserve your high estate, my special lord.'

Everybody was more or less superstitious, and nobody was ashamed of confessing it. Thus William Yelverton, a worshipful Justice, tells his cousin John Paston that he ascribes his good fortunes to 'Our Lady of Walsingham,' an image of the Madonna much revered at that time. Malefactors could still take sanctuary in church. A letter of 1444 describes 'a great fray' which took place in a certain church, when the sheriff refused to recognise sanctuary, and presumed to arrest an unfortunate who had fled to the altar. The congregation rose up indignantly during mass and taught the sheriff the rights of the case.

The clergy were much respected as such; but as mere men they were not expected to be better than the rest. Thus Sir John Fastolf (who is supposed to be the original of Shakespeare's Falstaff) complains that a certain Sir John Buck (they called the clergy 'Sir' in those days as a title equivalent to the more modern 'Reverend'), the parson of Stratford, had poached his private fish-ponds, had broken his dam, robbed his swannery, and done other enormities of the same kind, all without any particular reproach attaching to his cloth.

Women were chivalrously protected by the knights who espoused their cause, but there was no general sense of woman's worth or purity. No woman was for a moment safe who was not protected by some mailed champion. Love was lightly given and lightly tossed aside, and when that is the case woman is always the worst sufferer.

Amidst this general confusion the lingering spirit of chivalry was the saving element. The origin of chivalry is most interesting. It sprang out of the teachings of the Church and the vileness of the times. The Church taught that the strong should protect the weak; and so, in a day when there was no law strong enough to undertake this duty, Christian gentlemen took it upon themselves to be God's guardians of the feeble. Strong men armed themselves and rode about the world to redress intolerable wrongs. They were all brave men who did that, and naturally men who loved a fight. They fought one with another for glory and for the pure pleasure of it, and with robbers for the good of mankind. Hence the name. The armed horseman was known as the 'chevalier.' His self-imposed patrolling of the land was called after him the practice of 'chivalry.'

Knighthood was taken very seriously in those days. In the reign of Edward the Confessor it was associated with prayers, vigils, and the special blessings of the Church. Knights were solemnly set apart to the service of God and man. They were sworn to speak the truth, maintain the right, protect women and the oppressed, and to practise gentleness and courtesy as well as courage. It was a radiant idea, and it appealed to all that was romantic in the best men. All youths of gentle birth were educated with the hope of winning the golden spurs. The castles of great lords became schools of chivalry. Boys were taught in those fine schools how to wield arms and fight by rule, as Christian gentlemen should. A highly elaborate courtesy was practised toward ladies, and each man was encouraged to enslave himself to some queen of hearts and to do deeds for her sake.

One of the pleasantest results of this brotherhood in arms was that it levelled mere class distinctions. There was less snobbery in that age than perhaps in any other. A knightly man of no birth was more highly esteemed than the best-born craven. There were plenty of instances in which common men-at-arms were knighted for gallantry in the field, and, being knighted, were received into the ranks of gentlefolk. Sir Robert Sale was such a man, knighted by King Edward for brave conduct, and then made governor of Norwich. Sir John Hawkwood, a tanner's son, was another such. Thus a high sense of honour permeated all classes, and did something to shame men into decency in an age when there was no other check upon cruelty and selfishness.

Chivalry was often fantastic. Plenty of instances of that are to be found in Malory. It disappeared at last under a hail of laughter when Cervantes drew the fine, pitiful figure of crazy Don Quixote. But chivalry did its work before it died; it created the ideal of the Christian gentleman and lady. No age could be altogether bad which conceived such a complex character as that of Sir Launcelot of the Lake. A frail man was he when passion tore at his heart, but he was never ignoble, never less than a

gentleman. As Sir Ector said of him, after his death: 'Ah, Launcelot, thou wert the head of all Christian knights. . . . Thou wert the courtliest knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; . . . and thou were the kindest man that ever strake with sword; . . . and thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest.' Allowing for differences of investiture, what man is there in any age of the world who could wish for a much better epitaph than that?

On the whole, then, one may grant some good intentions to that dark fifteenth century which immediately preceded the renaissance of letters and the reformation of the Church. It is true that some of the most serious men of the sixteenth century did not like Malory and his book. Roger Ascham wrote in 1570 (*The Schoolmaster*) that the chief pleasure of the *Morte d'Arthur* people seemed 'to lay in two special points—in open manslaughter and bold bawdray. In which book those be counted the noblest knights that do kill most men without any quarrel, and commit foulest adulteries by subtlest shifts.' But that is taking Sir Thomas Malory very literally indeed. Something must be allowed to a romance founded on ancient legends; and, of course, Malory took his facts from the old romances. The interesting fact is that he did not think it necessary to purify them more thoroughly and to idealise them more nobly.

But that is what Tennyson has done. He has taken the rude old romances and Malory's fifteenth-century romance, and out of them all he has woven a new-old story which the fifteenth century would not have been capable of appreciating. In the *Idylls of the King*, King Arthur becomes the Christ-man. His knights are the soldiers of the Christ, who serve Him according to their light; and right and wrong measure all. Under Tennyson's reverent hand the heroic germ blossoms out into its latest and most beautiful flower.

Of course Tennyson has allowed himself a very free hand in dealing with the old legends. His *Coming of Arthur*, a thing of pure beauty, is daintily carved out of a wild romance of cruelty and lust. In the rude old story Uther Pendragon, 'King of all England,' falls foully in love with the wife of one of his dukes. The Lady Igraine will not listen to him, so he makes war on her husband in Cornwall, and slays him, and takes his castle of Tintagel. He then marries her forcibly before her husband is underground. King Uther dies shortly afterwards, and the child of this marriage is kept hidden, by the counsel of Merlin. After the death of the king everything falls into disorder and the land is overrun by spoilers. No one knows who may be the rightful heir to the throne. There is, however, a great stone in London, opposite the principal church (probably St Paul's is intended), and embedded in this marble block is a steel anvil, and sticking in the anvil is a sword, on which is graven in gold letters that whosover can pull out the blade from the anvil is the rightful heir to all England. As this seems a challenge, and might point to strength or worth rather than kingly birth, many knights try their hand at the sword. But all in vain till Arthur comes, when without an effort he draws the blade forth as from a sheath. The legend says 'he handled the sword by the handle, and lightly and fiercely pulled it out of the stone.' This he did several times, till all owned him King Uther's heir. In spite of the sons of Belial who would not have an unknown boy to reign over them, Arthur's high gifts triumphed; a band of the most knightly knights came about him, and he at once set to work to reconquer the revolted provinces. All the north, with Scotland and Wales, came under his rule. Among his other exploits, he rescued a King Leodegraunce, whose daughter Guinevere he made his queen; whence also came his sorrow.

Now all this is excellent matter for romance, but the old romancers did not yet see the gold which lay hidden in the story. It remained for Tennyson to unveil the picture of the stainless king and his circle of white-souled knights. Malory's Arthur is very far from being stainless; in fact, so muddled up is his story with the coarse old legends that he makes Arthur the father of the traitor Modred by his own sister, the wife of one of his dukes. He even goes so far as to make Arthur a sort of Herod, who, when Merlin tells him that his wretched son shall be his bane and death, tries to put him out of the way by killing all the children in the neighbourhood born about the same time. All this sordid dreaming was not inconsistent with the mixed morals and grotesque conscience of Malory's age; but it shows how little he understood the message of the grand drama he was translating.

Tennyson would have none of such foul imaginings. The real Arthur never did any vileness of that sort. Tennyson saw him as he stood, the hero-man of his generation, the greatest man of his time, living nearer to the light than any other man of that day; and he tells how Arthur came, the chosen king, to serve the Christ. As like attracts like, he gathers about him the circle of lion-like men whom he constitutes the Order of the Round Table.

All this Tennyson idealises in masterly fashion, never keeping quite close to Malory's story. *Gareth and Lynette* is the tale of a young man's training in patience and humility. *Geraint and Enid* is a woman's loyalty and patience stretched to its utmost endurance. *Merlin and Vivien* is the queer legend of the downfall of wisdom without grace before the poison-shaft of flattery. *Launcelot and Elaine* is a fine study. Launcelot is the real hero both in Malory and in the *Idylls*. But while Malory's Launcelot can be fickle, Tennyson knows with a truer instinct that such a man could never trifle with love. Launcelot might stand for St George were it not that the poison of an unlawful

passion had got into his veins. Both he and Guinevere might have been saints if only they could have loved one another honestly. Elaine touches the life of the irresponsive Launcelot only to die for desire of him.

The *Holy Grail* is a wonderful piece of writing. It shows how the most closely linked community of friends in this world is bound sooner or later to be broken up. The nobler the company the harder to keep it unbroken. Arthur is dismayed when his finest knights devote themselves to find the vision which has inflamed them all with high desire. A remnant comes back from the quest, but nothing is quite the same afterwards. *Pelleas and Ettare* describes the beginning of the end. The canker at the Court can no longer be hid from any one but the unsuspicious king. Pelleas is a simple country gentleman with high ideals, who is driven distraught when he discovers the queen's frailty. Meanwhile the rot spreads. *The Last Tournament* shows the disintegration of all that Arthur has so patiently and lovingly built up. His knights, no longer basing their fealty on their confidence in the stainless honour of their order, lose their power of patient endurance. They become fretful and hysteric. They begin to fight for their own hand, and show no mercy to the vanquished. Sir Tristram carries on his love intrigue with *la belle* Iseult on coarser lines than Sir Launcelot with Guinevere, and gets his death, not undeserved, at the hand of her ungenerous husband.

Queen Guinevere's disgrace soon follows Iseult's. Malory's story of this tragedy is sufficiently vivid. Guinevere is condemmed to be burnt for her misdemeanour, and is only rescued from a shameful death by her lover and his friends. But Tennyson ignores all barbarisms of that sort, and goes straight to the soul of the story. In his poem Guinevere sees both her sin and her mistake in the flash of revelation which accompanies the shock of her dishonour. If Arthur is scarcely human in his interview with her, Tennyson's aim is clearly to show us the Christ-man in whom justice, love, and pity are all harmonious elements. And Guinevere in losing him finds him at last:

> Ah my God,
> What might I not have made of Thy fair world
> Had I but loved Thy highest creature here!
> Not Launcelot, nor another.

The *Passing of Arthur* is the crown of the *Idylls*. It is vivid as a dream, that sunset-land of Lyonnesse into which Modred and his rebel host were driven, and where the long flats from which the tide had ebbed ended in 'the phantom circle of a moaning sea.' In the confusion of the death-white mist all perish but the king, his two sorely wounded friends, and Modred the traitor. In slaying the reptile Modred, the king is almost slain. All is done now. It only remains that the sword Excalibur should be returned to the mystic giver. Then Arthur himself disappears into the golden west, perhaps to return again, *rex futurus;* but, if so, then in a different guise suited to a different age. For

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new;
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

And so the pageant passes. The older legends drew their rude pictures of it and faded out. Malory translated them as best he could into such form as his own age could understand. His book, too, has ceased to show things as they are. Then Tennyson took up the brush and created that fair picture of fine deeds which is one of our best possessions. Some day it will need to be painted yet again, and, it may be, again and again, for other generations and other modes and minds. But the pageant of Arthur and his knights will always be essentially the same. For it is the deathless struggle of 'men of goodwill' against the meanness and cruelty of this world. It is the display of the achievements and limitations of life. It is that battle of life which is ever fought on a shifting field on which one can never see the very end of anything. And through it all floats the light of the promise of the beatific Vision, eluding most men here, but to be granted hereafter to all who are faithful to their order and their vows.

## THE VISION OF THE HILLS.

I STAND upon the hills that touch
  The wonder of the skies,
And gaze on those wide plains where such
  Bewildering rapture lies.
Enchanting is the view outspread,
  But yet I cannot stay;
For there but saints and angels tread,
  And *I* am common clay.

I cannot breathe the mountain air,
  For me too rare and fine;
Nor, lingering in that place of prayer,
  Muse long on things divine.
A moment on the Mount, and then
  My wayward feet go down,
Back to the busy haunts of men
  About the crowded town.

But though upon those radiant heights
  I dare not long remain,
I slip back to earth's humbler sights
  With sweet amid my pain;
For, won from that brief space apart—
  That dream of glory given—
I bear through life within my heart
  That glimmering glimpse of heaven.

And going here and going there,
  More live to human ills,
I see the vision everywhere
  That met me on the hills.
It moves with me 'mid care and pain
  And life's heart-breaking sights,
It bids me climb once more to gain
  That moment on the heights.

MARY M. CURCHOD (MYRA).

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# THE PASSING OF KOREA.

By TAFFRAIL.

KOREA, the so-called Hermit Kingdom, now once more before the eyes of the world, afforded perhaps, before her recent annexation by Japan, the most striking example in modern times of a country whose inhabitants were untouched by the gradual advance of civilisation. In spite of the proximity of Japan, an empire whose fighting men half a century ago were armed with bows and arrows, but who are now the veterans of a successful campaign against the might and power of Russia, and of the gradual spread of civilisation throughout the whole of the Orient, Korea remained conservative, and she may have been looked upon as the one country whose statesmen were not afforded a hearing in the political arena of the world. The country itself, which up till 1895 was tributary to China, is a rich and fertile one, the well-watered valleys, sheltered by the luxuriantly wooded hills, forming exceptionally fine ground for the cultivation of tobacco. Coal, iron, copper, and gold are also found; while the salt industry, in places contiguous to the coast, is a very large one. Altogether it is as fertile a territory as it is possible to imagine, while its richness in minerals will make it a most valuable asset to a people who have the intelligence to open the land up to individual effort and enterprise.

The Koreans themselves, however, are naturally indolent, and in spite of their being the inhabitants of a country whose natural advantages and resources are without parallel, they have done nothing towards making the best of their kingdom. Undermined by political intrigue, peculation, bribery, and corruption of the very worst possible kind, the Government did not encourage the inhabitants to make any efforts towards utilising the land to the best advantage, while the people were quite content to lie dormant, with the inevitable result that the resources of one of the naturally richest countries in the world were wasted until the Japanese came to be a power in the land.

Throughout its history Korea has always been very adverse to outside interference in its administration; and until June 1882, when four ports were opened up to oversea trade, all representatives of foreign commercial houses were rigidly excluded. In June 1871 an American fleet, accompanied by British, French, and German ships, proceeded to the country to conclude a treaty for the protection of shipwrecked sailors. Landing on one of the islands, they were fired upon by masked batteries, with the result that the defences were attacked and destroyed. This did not tend to raise Europeans in the estimation of the natives; and although negotiations for commercial treaties were renewed, they had no effect until 1882, when, as I have said, four ports were opened to foreign commerce.

The anti-foreign feeling throughout the country, however, still ran high, and the month following the opening of the ports there was a dangerous insurrection, the result being that eleven members of the Japanese legation were killed. Japan, as a result of this, promptly prepared for war; and on her thus showing that she did not mean to stand any nonsense, the Koreans were brought to their senses, and compensation was made, while the ringleaders in the revolt were executed.

The first treaty with Great Britain was ratified in 1884, while the same year, owing, as before, to the strong anti-foreign feeling among the inhabitants, another insurrection took place. This time the king and his Ministers were the victims of the uprising, for the inhabitants were under the impression that the advent of the hated foreigners was due to them. The palace at Seoul, the capital, was besieged by the mob, while several Ministers were killed; the unfortunate king himself having a very narrow escape.

China, the nation who claimed the suzerainty over Korea, proved herself incapable of suppressing the continual disorders, the result being that anarchy and bloodshed reigned supreme for some considerable time, while little or nothing was done to stop it. The astute Japanese, seeing that there were enormous possibilities in the country if it were

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properly administered, and realising that if they wished to gain a foothold in Korea they would have to act at once, promptly did so, with the result that they took it upon themselves to quell the disturbances. Their policy was somewhat high-handed, and the Chinese Government resented their action on the grounds that the Japanese were endeavouring to gain power in a nominally independent country over which they themselves claimed the suzerainty. For a time the relations between the two countries were distinctly strained; but the difficulty was eventually settled by European mediation, China still maintaining her rights, but the Japanese really coming out top dog in the agreement. The unfortunate country meanwhile occupied the undesirable position of the bone for which two dogs were fighting; and although she nominally had her own Government, it was effete and incompetent, the result being that the kingdom remained in the same stagnant condition as it was before. Japanese power, however, was distinctly in the ascendant; and China, although still endeavouring to maintain her rights, was forced to take a back seat.

In 1894 the bad feeling between China and Japan reached its culminating point, and this resulted in the war of 1894–95. The Chinese fleets and armies were everywhere defeated, and on the declaration of peace her claims in Korea were waived, whereupon Japan took more of an interest than ever in the country for which she had fought. The history of the negotiations preceding the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–5 is interesting, for it largely affects the territorial integrity of Korea, so I will give a brief *résumé* of what passed between the two countries.

Japan realised that it was indispensable for her safety and welfare to maintain the independence and territorial integrity of Korea; and as she had paramount interests therein, her statesmen viewed with great concern the action of Russia in occupying Manchurian territory, and in carrying out aggressive measures on Korean soil. If Manchuria were annexed by Russia, the independence of Korea would naturally be impossible; so, with a view to arriving at a friendly adjustment of the mutual interests of both Powers, the Japanese, on 12th August 1903, communicated the following proposed agreement to the Russian Government: (1) Mutual engagement to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Chinese and Korean empires. (2) Mutual engagement to maintain the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations in those countries. (3) Reciprocal recognition of Japan's preponderating interests in Korea, and Russia's special interests in railway enterprises in Manchuria; and mutual recognition of the respective rights of Japan and Russia to take measures necessary for the protection of the above-mentioned interests in so far as the principle of Article 1 is not infringed. (4) Recognition by Russia of the exclusive right of Japan to give advice and assistance to Korea in the interest of reform and good government. (5) Engagement on the part of Russia not to impede the eventual extension of the Korean railway into southern Manchuria, so as to connect with the East China and the Shanhaikwan-Newchwang lines.

It was not until 3rd October 1903 that the Russian Government presented counter proposals, in which it declined to engage to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, and to stipulate the maintenance of the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China. Russia further requested Japan to declare Manchuria and its littoral as being entirely outside her sphere of interest, and put further restrictions upon Japan's freedom of action in Korea. For instance, while recognising Japan's right to despatch troops, when necessary, for the protection of her interests in Korea, Russia refused to allow her to use any portion of Korean territory for strategical purposes, and even proposed that a neutral zone should be established in Korean territory north of the thirty-ninth parallel.

Japan absolutely refused to consider Russia's proposals, and urged that country to reconsider the situation; and in spite of the forbearing attitude of the Japanese, the consideration of the questions involved was conducted with much shilly-shallying on the part of Russia. There was nothing for it but for Japan to fight for her interests and rights on the mainland of Asia; and on 8th February 1904 the diplomatic relations between the two empires were broken off, and the same day the Japanese—who all along had regarded war as inevitable—delivered an attack on the Czar's fleet off Port Arthur.

In this manner Korea again became the bone for which the two dogs were fighting, and the integrity of that country for which Japan had fought—not altogether, I may say, from purely altruistic motives—again became the *casus belli* between two countries. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities Japan concluded a treaty with Korea, the text of which ran as follows:

(1) For the purpose of maintaining a permanent and solid friendship between Japan and Korea, and firmly establishing peace in the Far East, the Imperial Government of Korea shall place full confidence in the Imperial Government of Japan, and adopt the advice of the latter in regard to improvements in administration. (2) The Imperial Government of Japan shall in a spirit of firm friendship ensure the safety and repose of the Imperial House of Korea. (3) The Imperial Government of Japan definitively guarantees the independence and territorial integrity of the Korean Empire. (4) In case the welfare of the Imperial House of Korea or the territorial integrity of Korea is endangered by aggression of a third Power or internal disturbances, the Imperial Government of Japan shall immediately take such necessary measures as the circumstances require, and in such cases the Imperial

Government of Korea shall give full facilities to promote the action of the Imperial Japanese Government. The Imperial Government of Japan may, for the attainment of the above-mentioned object, occupy, when the circumstances require it, such places as may be necessary from strategical points of view. (5) The Governments of the two countries shall not in future, without mutual consent, conclude with a third Power such an arrangement as may be contrary to the principle of the present protocol. (6) Details of the present protocol shall be arranged, as the circumstances may require, between the representative of Japan and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in Korea.

This was the first occasion on which the Japanese officially established themselves in the country, and their act of recognising Korea as a protectorate in 1904 has now finally culminated in its annexation to the Japanese Empire under the old name of Cho-sen. Cho-sen, a form of the Chinese Chao-sien, 'morning freshness,' seems to have been the name by which the country was known after it came under the power of China in the 2nd century B.C. Korea is a form of the Japanese Kurai, and that is derived from a native name, Kori.

On the signing of the treaty of peace in September 1905, at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese war, the former country agreed not to interfere with the measures of control Japan might take, and recognised her paramount interests in Korea. The Japanese troops which had been in the country during the war were not withdrawn at the conclusion of hostilities, and slowly but surely the Japanese asserted their power until they were the rulers of the land in all but name. The Emperor and his Ministers were completely under the thumb of the Japanese Resident General, Marquis Ito, and his word was absolute law in spite of the nominal rulership of the Korean Emperor.

Even at that time it was a foregone conclusion that the occupation would one day develop into annexation, and now that it is an accomplished fact, the independence of Korea has gone for ever. Referring to the annexation, which was formally promulgated from Tokyo a short while ago, the present Resident General in Korea has said, 'Not a stone shall be left unturned to make the Koreans and the world feel that Japanese rule in Korea will be a beneficial thing for Koreans. . . . It is the wish and command of the Japanese Emperor that every effort shall be made to make the Koreans feel there is no humiliation, but rather a relief, in annexation. The policy of Japan in administering the new portion of her empire will be directed to the steady improvement of the condition and development of the resources of Korea.'

The Koreans themselves have invariably disliked the Japanese, and the better class of inhabitants viewed with great concern the repeated encroachments of that persevering race. During the Russo-Japanese war numerous guerilla bands of natives, armed with all manner of weapons from rusty flintlocks to repeating-rifles, took the field to fight against their common enemy the Japanese. Without discipline, money, or food, as they were, their efforts were useless, and they were hunted down and stamped out with, it is said, much unnecessary cruelty and barbarity. The Japanese attitude towards their so-called allies left much to be desired, and on all sides, from Europeans as well as natives, complaints were heard with regard to the atrocities which were committed on the purely peaceable inhabitants. Some of these allegations were quite true, and it is also certain that the Japanese looked upon their 'allies' as nothing more nor less than a conquered race.

During the war minor police officials were entrusted with the power of life and death, with the inevitable result that the most barbarous and revolting excesses were condoned, whilst in many cases innocent and peaceful inhabitants were put to death without fair hearing or trial. Whether or not the Koreans will be happy under the new régime remains to be seen; but from the wording of the Resident General's speech it rather appears as if the Japanese themselves had serious doubts in the matter. Japan, however, seeing a fine country being spoilt through bad administration and the indolence of its inhabitants, and being anxious to afford her own people a foothold on the mainland of Asia, has not scrupled in her dealings with the inhabitants of the land she coveted; the consequence being that while she has bettered herself, she has raised up a bitter hatred in the hearts of all Koreans.

Whilst in the country four years ago I could not help noticing the domineering insolence of the Japanese and the cringing servility of the hapless Koreans. On all sides I could see the hatred which existed between the members of the two races; and on more than one occasion, when talking to Koreans who had had a European education, I noticed they invariably referred to the 'detestable Japanese.'

Koreans themselves come from a Mongolian stock, and are of exceptionally fine physique; but in spite of this their innate laziness renders them incapable of any sustained labour. The better class of men appear to have no occupation at all; and, excepting the actual coolies, the male inhabitants appear to spend all their time strolling aimlessly about the streets smoking their long pipes. The national dress is very quaint, the men wearing a long white robe of loosely woven grass-cloth, over baggy trousers of the same material tied at the ankle. White calico socks and shoes are worn, while on their heads, over a skull-cap of shiny black gauze, they sport a stiff, broad-brimmed hat—it is somewhat similar in appearance to a top-hat—and this headgear, in conjunction with the white robes, gives them at first sight a most ludicrous appearance. Seoul, the capital, is a dirty, ill-paved, evil-smelling, and unimposing-looking city. The houses are squalid, while the occupants get rid of their refuse

by throwing it into the streets. The consequence is that there are usually large heaps of decomposing refuse by the roadside, the odours of which are anything but pleasant to the nostrils of the casual visitor.

At the time of my visit the army and the police force were still maintained by the Korean Government, and I spent some time in finding out as much as I could about them. The police lounged about the streets smoking cigarettes when there was nobody to arrest, but somehow or other vanished mysteriously on the first symptoms of a fracas of any kind.

The uniform of the Korean soldiers consisted of a blue tunic and scarlet trousers, with a *képi* of much the same pattern as that of the French infantry of the line. They were armed with the discarded Japanese Murata rifle, while the soldiers themselves and their weapons and accoutrements were in an advanced state of neglect and dirt. The men lounged about smoking cigarettes, and had anything but a smart and soldier-like appearance. I met a lot of officers at a garden-party at Seoul given in honour of the Emperor's birthday. There were apparently officers for every five or six soldiers, and none of them was under the rank of major. The generals preponderated, and every military officer I noticed had his tunic covered with orders and medals. What they were given for or how they were earned I was unable to find out; but the youngest officer present, a major of twenty-one, was hung round with decorations to such an extent that he looked like a perambulating Christmas-tree, while he rattled as he walked. They, too, all seemed underfed, and at the refreshment-tables at this same garden-party they seized what food was nearest to them, and crammed it into their mouths with their fingers. The sight of an elderly major-general—he may perhaps have been a field-marshal—eating jelly with his fingers was most ludicrous, and I strongly suspected that he had had nothing to eat since the Emperor's garden-party the year previous. I did not, of course, see the Emperor himself. There is no doubt but that Korea at that time (1906) was in a very bad way, and it remains to be seen whether or not the Japanese rule will meet with success.

For the last half-century the country has had a very troublous time, and if any land deserves a little quietude and rest, Korea does. It is to be hoped that the Japanese régime in Cho-sen will enable its inhabitants to develop their country to the utmost, that individual enterprise will be encouraged, and that political intrigue and petty strife throughout the newly acquired territory will cease.

In common with most British people who have been in the Far East, I have a great sympathy for the Koreans; but I cannot help feeling that the Japanese annexation will, if the administration be carried out with due moderation and tact, prove beneficial for Korea and the Koreans.

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# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EDGAR WARRISTON.

## CHAPTER V.—EDGAR WARRISTON LEAVES SYDNEY.

N the afternoon before the dinner at the Bouveries', Warriston had tracked John Williams to his hotel, and had waited long in the hope of catching a glimpse of the woman who had come into his life under such tragic circumstances six years ago. He wished an interview with her alone for reasons best known to himself. What, he asked himself, were the relations between man and wife? Was Mrs Williams a coadjutor in the conspiracy that threatened to bring him under the jurisdiction of the law, or was she kept in ignorance of her husband's scheme? He was quite aware that the woman held the memory of Edgar Warriston in abhorrence, and that Edgar Warriston need not look for any assistance from her. But there were things that he knew which might help him to escape from the trap which had been set for his downfall.

But Warriston had failed to find her alone, and it was only alone that he could hope to obtain the end he had in view.

When Warriston returned from dining with the Bouveries he sat late into the night, thinking over the ways and means which were calling for immediate application. Gradually, out of the chaos, a certain plan pushed itself forward to gain the merit of his acceptance. Of many ways out, this seemed the best for society in general, for his work, for the woman he loved, for himself. He had no difficulty in deciding that, whatever happened, he would not consent to the terms as laid down by John Williams. He would not make society pay the price for his sin. The name of Edgar Warriston would not appear on the prospectus of the New Woollanga Mines.

But in the meantime Williams must be dealt with. Accordingly before Warriston retired for the night he wrote a long letter, in which he indicated that he had considered the proposal submitted to him, and required that he be given at least one month to decide. From what he gathered from the preliminary prospectus, he wrote, the matter was not immediately urgent, as certain further reports and investigations had to be made. 'During that month,' he went on, 'I shall be away from Sydney; but as a proof of my straight dealings with you—in other words, that you may gather I do not propose to "clear out"—I enclose a cheque for five hundred pounds with to-day's date, and another

one for one thousand pounds payable this day four weeks. An inquiry at the bank named on the cheque will convince you that the bank holds securities for four times this amount. You must not, during that month, attempt to have an interview with me. I have a reason for this, but it is not a reason which affects you. I have work on hand which demands that I be kept free from worry. I am leaving Sydney to escape not only your immediate attention, but the nearness of those who are very dear to me. I have come to the crisis of my life as far as my work is concerned. I must be absolutely alone.'

It was four o'clock before Warriston retired to bed. When he did so the stern reality of the future had been graven deep into his consciousness, and he admitted himself brave enough to face it.

Next morning after breakfast he called at the Bouveries'. The girl was overjoyed at seeing him, but pained to notice the deepening shadows that encircled his eyes.

'You are working too hard,' she said sympathetically. 'You must have a rest.'

How well fortune was planning things for him! Warriston had elaborated an excuse far less simple than the one suggested. The girl had offered a solution which was simplicity itself.

'Yes, dear,' he said when they were alone; 'I am overwrought. I must go away for a while. I came to ask you if you would not mind if I left you for a few weeks.'

'Of course, darling,' said the girl. 'I am not selfish.'

The words hurt. He had come there with the avowed intention of securing her consent to a change in their relationship, not for his sake but for hers, and the tone of her voice and the look in her eyes only convinced him the more that such a task would be hopeless.

'I often wonder,' he said, 'what the love of a woman for a man like me means. Do you love me for what I am, simply as Edgar Warriston, solely for the character and qualities I possess, or for what I am in regard to reputation and position, and for the work I am endeavouring to accomplish?'

The girl laughed. 'I believe I should love you if you were a failure—if you were a criminal.'

'How you talk nonsense—the sublime nonsense of love!'

'No, I do not,' said Muriel. 'Whatever you were—whatever your past or your future—I should love you because you are you. It is yourself, your point of view, your instincts, every chord of your character, that I love, and nothing could change that.'

The man took the girl in his arms and looked down into her face with an expression of wonderful tenderness. The agony of his soul brought into his eyes a new light which aroused the whole pitying love of the woman.

'We shall yet find a way out,' he said; 'for such love as yours and mine must be eternal. You will, I know, prove a friend in time of trouble. Whatever happens to me, you will think the best—you will understand.'

'Yes, I shall always understand, dearest,' said the girl as their lips met.

'I go away to-day.'

'To-day!' cried the girl.

'Yes. I never was a man who procrastinated in word or in action. I must go before the cords snap.'

There was no need for Muriel to tell the man what his absence would mean to her, and she was too unselfish a woman to frame the words. She was very brave and very disinterested, despite her natural desire to be the sole owner of the man she loved. But she could not deny the appeal of her instinct, which was to keep him as near to her as long as she could; for though she had an overwhelming feeling that circumstances would mould themselves for their mutual happiness, yet her reason was too straight and her vision too clear to prevent her seeing the pitfalls ahead.

'You will come back very strong, promise me,' she said.

Warriston left her side and crossed to the window. After a moment he turned and came near to her again.

'I have an instinct,' he said very sadly, 'that something is going to happen that will affect both you and me.'

Muriel glanced quickly at Warriston. He was looking into the fire with a curious stillness of gaze that frightened her.

'I am brave enough to bear pain,' she said.

'You have great courage, I know,' said her lover.

'You are ill and depressed. I noticed it last night,' said the girl; 'but I have a faith which tells me that, whatever happens to you and me, you will be mine and I yours.'

Half-an-hour later Edgar Warriston was standing in the office of Robert Seton. He had told his friend of his intention of taking a holiday.

'You have been a good friend to me, Seton,' he said, 'and it may happen that you may be called upon to be even a better one.'

The lawyer caught the reflection of the voice and wondered.

'I have enemies,' said Warriston, 'who may wish to do me an injury. I have only just discovered that such is the case. What I ask is this: if any one comes to you and mentions my name—makes, indeed, any charge against me—you will not take any steps until you have communicated with me.'

'Naturally,' said Seton, mystified.

'You will find my address in that envelope,' continued Warriston; 'but don't write to me unless it be absolutely necessary. I am going to take a rest-cure,' he added with a laugh. 'I believe it is the orthodox thing to be denied the pleasures even of business correspondence.'

CHAPTER VI.—A POOR WOMAN'S ROMANCE.

FOUR weeks had passed since Edgar Warriston had left Sydney. During that time Muriel received letters, that were not wanting in tender thoughts, which filled her with pleasure. But she was not very happy. She had no need to read between the lines. The written words were suffused with an atmosphere of uncertainty. She replied, however, in a spirit of trust and hopefulness, and patiently waited for the lifting of a load which she attributed to weakened nerves and wounded vitality.

John Williams was up-country in the mining area, but his wife remained in Sydney.

A handsome girl Mary Porter had been, and as Mrs Williams she still retained physical beauties which were notable. But her dark face looked hard and embittered. Between her and her husband nothing existed of the nature of love. He had always been selfish, cruel, and inconsiderate. Now he seemed degraded and despicable. To feed her dislike she nursed within her breast the memory of an incident which her weak head and impulsive heart had turned into romance. When John Maxwell had been her friend, at a time when Edgar Warriston was striving to be her enemy, she had named Maxwell's very natural and disinterested action in the category of the sentimental; and when later there came to her ears the story of the quarrel between the two men, and the discovery of the bleached remains, she had warmed her own feelings into those of passion. If there were one thing more fierce in her nature than her antipathy to John Williams, it was her hatred of Edgar Warriston. That malice had grown with the passage of years, and had now become almost a monomania.

The fact that Warriston lived in Sydney was unknown to her. John Williams, putting little trust in women, had made no reference to the fact that he had had an interview with the victim of her hate. Had he confided in his wife events might have taken a different course.

Mrs Williams was sitting late at night before the fire, reading the daily paper. She scanned the columns in the aimless fashion of the uncultured, passing from paragraph to advertisement with no other interest but that of purposeless curiosity, and a desire to fill up the dull hours which nature and fate allotted to her. But her languid interest was suddenly aroused to passionate intenseness by an advertisement in the columns before her:

'Wanted, the whereabouts of John Christie Maxwell, sometime student of medicine in Edinburgh, and last heard of in Sofala, on the coast of Africa. Any information relating to the said John Christie Maxwell will be welcomed by Mr Robert Seton, Solicitor, 127 MacQuarry Street, Sydney. A substantial reward is offered.'

A glow of warmth thrilled through the tired limbs of the woman. A voice had spoken which called her to action. It was not the temptation of the suggested reward that kindled her interest, but the mere fact that she knew of what this man sought, and could give it to the world with all the accompaniments of injured pride and shattered happiness of which fortune had made her the heir.

She rose from her seat and made as if to seek out Robert Seton at this moment, while the hot blood flowed within her, to tell him how, long ago, in the heart of Africa, John Maxwell had been done to death. But a moment's thought reminded her that it was already midnight, and the realisation of this fact filled her heart with impatience and bitterness.

She resumed her seat, and, lifting the newspaper, read and reread the advertisement which had so fired her interest. She grew fatigued and weary under the strain of her emotions, and leaning back on the chair, she allowed her mind to dream.

A piteous woman this, with a life of drab touched by a single streak of tawdry tinsel; but to her it was as real gold set in clay. To her brain had come none of the light which is as life to those who think, to her heart little of the tender, almost illusive, throbs which is as life to those who feel. There had been no sounding feet across the threshold, no artless and cheering smiles by the hearthstone, no hand to caress, no pain to soothe; little of joy, nothing of happiness; only the dull, aching weariness of the lonely life, the ever-present yearning for an eternal slumber which enticed but frightened her. True, she had known a little excitement in the shape of a husband's curses and a husband's blows, but they had become so much a part of her existence, like a thunderstorm or a headache or the clatter of broken dishes, that they had ceased to arouse her from her state of dumb resignation. The only holiday for her heart and mind was in her day-dreams, when she called into her vision the image of John Maxwell, who had treated her as a human being. That simple fact had been such a wonderful experience that she thought of Maxwell as more than human. Her conception of humanity meant nothing but cruelty and indifference and degradation.

She lifted the paper again and let her eyes wander aimlessly along the columns. They had not yet exhausted their power of arousing her to feelings of passion. Her eyes lighted on words which told her that the long, weary wait had ended, that the day to which she had looked forward had come: 'Owing to ill-health, Dr Edgar Warriston has been compelled to postpone his lecture before the Sydney Institute till next month.'

The association of the two paragraphs appealed forcibly to the love of the melodramatic in her roughly hewn mind; but her mental pleasure in the coincidence was nothing as compared with the passionate feeling which it invoked. To-morrow! To-morrow! To-morrow! That would be *her* day, if there ever were to be a day for her.

Her mind worked quickly, and she realised how glad she was that her husband was not present to

stand in her way. This was her business! For once she would be the master and not the slave. The sense of power thrilled her, lifted her to heights she had never known, infused a new blush of health and vigour into her veins.

She slept scarcely more than an hour that night, but when she rose in the morning there was little lassitude in her limbs. Her great purpose was a fire that fed her vitality better than sleep.

A directory supplied her with the information she desired, and it was barely nine o'clock when Mary Williams made her way towards the home of Edgar Warriston. Here her purpose received a check which her impatience resented with a fierceness that startled her informant. She was told that Dr Warriston was away, and his return was uncertain.

Uncertain! The word echoed in her suspicious brain. Had her quarry flown? She did not stop to argue that Warriston could not be aware that she, the one person who could bring him to justice, was in Australia. The mere fact of the uncertainty of his return convinced her illogical mind that he had fled from her, whom she had in her heart come to think of as 'The Avenger.' And though she feared his escape, yet its very suggestion seemed to lift her higher in the importance of things. She seemed to be coming more and more into the centre of a stage of heroic action. She was exhilarated at the thought that she had not dragged herself through a weary pilgrimage in vain. But she was impatient for some meed of success, and having failed in her first attempt to face the man for whom her hatred hungered, she determined to give evidence of her power to another.

She proceeded to MacQuarry Street, and soon found herself at the office of Robert Seton. She was kept in a waiting-room for half-an-hour, during which time she had plenty of opportunity of reflecting upon the impediments that seemed to stand in the way of justice. It seemed to her that, while all the world was calling for her revelation, this lawyer was obstructing the stage. Again her suspicious nature was aroused, and she was convinced that there was an organised plot to dam the courses of honour, to rob her of her legitimate vengeance.

Robert Seton received her with interest. He was one of those men who held a grudge against nature for having made so many women plain. Such a procedure seemed to him a waste of fine material, an error in selection. A misshapen or a hideous man aroused little more than a sense of pity, but an ugly woman he put into the category of monsters. The fact that Mary Williams was pleasing to the eye, though rather like an old master, stained and discoloured by careless handling, appealed to his sympathy at once. Seton was a connoisseur in painting, and there seemed to him something suggestive of a fine Zurbaran or a prized Moroni in the woman before him. There was a warmth and depth in her colouring, and he was pleased to observe that her dark auburn hair and bronzed complexion united with the paper on the walls in a fine tonality. From the human point of view he was also interested in an aspect of determination, in a certain confidence, with which the woman approached her task.

Seton offered her a seat, and, taking his own, plunged at once into business. 'You came in answer to our advertisement?' he said, looking at Mrs Williams closely.

'You may advertise till you are sick,' said the woman brusquely. 'John Maxwell is dead.'

Robert Seton leant back in his chair. This, then, was the solution of his problem, the possibility for which he had been most prepared.

'How long has John Maxwell been dead?' he asked.

'About six years.'

'Where did he die?'

'He was done to death.'

Seton looked up, startled. He sought the eyes of the woman to discover a suggestion of foul play. 'How?' he asked quickly.

'He was murdered,' answered Mrs Williams fiercely but with a touch of tenderness.

'Where?'

'In East Africa.'

'I presume by natives?' said Seton with confidence.

'No; by an Englishman!'

'You are sure of this?'

'Absolutely certain.'

'How did you learn this fact?'

'From a native who saw the quarrel, and from another native who, two years later, found the body, or at least what was left of it,' said Mrs Williams with intensity.

'But how were you able to identify the actors in the case?' asked Seton sceptically.

'Because a month before the crime the two men stayed in the inn where I was residing,' answered the woman with an air of triumph.

'You knew them both?'

'I did. The second—the one that was left—reappeared at the inn some time later—alone.'

'You saw him?'

'No; but my husband did.'

'Is your husband alive?'

'He is.'

'And could identify the—the murderer?'

'Without a doubt.'

Robert Seton laid down his pen and looked at the woman. She had spoken with confidence and had answered his questions without hesitation. Something in her bearing inspired a belief in the story.

'And the murderer's name?'

'Edgar Warriston.'

'Edgar Warriston!' repeated Seton in a low, startled tone, stunned by the coincidence of a murderer's name with that of his best friend. A feeling of hopeless fear broke over him, but he called himself a fool for his cruel doubt.

One question would settle matters. But he asked

it fearfully, and it was an agonised moment that awaited the answer: 'Do you happen to know what was Edgar Warriston's profession?'

'Yes; he was and is a doctor of medicine; and, what is very much to the point, he is practising in Sydney.'

The full horror of the revelation struck at Seton with an intensity that paralysed speech. Edgar Warriston, his proved friend, one of the noblest self-sacrificing men he had ever known—a murderer! The idea was too hideously impossible. He would refuse to believe it. It was a slander too cruel even for thought.

'My dear woman,' he said, 'you have gone hopelessly astray in your deductions. Of one thing I am certain, Edgar Warriston of Sydney never committed a crime. If you knew him you would be the first to admit it.'

Mrs Williams sprang to her feet. 'But I do know him, and he knows me.'

Then she told Seton all she knew, unwinding the story without hiding any incidents relevant or otherwise. And Robert Seton listened, yet only half-listened, for he was recalling the fact that Edgar Warriston knew of the bequest to John Maxwell, and that when it was told him he gave no indication that he was acquainted with the man. No, there must be a mistake; and yet—yet——

Seton's lines of thought were shadowed with suspicion. 'Suppose,' he asked himself, 'the sudden departure of Warriston meant flight; suppose'—— No, no, he could not, he must not believe it. He thought of Muriel Bouverie, and the idea that Edgar Warriston might be a criminal made Seton sick with pity.

But he must act. In the first place he must do his duty and acquaint his friend with what he had been told, and then—well, what then? All the possibilities of the case chased themselves through his brain—want of evidence, silence-money, flight. But he brought his reason into leash. In the meantime this woman must hold her counsel. He must curb her impulses. 'As the representative of John Maxwell,' said Seton, 'and that justice may be done and the offender brought to book, it will be necessary that you confide in no one what you have told me. You will give me your address, and I will communicate with you,' he added.

The delay irritated the woman. She would have liked to see Edgar Warriston led out before her and done for at that very moment, and she would have willingly acted as his executioner.

She rose to her feet, and after a moment's silence she asked eagerly, 'What will be his punishment?'

'That is difficult to say,' answered Seton.

'Surely there is only one punishment for murder!' protested the woman hotly.

'My dear Mrs Williams,' said Seton, 'how are we to prove murder? At the very worst it will be a charge of manslaughter.'

'And the punishment for that?'

'Imprisonment.'

The woman laughed. 'Imprisonment!' she cried. 'And this is justice! I know—I know—I know,' she continued fiercely, 'that John Maxwell was done to death by Edgar Warriston.'

'It is not what you know but what you can prove,' said Robert Seton calmly.

Mrs Williams looked into the lawyer's eyes with wonder. She saw nothing there but blind inability to read the tragedy of her life, and a faithful clinging to the cautious and weary ways of the law. Then her cunning prompted her to silence. She guessed now what was in store for Edgar Warriston. She knew the law could offer her nothing. What she required she would have to take herself.

She left the lawyer's office, and with quick steps made her way back to her lodgings. She passed into a bedroom, and, unlocking a box, took out a revolver. She opened it, and placed it in a side-pocket. Then she selected six cartridges.

*(To be continued.)*

## MEMORIAL SHAFTS AND COLUMNS.

WHILE a certain amount of interest is being shown in the question of the preservation of our national monuments it may not prove out of place to give some account of the more modern and less well-known monuments which the severely classical taste of the eighteenth century erected to the memory of its worthies. These are sometimes in the shape of obelisks, more frequently of columns or pillars, and are to be found throughout the length and breadth of the land, often in remote or inaccessible spots. All kinds of persons as well as events are commemorated. Frequently they crown the summit of a hill from which the eye may roam over a vast extent of country. At times they act as sea-marks, like the one at Ashey, near Ryde, erected in 1735 on the summit of a lofty down.

Of genuine Egyptian obelisks there are said to be but five in this kingdom. Three of these are in London—Cleopatra's Needle and two in the British Museum. One brought from Memphis is at Alnwick Castle, and commemorates sacrifices to Osiris, the Judge of the Dead; the other is at Soughton Hall in Flintshire. The two finest examples extant are that in the piazza of the Lateran, in Rome, and that at Karnak. Obelisks of native production are fairly numerous. One to Charles, third Earl of Carlisle, adorns the avenues of Castle Howard; and that at Thornhill Park, Dorset, was erected in 1727 by Sir James Thornhill, the painter, to commemorate the accession of George I. to the throne. Like many

another slender shaft of the kind, it has not escaped the effects of wind and weather, and has been rebuilt. Thornhill it was who decorated the interior of the dome of St Paul's against the views of Sir Christopher Wren. Other works of his are at Greenwich Hospital. He was made Serjeant-Painter to the King, and subsequently knighted. At Woolverstone Hall, near the picturesque village of Pinmill on the Orwell, in the Gainsborough country, is an obelisk surmounted with a globe encircled by rays. It was set there in 1793 in memory of Charles Berners, whose family lends its name to the well-known London street. Of much larger size is that at Holkham, Norfolk, the first work erected on the estate. Surrounded by ilexes, it was completed in 1729. The obelisk at Kendal on Castle How Hill, the circular eminence supposed to be of Saxon origin, was erected by the inhabitants to commemorate the centenary of the Revolution of 1688. A short distance from the village of Chalfont St Peter, in Buckinghamshire, at the crossways, is a brick obelisk which dates from 1770, and reminds us of nothing more important than that King George III. was in at the death of a stag at this spot at the close of a long run. More utilitarian in aim is that on the height near Chingford, which has been thought by some to mark the site of Boadicea's death, but in sober fact was placed there by the Ordnance Survey, which commenced to map out the country in 1791. It is used by the authorities at Greenwich Observatory for occasional verifications. At Hadley Green, the site of the battle of Barnet, an obelisk marks the spot where Warwick made his last stand; while another a few miles off, at Rabley, is said by tradition to indicate the point where the pursuit ended. The exact place where he fell in 1471 is said to be shown by two trees planted in the place of others which perished from age, about twenty yards north of the obelisk. A shaft or pyramid occasionally surmounts a grave, as at Beaconsfield, where under an old walnut-tree in the churchyard is the tomb of Edmund Waller, the poet-lover of Sacharissa, who died here in 1687.

In Scotland the site of Forres Castle is marked by a tall granite obelisk to the memory of Dr Thomson, a native, whose devotion as assistant-surgeon of the Forty-fourth Regiment to the troops in the Crimea is gratefully remembered. Near here, at the north side of the road leading to Kinloss, is the narrow shaft of sandstone about twenty feet in height called Sweno's Stone, supposed to have been set up about the year 1014 to commemorate the expulsion of the Danes. It is covered, like similar monuments in the north-east of Scotland, with carving of figures and other objects. Another curious monolith of great interest to antiquaries is the pyramidal stone of great weight near Rudstone Church in Yorkshire. It may have been sacred in Saxon times, and so called 'Roodstone,' but is also possibly a 'Druid' stone of earlier date.

Sundials are at times of obelisk shape; two specimens are at Kelburn Castle, Ayrshire. The first pillar is dated 1707, and bears the initials of David Boyle, first Earl of Glasgow, and those of his wife. Its height is eight feet six inches, and it is crowned by a vase of finely wrought ironwork. The second, standing on a pedestal in the centre of a stone basin, resembles the first, but has the upper part plain and crowned with a ball. At Mountstuart the obelisk dial is over eleven feet high, there being dials all over the pillar, with the sun's face on three sides of the pedestal.

More numerous than the obelisks are the columns and pillars which may be found in most of our English counties, Wiltshire and Somersetshire being particularly rich in them. The erection of a pillar was from ancient times one of the principal modes of celebrating a victory or of commemorating a hero. A notable example is the so-called Pompey's Pillar near Alexandria. Thus it is fitting that Nelson's flag-captain at Trafalgar, Sir Thomas Hardy, should be so honoured at Portisham, his birthplace, in Dorsetshire, where, on the adjacent wind-swept height of Black Down, eight hundred feet above the sea, stands his lofty column. Out of the beaten track, on the summit of Breidden Hill, near Welshpool, is a rough stone column in memory of Admiral Rodney's victory over the French in 1782. The lofty monument crowning a hill on the estate of Butleigh Wootton, not far from Glastonbury, was erected in memory of Admiral Sir Samuel Hood in 1831. Nelson has not only his column in Trafalgar Square, but also one on Gorleston sands, Yarmouth, designed by William Wilkins, and erected by the county of Norfolk in 1817–18. It is a Doric pillar of a total height of one hundred and forty-four feet, crowned by a statue of Britannia, and placed on the spot where the hero landed after two of his greatest victories. Wilkins was a Norwich architect who built London University College, Dalmeny House, &c., and some years earlier had drawn the design of a similar (unexecuted) monument to Nelson at Dublin. The London statue was not erected until 1843. The celebrated Captain Cook has a tall, plain column erected to his memory by one Robert Campion of Whitby. It stands on Easby Heights, Yorkshire, not far from his birthplace at Marton. The neighbouring height of Rosebury Topping, one of the towns of the Cleveland district, had been previously suggested as a site.

One of the loftiest monuments in the country is that at Wellington, Somerset, to the memory of the Iron Duke, which takes the form of a triangular stone tower or pillar standing on a height nine hundred feet above the sea. Another at Lansdowne, in the same county, commemorates Sir Bevil Grenville and his Cornish friends who fell at the field of Lansdowne in 1643, when the forces of Charles met those of the Parliament. Grenville was killed as he led his Cornish pikemen up the hill against Waller's entrenchments. The monument was erected by his grandson, Lord Lansdowne, in 1720.

The Ailesbury column which crowns a lofty

height in Savernake Forest, near Tottenham House, was placed there in 1781 by Thomas, first Earl of Ailesbury, to commemorate the recovery of George III. and other circumstances. No sovereign, indeed, has had his memory more perpetuated in stone than he, with the possible exception of Queen Victoria. Thus Dunstan Pillar on Lincoln Heath, a square stone column about ninety feet high, is terminated by a statue erected in the early years of the last century by Robert, Earl of Buckinghamshire, as a memento of the jubilee of that king. The pillar itself dates from 1751, and was built as a lighthouse by Sir Francis Dashwood to guide wayfarers over the desolate expanse haunted by highwaymen. The statue was substituted for the lantern, which in the changed aspect of the times had become of no further use. Another column in honour of the jubilee of the same king stands on Moel Fammau, the highest of the Clwydian range of hills in North Wales, and was partly blown down in 1862. The Countess's Pillar, which in Wordsworth's time stood by the wayside between Penrith and Appleby, forms the subject of one of his sonnets. It bore an inscription stating that it was erected in 1656 by Anne, Countess-Dowager of Pembroke, for a memorial of her last parting with her mother, Margaret, Countess of Cumberland; 'in memory whereof she hath left an annuity of four pounds to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham every 2nd day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus Deo!*'

> 'Charity never faileth:' on that creed,
> More than on written testament or deed,
> The pious lady built with hope sublime,

sings the poet. A familiar object in the Derbyshire scenery round Matlock is Crich Stand, some fifty feet high, resting on the edge of a gigantic quarry. Properly speaking it is a round tower originally built by Francis Hunt of Alderwasley in 1788, and since rebuilt, its exposed position rendering it liable to the effects of lightning.

Coming to the nineteenth century, we find that memorials do not so often take the form of shaft or column. One at Hull commemorates the great Wilberforce, born in the High Street of that town, which he represented at one time in Parliament. It is a Doric pillar of sandstone, surmounted by a statue, and was completed in 1835. At Holkham is the Leicester monument erected in 1845–48 to that 'Coke of Norfolk' whose biography has but recently appeared. A tall column surmounted by a wheat-sheaf reminds us of the tastes of the agriculturist earl; on the pedestal are bas-reliefs, and at the corners figures of an ox, a sheep, a plough, and a drill. Near the village of Tytheran Kelways, in Wiltshire, on a ridge of hill, is a monumental column crowned with a rough statue of Maud Heath, said to have been a market-woman of the adjoining parish of Langley Burrell. In 1474 she gave houses and land in and near Chippenham for the making and maintenance of a 'causey' or stone path from Bremhill to Chippenham. It was set up in 1838 by Lord Lansdowne. At the south end of the great avenue at Castle Howard is a Grecian column standing on high ground. It was built in 1869 to the memory of the seventh Earl of Carlisle, the poet and statesman. Entwined with a wreath of laurels, it is crowned by an urn surrounded by plumes. On St Katharine's Down, near Ventnor, is a lofty column erected by one Michael Hoy, a Russian merchant, in memory of the visit of the Emperor Alexander to England in 1814. It now bears a second somewhat infelicitous tablet commemorating the British officers and soldiers who fell in the Crimea.

The Metropolis is not rich in English obelisks. One at the top of Bridge Street in Fleet Street, of sufficiently shabby aspect, is in memory of John Wilkes, Lord Mayor in 1775; while opposite to it, in Farringdon Street, stands another equally uninteresting, commemorating Robert Walthman, Lord Mayor in 1824. The third, once in Blackfriars Road, was taken down and re-erected in St George's Road, close to Bethlehem Hospital, in 1905. The London columns and pillars are too well known to need description: the Monument (Wren's work, begun in 1671), the Duke of York's column on the site of Carlton House, and that to Nelson.

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# THE SIGNET-RING.

### THE LAST STORY.

### IN THE RING.

NOVEMBER drizzled into December, and we prepared to leave St Enns. I was now strong enough for work, and work I must. Daily bulletins from Warwick were no longer enough to give Cecilia peace of mind apart from the Scamp. A December storm, too, made us restless to leave the place.

Two fishing-boats were lost within sight of land, three poor families were in mourning, and the gloom cast over the little town seemed to settle particularly upon Cecilia and me.

To be Carvells in St Enns at such a time, and to be poor, and able to do nothing, or only infinitely little, galled us both, though we hardly spoke of it to each other. In Warwick we were not obviously poorer than our neighbours, or if we were it did not matter. We arranged to leave, and that I should have a week in Warwick previous to taking a professional engagement for a month; and we actually managed

(with the aid of Miss Potter and her calendar) to get the Vicar up for a farewell dinner on the occasion of some Church festival when his conscience allowed a decent meal.

After dinner we naturally fell into a chat over what had brought me to St Enns, and what had happened; while Schnapps, a much more affable dog since he had been under Cecilia's care, lay with his nose on the fender and blinked at the fire.

'You will be sure to let me know,' Bonaventure said, 'when you get farther?'

'When!' I answered. 'But with the death of those two men I'm afraid the thing finished; though one can't tell how much they knew, or whether they really knew anything that would help me.'

'Mearns was interested most in the old mine,' Bonaventure declared. 'I told you that no papers were found among his things except memoranda of soils and depths and chemical formulæ. He told me that he was related to the Carvells, and was investigating the family records. So he did investigate, but that was probably a blind. He thought you were a rival on the same track, I fancy.'

'Another "mining adventurer,"' I said, using the customary Cornish mining phrase; and then I spoke of something else, for Mearns, even dead, was a bit of a bugbear to me. 'Yes, I've had my bit of adventuring,' I went on.—'And now we're going back to quiet, humdrum, hard-working respectability, aren't we, Cecilia?'

'But what about the ring?' Bonaventure objected. 'And what is hidden up Avon?'

'That way madness lies,' I declared. 'We can't afford to "hunt the gowk" any farther. Do you propose that I should buy up both banks of the Avon and excavate, or that Cecilia should set Schnapps to hunt for hidden treasure as pigs hunt for truffles?'

Bonaventure, poor man, saw, I suppose, that the thing had annoyed me, and contented himself with muttering apologetically to Cecilia that it was all very interesting, and that he couldn't help thinking what a lot of good could be done in St Enns if funds were available.

'You think they'd be available if I had them?' I laughed. 'That poor old sinner Jan said plainly that my great-grandfather was fond of money, and evidently thought me like him. But I'll tell you what I'll do, Vicar. Here's a promise for what it's worth. For every five sovereigns the ring ever brings me, you shall have a shilling for these folk. I advise you to compound with me for half a sovereign now, while I'm in a generous frame of mind, and before I pay our bill here.' I found a half-sovereign, and held it out alluringly.

'Take it, Vicar', said Cecilia, and Bonaventure looked at it half-laughing, half-grumbling.

'There's the Christmas dinner for the children,' he said; 'and yet'——

'Take it or leave it, which you like,' I persisted; 'but if you take it you may lose untold gold.' And, to my astonishment, Bonaventure refused it.

'There was a time,' he said, 'when, as an undergraduate, I betted heavily. I found one night that I must stop it, and I did. But the gambler's spirit is in me still. I won't take your half-sovereign. Put it away. But mind you, if the time comes, I'll hold you to your promise, as a debt of honour.'

'Done!' I said, and slipped the coin back into my waistcoat-pocket.

'The children's Christmas dinner loses a half-sovereign,' Cecilia pointed out; but the Vicar muttered that they mustn't lose by his follies, and that he must try to find ten shillings somewhere else. I've no doubt he did find it—in his own pocket.

'What I cannot guess at,' said Bonaventure, staring into the fire as though the information might lie there, 'is why anything should be hidden "up Avon," assuming this to be the work of the old Squire. Between 1830 and 1840 there must have been banks in Warwick. Banks will take any valuables and store them.'

I had thought of that point already, and I had dreamt mad dreams upon it; but I was not going to let Cecilia and Bonaventure know what a lunatic I could be.

'I suppose one would not care to bank stolen goods,' I said flippantly, 'or new explosives;' and there the matter dropped.

Two days later we said good-bye to Bonaventure at the station, and there, to tease him, I made a final offer of the half-sovereign in full satisfaction of all claims. But once more he refused it, though reluctantly, and we left him to all appearance mourning over the survival in himself of the old Adam.

At Warwick I began immediately to get ready for my engagement in the north of England. I decided that I had given too much time already to the unsatisfactory affair of the signet-ring, and determined to put it out of my mind.

It came back to me in a roundabout way. The afternoon before I left, the Scamp had watched me laying out the things I wanted to be packed, and became very busy helping. Knowing his intentions to be good, whatever the results might be, I presented him with a small parting present—a coin. Cecilia first scolded me for giving it, and then wanted to annex it for his money-box. The Scamp, who was then getting ready for his afternoon walk, protested loudly, saying that it was his own to keep, and that he knew where it would be quite safe.

'Let him keep it till evening,' I decided; and away went the Scamp, jubilant. I finished the things for Cecilia to pack, and retired to my particular little den for a pipe.

Oh tobacco, how many castles in the air are formed out of your clouds! I fancied I had put away all dreams of the signet-ring, but they returned with a pipe and an idle half-hour. I smoked, and

thought idly of the fantastic proceedings for which the ring seemed responsible, speculating on the achievements and intentions and failures of the sombre-faced man with the snuff-box whose portrait hung in the dining-room, and on his faithful young wife who followed him so closely, even to the grave.

The little room was warm, stuffy I dare say, and the pipe was soothing. From day-dreams I passed to sleep, and dreamt again—dreamt of old Jan and Mearns and the shaft.

Then the dream changed. I thought I was in the little dining-room, staring up at the portrait of my great-grandfather and his snuff-box, and that suddenly he leant out of the frame and spoke in a queer, childish voice: 'I hid it up Avon *in the ring*.'

It was the childish voice that seemed to startle me more than what it said. I woke, sat up, and rubbed my eyes, saw that I was beside the fire in my own little room, looked at the clock, and thought a cup of tea would be good. Ridiculous things dreams, but sometimes startling if they continue after one wakes. This one did, too. There was the voice again: 'I hid it up Avon in the ring.'

'*Where?*' That was Cecilia. That was Cecilia's ordinary voice. There wasn't an atom of surprise in it, only annoyance.

I rubbed my eyes again, gasped, and went to the door. I looked out into the passage upon which my room opened, called by courtesy the 'hall,' and there was the dream's explanation before me.

Cecilia was leaning over the balusters and questioning the Scamp, who stood, apparently much pleased with himself, just inside the front door.

'In the ring, mummy,' he said again. 'I hid it up Avon in the ring. Nobody 'll find it there.'

'Find what? Where?' I asked.

'The money you gave him,' Cecilia said. 'I told you it would be better for me to put it in his money-box at once. Now he has hidden it in the ring, and perhaps we sha'n't find it again.'

'How on earth—— *What* ring?'

'The old mill-ring, of course. That sunny place up the river where you and I always sat in summer. What 's the matter, Dick? You look quite scared.'

I *was* scared, or at any rate considerably startled. I stood and looked at Cecilia, undecided what to say. She seemed quite unaware that anything particular had happened, and yet it seemed so glaringly obvious.

'Perhaps I was a little startled,' I admitted. 'I was dreaming, and the Scamp woke me suddenly. Perhaps I 'm dreaming still.—Where did you say you hid that money, you rascal?'

'I hid it up Avon in the ring. It 's quite safe.'

I looked at Cecilia, but she was still perfectly calm—judicially so, in fact. 'Well,' she said, eying him critically, 'shall I send you back for it now, or shall I tell you to wash your hands for tea?' And I laughed.

'It 's getting dark,' I said. 'What has waited so long can wait till to-morrow morning.—You and I will go up to-morrow before breakfast, Scamp.'

'Then mind you both have a biscuit and some milk,' said Cecilia; and that was all she did say.

As for me, I referred to the matter no more; but I was poor company for her that evening. She thought, bless her! that I felt dull at leaving them both.

I went to bed early, but not to sleep. For one thing, I was wondering whether just for once I was not too ingenious in my theories. For another, I am accustomed to sleep on my right side, and that side of my chest, which happened to be under the pocket where I had carried the snuff-box, was rather sore.

It was hardly dawn when the Scamp pattered into my room, followed by Schnapps.

Obeying Cecilia's orders in the matter of biscuits and milk, we sallied out to seek our fortune, and the Scamp was interested when I shouldered a spade.

'I hided it under a stone,' he observed.

'We 'll see if any one else hides there too,' I suggested. 'You never know your luck, old boy!' And so it proved.

If the fantastic theory I had formed happened to be no more fantastic than what was already certain, then, I argued, an hour's steady work with a spade would cover all the ground that lay within this deserted ring, round which, perhaps seventy or eighty years ago, a horse must have trodden monotonously, working the mill.

But we did not need an hour.

The Scamp, hopping up on to the raised ground within the ring, proudly displayed his coin, which he had hidden under a flat stone.

'I 'll follow your lead,' I said, and dug a full spade's depth under and about that stone, and then went to the next and did the same. Nothing was there to encourage me; but I went on. I had determined to dig every inch within the circle, and each moss-grown lump was lifted in turn and the ground tossed aside from beneath to a full spade's depth.

I had been at it about twenty minutes, the Scamp and Schnapps both scratching industriously beside me, when the edge of the spade struck something more resistant, and yet not like a stone.

I scraped away the earth gently, and uncovered what looked like a bit of an old waterproof. I dug round it, and at last lifted it out. It was waterproof, wrapped about something hard and oblong, and fairly heavy for its size. I pulled the folds apart, and saw an ordinary wooden box—in fact, a cigar-box—tied round with tape and sealed here and there, and the seal bore the impression of the winged horse.

I stood and stared; and the professionally trained cells of my cerebral cortex noted that I both sweated and shivered, and that my teeth were chattering loudly. I think I should have given way to some ridiculous exhibition of excitement but for the restraining presence of the Scamp, who kept perfectly sane.

'I percept it 's chocs,' he observed calmly, and I laughed and pulled myself together.

'I hope some chocs will come out of it,' I said. 'Can you keep a secret, Scamp?'

'I've keeped lots,' he assured me.

'Well, this is a secret from mother till I've looked inside. Don't tell her we found it. Mother likes chocs, and if there were none after all she'd be disappointed.'

'Me too.'

'Well, I'll find some somewhere for you, anyway, if you keep this secret now.'

The Scamp wanted to search for more, but a suggestion of breakfast made him ready to go home, where he kept me anxious by repeatedly assuring his mother that we had a great secret about chocs which he couldn't tell.

I suppose every one has a code of morality or honour which he generally acts up to. Our disappointments and disagreements perhaps come mostly from differences in our codes. While no doubt I commit many more serious crimes, it is a point of honour with me never to break a professional engagement. I was due in the north of England that night, and I drove to the station an hour or so after breakfast, carrying the cigar-box with me. I did not trust it in the luggage-van, but locked it in a hat-box, which I stowed in the rack above my seat.

I don't know whether my fellow-passengers noticed how very often I looked up at the hat-rack. I know that I startled everybody and made a baby howl because, after I had secured a luncheon-basket and had begun to eat, a stout old party suddenly seized his hat-box and made a dive for the platform. It was his, but I didn't think so, and in a moment my lunch-basket was crashing on the floor of the carriage as I hurled myself after him. Of course I apologised all round, but I was regarded as a nuisance, and felt a fool.

I got the box safely stowed away in the bedroom allotted to me on my arrival, and I only broke the seals and opened it after the house was quiet, late that night.

No, I sha'n't tell you yet what I found inside. I couldn't make it out myself.

There was a fire in my bedroom, and I sat staring at the box, fingering its contents and considering many things, including the soreness in my right side, until I found that the fire had gone out and I was cold. Then I tied the box again, and resealed it with wax I had ready provided and with my signet-ring, and then I slept.

It was the week before Christmas, and Edinburgh was very cold. I went there direct from the north of England at the end of my fortnight's engagement, having written to Cecilia that I might be away from home till Christmas Eve.

As I tramped quickly through the streets carrying a small box covered with waterproof I saw notices up that there was already skating at Craiglockhart, the shop-windows were dressed for Christmas, motors were lined along the edge of the kerb in Princes Street, and now and then a flake or two of snow drifted down from a gray sky.

I hurried on, wondering what chance there was of my returning to Princes Street, ready to buy Christmas presents for Cecilia and the Scamp. I went south up the Bridges, and at last entered one of the big buildings there and sought a familiar door.

I went in quietly, and found myself in a classroom reeking with strange and unholy odours, where a rather weary-looking man with a pale face and a subdued twinkle talked to a few only moderately attentive students.

I slipped into the nearest seat as quietly as possible, and I saw the lecturer's eye gleam in my direction for an instant, and his eyebrows lift a little; but he went on talking without any hesitation. 'But if, for any scientific reason,' he continued, 'one wanted a compound that would make a really good explosion by the act of ignition, giving off sickening fumes in the process of disintegration, then I can honestly recommend ammonium picrate. Now, to-morrow, gentlemen, we will continue'——

There was a loud scuffling of protesting feet upon the bare floor, and the lecturer paused, looking down from behind his rows of test-tubes with an air of bland surprise.

'To-morrow, gentlemen, as I was going to say when interrupted, we will continue our work elsewhere if so disposed. Personally, I may tell you that I shall not be here for a fortnight. I wish you a Merry Christmas, and a little more interest in chemistry on your return.'

The class broke up, stamping an acknowledgment; and the lecturer, nodding his farewell to them, leaned over and greeted me as I pushed my way slowly up the room.

'Ah, Carvell! what brings you this way? Come back to learn something about chemistry? You're late as usual.'

'You've not forgotten me, then?' I said, shaking hands. 'And you're as keen to improve me as ever. Now, I want to know something.'

'Well!' The chemist seemed incredulous, and looked at me and my packet alternately. 'An infernal machine?' he asked, indicating it with a deeply stained forefinger.

'It may make a stir perhaps,' I admitted; 'but that's what I want you to tell me. I see you still smoke;' and I took off the outer waterproof wrapper.

'Cigars!' said the chemist, looking at the box; 'and it's Christmas. And you've come all the way from—what barbaric part of the country do you hail from?—remembering all that I taught you—I mean all that I tried to teach you—to bring me a Christmas present?'

'Or a fee as an analytical chemist,' I said. 'I give you your choice.'

My old teacher twisted his clean-shaven lips and looked at me suspiciously. 'What am I to analyse?'

'Ah, if I knew I shouldn't ask you to analyse it. But I'll make you a sporting offer. Charge an ordinary fee, or take payment in kind—one grain of the stuff you test.'

My friend stared at me and at the old cigar-box, and whistled softly. 'Let us say my fee is five guineas.'

'Very well. Five guineas or a grain, which you like. Look here, I'm ready to make it ten. Ten guineas or a grain.'

'You were always a bit daft, Carvell,' he said confidentially. 'Do you know how many things are worth ten guineas a grain? There aren't many, and they aren't generally carried about in old cigar-boxes.'

'And I don't know that this is one of them,' I retorted.

'Still,' he said meditatively, 'as a student you were a decent sort of fellow, though not brilliant.'

'It's a hard world,' I reminded him, 'and a swindling world. I've knocked about it since then.'

'Yet,' he debated, eying the box, 'I don't think you'd'——

'I never was a dab at chemistry, remember. You weren't at all sure that I wasn't going to be spun.'

'I did my best for you,' he said with a sort of humorous appeal in his voice.

'Oh, it took you all your time, I know,' I acknowledged. 'And I've forgotten a lot of chemistry since.'

'Oh, not a lot, Carvell, I assure you—not a lot. You never knew'——

'Confound it!' I said hastily, 'am I to be chaffed first, and then probably disappointed afterwards? Decide in two minutes. Ten guineas—or a grain;' and I laid my watch on the desk.

He looked at me, hesitated, watched the second-hand go round, and made a hurried resolution.

'Neck or nothing! It's holiday-time, anyway. The grain!'

'Bravo!' I applauded. 'Now, let's see whether you've more pluck than judgment;' and I broke the seals and lifted the lid, while the chemist watched.

Inside the box was another sealed waterproofed packet practically filling it, and kept tight with a little packing. Breaking these inner seals, I reached the final contents.

The packet was full of loose little colourless crystals. I knew half-a-dozen drugs of very much the same appearance, and glancing at the chemist, I could see that he thought he had been sold.

There was a Bunsen-burner at his elbow. He lit it, and I stopped him. 'What are you going to do?'

'Try a little in a flame.'

'It's your own grain, then, that goes in,' I said; 'please remember that! I may tell you I've performed that experiment unintentionally already.'

'With what result?'

'It merely volatilised,' I said. 'Perhaps a faint smell, but that went up the chimney.'

He turned silently, and used a pocket lens, then a powerful microscope, then a spectroscope. He compared these crystals with various others, and at last with a very minute quantity which he took from a locked drawer. Then he suddenly turned. 'Better come with me,' he said, and folding the inner waterproofing and the box-lid over the crystals, he picked up the whole. He went, and I followed into an inner laboratory behind his desk. There he carefully deposited my box on a table where very delicate scales stood under a bell-glass, and he lifted the glass.

'What are you going to do now?' I asked; and when he turned a little sideways to answer me I saw that his face was even paler than usual.

'Thank you,' he said; 'I've seen enough. Quite enough. My hand is not quite so steady as usual, I'm afraid. But I'll get my grain accurately measured in time.'

'Don't hurry, and take full weight,' I said encouragingly. 'I don't grudge you an extra tenth of a grain or so, though you nearly lost it. Now, what is it?'

'Bromide of radium,' he said softly. 'I think you should take a cab to go home, Carvell. I take you to be a millionaire, or nearly, as you stand holding that cigar-box. And you've made me a Christmas present worth roughly a couple of thousand pounds.'

. . . . . .

Bonaventure is now the Reverend Sir Cyril Bonaventure, Baronet, with a good property; but he is still Vicar of St Enns, and St Enns hopes that he may long be. Were he a little differently constituted I should predict for him a high office some day, though I do not know whether in the Anglican or the Roman Catholic Church. As it is, however, in spite of his property and his many sterling qualities, I believe he will always be a poor man, and Vicar of St Enns, with a very great number of friends and a very small congregation.

Miss Potter necessarily lost her situation when I bought back Carvell Castle, as of course I did as quickly as possible. But Cecilia, who for some reason or other has a great respect for her, is working hard upon Bonaventure and myself to build a small hostelry and to put Miss Potter in, to rule it on the most approved temperance—not teetotal—principles.

I am ready to confess that for a long time the dead man Mearns haunted both my dreams and my waking thoughts. The police could not trace his identity, and probably did not try beyond a certain point, since he was dead. The only papers found among his clothes were memoranda relating to chemical tests for pitch-blende, radium, and other metals, and notes and measurements, with various calculations referring obviously to the old shaft, where work now goes on again, but radium is as yet barely traceable.

As soon as I could afford it I employed private agents to search for his wife. I am ready to acknowledge now that I feared the discovery of some family skeleton. Mearns—to give him one of his numerous aliases—seemed to have such uncanny knowledge of and interest in my affairs that I

dreaded to find in him some dishonourable relationship, but could not rest with the matter unsettled.

Well, the woman was traced at last; and I surprised her one day by walking into the little shop in Hampstead, where she kept a small dairy. She knew nothing of her husband's death, and when I told her of it, without telling her all or nearly all, though she cried a little I believed her to have an easier mind.

She assured me that Mearns had known nothing of me until the affair of the Connoisseurs, of which you have heard. Then, however, though he never talked freely to her, she knew that something he found out about me interested him; and after that, she said, he kept in touch with me and my affairs much more closely than I knew.

This reminded me, among other things, of the night when 'Calthorne' examined my ring by lamplight, with a cigarette-case as a reflector.

Over her, personally, his domination had been complete. For example, to have an excuse for getting his meals in his master's house while I was there, and when he had the plate-robbery to work out, she told me that he made her submit to an occasional bleeding in order that I might send her to her bed.

He had courted her under an assumed name while he was an undergraduate at Cambridge, where he never took his degree. I gathered that there, in self-defence at last, she set her woman's wits against his unscrupulousness, found out his real name and station, and, being madly in love, forced him into marriage.

A result of this interview with her was that in London, in the following spring, I deliberately worked up an acquaintance with a man well known in London clubs and of good family—let us say Northumbrian. He was a bachelor like myself, who lived very quietly for a man of his supposed large income, and seemed to avoid intimacy with anybody. I conciliated him gradually, and when he suggested a visit to shoot 'cock with him about Christmas-time I welcomed the idea so warmly that he gave me a definite date.

After we had been there two days, shooting by ourselves, I took an opportunity, sitting over wine at dessert, to approach dangerous ground.

'I was admiring your pictures just before dinner,' I said casually, helping myself to walnuts.

'There's a good deal of rubbish,' he responded, pushing the old-fashioned wine-slides over the mahogany. 'But one does not care to move it. There are two good Raeburns.'

'And I had a good look at them,' I said, 'and at the Constables. There's a very pleasant portrait of you, as you were ten years or so ago—you and another.'

'Yes,' he said, 'it was thought good.'

'The other young fellow's face seemed familiar to me,' I went on, holding my glass toward the candelabra and admiring the clear richness of the port. Then, as there was no reply from the head of the table, I added, 'Possibly I am mistaken. The man I was reminded of is dead, I know.'

My ears are quick, and I was sure that I heard a soft, long-drawn inspiration while I sipped the wine deliberately and waited.

'It was my younger brother with whom I was painted,' my host said at last slowly. 'He left home years ago, in my father's time.'

'A bright face,' I suggested.

'And a bright fellow,' he assured me—'much brighter than I,' he added with a grim smile, 'and brilliantly clever with his head and his hands. Even as a boy he was first class across country or among the turnips; and no private theatricals hereabouts were worth anything without him. Then came trouble, while I was abroad, of which my father would never even speak, and I know nothing of the details. The boy left home before I came back. I was warned never to mention his name or try to know anything about him. Since my father died I have done what I could. He must be abroad or dead, or I should have heard. But I should like to know.'

'Had he any peculiarities of face or figure,' I asked, 'that I could recognise him by? No, wait. It is for me to satisfy you if I can. The man I knew was about thirty, two years ago.'

My host nodded in silence, raised a glass half-way to his lips, and put it down again.

'He was of middle height, deep-chested, very wiry.'

'Good at all games and sports,' the other man said with a half-suppressed sigh.

'Clean-shaven, when I knew him,' I added, 'and had the last joint crooked on the left little finger.'

'Got it standing point at a local cricket-match here in the park,' said my host. 'A very hard hit, and he stuck to it—as he stuck to anything when he thought it worth while.'

We both sat silent, I thinking of the times when 'Mearns' had 'thought it worth while,' while my host followed his own sombre train of reflection.

'Poor Archie!' he said at last. 'Well, it is only what I supposed. When did he die, and how?'

'He died in my place,' I said, 'mistaken for me in the dark by an old madman who thought he had a sort of hereditary feud with me. The old fellow himself died soon after.'

There was another silence, and then, 'It might have been worse,' the other man said. 'I sometimes feared—— Do you know if he was married?'

'He was.'

'Is the widow provided for?'

'According to her station, which was different from his.'

'Any family?'

'No.'

And the sigh with which my host rose from the table was 'Mearns's' final epitaph.

THE END.

# CAKES AND ALE.

## NEAR EAST *VERSUS* FAR WEST.

By F. G. Aflalo.

**Concerning their Dyet, it is nothing so good or plentifull as ours, they contenting themselves many time with meane viandes. —Peacham.**

'MEANE viandes!' Alas for the cuisine of France! alas for the countrymen of Brillat-Savarin! that an English travelling-tutor of the seventeenth century could so describe it in his chagrin at not being served with the boiled mutton and capers, or the roast-beef with horse-radish, or the pickled bacon with beans, that the honest soul would have preferred. To him, no doubt, all the magic of the Paris *chefs* was but sickly kickshaws, little cleaner than the witches' brew in *Macbeth*.

There is an amazing difference between the cooking of East and West—between the restaurants of, say, Constantinople and New York. The urban American likes both luxury and abundance; and the menu of a good hotel in the States is an appalling document, offering—to quote but one item—a choice of thirty salads. The jaded palate of the strenuous citizen is piqued by startling contrasts between green peppers and powdered ice, or hot sauce with ice-cream. There is an alluring sweet, which I remember too well, at Delmonico's famous restaurant in New York. It was called *péche rosadelle*, and consisted of a peach, the stone of which had been replaced by a strawberry-ice, served in a hot chocolate sauce. Such a combination would seem a nightmare on an English table; but *autres pays, autres friandises!*

In the Near East the keynote of cookery is disguise. The Turk brings his oriental love of mystery with him to the dinner-table. He repudiates the whole-boiled fish. He will have none of the unmistakable joint. He turns with disgust from the warmed bird. On the other hand, he loves his *pilaf*, a dish of boiled rice and balls of mincemeat, not unlike the Moorish *kouskous*, in which pellets of semolina are served with a rich stew of mutton. He likes the concealment of the *dolma* and *moussaka*. Until contact with Europeans taught him the higher civilisation, the Ottoman was a total abstainer, and even to-day the rank and file of the country-folk prefer tea and coffee (execrable tea and exquisite coffee) to alcohol in any form. The up-to-date Turk of the better class, however, is acquiring a taste for beer and champagne; and even the Kurds and Lazes, the porters and lightermen of the capital, have learnt from their Greek and Armenian neighbours to drink *raki* and *mastic*, an appalling spirit costing a halfpenny a glass, and in the latter case flavoured with gum mastic. Yet the Mohammedan is never a toper at heart. What a contrast I remarked between the celebration of Cuba's Independence Day some years ago and the national rejoicings at Trebizond on the first anniversary of the Turkish Constitution! The Cubanos drank themselves mad, and made pandemonium of Havana for two days; the Lazes sat over their coffee and narghiles, and did not quite know what it was they were celebrating! There is this difference, though, between the American and the Mohammedan in the matter of strong drink. The latter does not trouble about concealment; on the contrary, he drinks, if such be his pleasure, in public, with apparently a vague idea that he is conforming to the best ideals of civilisation. The American, on the other hand, drinks nothing but iced water at table; but he drinks more alcohol between his meals than the men of any other nation.

Tobacco, equally popular both East and West, is, however, used very differently in these extremes of longitude. I have smoked both the narghile and the kief-pipe—the former in a public bath in Damascus, the latter in the privacy of my own room in a Moorish villa. The narghile is comforting, but requires too much effort to make it draw. The kief-pipe is nauseating, and one essay made me sick. In America it is all cigars, for neither the homely pipe nor the soothing but vicious cigarette is in favour there; indeed, there is a law prohibiting the sale of cigarettes in many of the states. Even the working-men smoke cigars—such cigars! I have sat opposite them many a time. But the finest that I ever tasted was one given to me by Mr Upmann when I was looking over his famous factory in Havana, a scene recalling the Covent Garden stage during the performance of Bizet's *Carmen*.

### THE FIRST-BORN.

Lily-fingers, rose-leaf toes,
Crumpled blossom of a nose,
Never was there quainter toy
Than this weeny wonder-boy!
Babe o' mine, on mother's knee,
All my world I find in thee.

Pull the tuft of thistledown
That has drifted on thy crown;
Laugh, and gurgle goo-goo-goo,
Dimples here enough for two!
Rosy rogue, thy mother's knee
Is the wide, wide world to thee.

How thy fragile fingers twine
Round this giant thumb o' mine!
So my Father's hand I hold—
I, His babe whom love makes bold.
God, let every mother's knee
Be an altar raised to Thee!

M. Hedderwick Browne.

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# THE ISLAND OF THE BLEST.

## THE GREAT OASIS OF THE LIBYAN DESERT.

By DOUGLAS SLADEN.

THE Great Oasis of the Libyan Desert, called by Herodotus 'the Island of the Blest,' is about a hundred miles long, and about a hundred miles west of the Nile. Where it has not been irrigated it looks like the desert; with the aid of artesian wells it can be made to look like the Nile valley. At intervals it has its stereotyped oasis-effects of palm-shadowed pools. These one might expect, but the abundance of classical ruins comes as a surprise to those who do not know it from books. Its desirability was early recognised. The one great monument the Persians have left in Egypt is the oasis temple of Hibis, built by the Darius who led them at Marathon. Cambyses' army started from here on that march against Jupiter Ammon from which not one man came back; the Romans occupied it extensively; it was a prison of Nestorius and a stronghold of Nestorianism.

Its antiquities, indeed, go back to dates which can only be computed astronomically. Its flint-mines and flint-workshops are famous. The desert all round is honeycombed with other mines worked by the Romans; and its wells are dominated by Roman castles, and even by Roman temples and convents.

The oasis is now easily reached by the light desert-railway of the Western Oasis Company. But when we went there in the spring of 1907 we were the first true tourists who had ever entered the oasis otherwise than by camel. And for tourists uninured to camels it had been a six days' ride instead of an eight hours' journey.

Civilisation has followed in the footsteps of the Western Oasis Company. Near the headquarters from which they direct their well-boring and agriculture they have erected a commodious rest-house, with baths and kitchens attached, for the use of tourists and people who come up for business; and a telephone connects the settlement with the base at Kharga Junction on the Nile, where there is telegraphic communication with Cairo and the rest of the world.

There is no hotel as yet; tourists must take their dragoman and provisions with them. But a hotel is in contemplation on a site commanding a view of the magnificent ruins. The ruins, except for purposes of investment, form the chief reason for visiting the oasis. The historical ruins lie round the buried village of Kharga; but Roman military and ecclesiastical buildings are numerous in several parts. I saw no medieval buildings, a fact which indicates a long abandonment to the nomad tribes.

The most striking single building is the noble Persian temple begun by Darius I., and extended long afterwards by Darius II. It is in ruins, but contains chambers little injured and noble remains of a colonnade, which are covered with sculpture and paintings. It is a good temple to photograph, because it is one of the few temples in Egypt, except Der-el-Bahari, which you can recognise at a glance in a picture. It is, moreover, quite beautiful, and is situated in a delightful palm-grove. Long before you reach it you see its procession of pylons rising above the waving fronds.

Next in importance to this temple is the Roman Christian necropolis, called by the natives El Bagnat. As it is probable that the oasis continued for generations to be one of the chief settlements of the Nestorians, an American university has selected it as a favourable spot in which to hunt for early-Christian manuscripts, arguing that the Nestorians must have needed good religious libraries. It is hoped that old manuscripts of the Scriptures may be found, and perhaps some of the lost Epistles of the Fathers. One of the Americans had a tame gazelle. I saw it eating a papyrus, which may have been one of these priceless Epistles.

The visit to the necropolis in which these young Americans were working was worth the whole journey, even if there had been no other monument

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to see. On a group of little hills there rose, arranged in streets, the finest necropolis of the Roman world —about two hundred tombs adorned with Byzantine arches. They were built, it is true, of mud-bricks, but were so graceful and picturesque that those who had kodaks took three or four dozen combinations and details. This cemetery was a veritable city of the dead; it would have done for a city of the living in a background of Giotto. Its interiors were no barren ruins; a few were frescoed with stories from the Bible, as uncouth as the mosaics of Ravenna or the pictures which adorn the walls of a poor pilgrim's house when he returns from Mecca. Many had conventional designs—vines full of wispy grape-bunches, or the *ankh* of old Egypt, the sign of vitality doing duty as a cross. The *ankh* is like a Latin cross, with a loop to replace its head. Was this the origin of the Christian emblem; or was it a substitute for it, adopted as a compliment to the ancient Egyptian cult not obliterated from the minds of humble converts?

In some cases the Americans had excavated the mummy-chamber, and had raised the vases of offering to the surface. There was a saucer of white ash in one which recalled the line in the *Rubáiyát*. The arrangement of most of the shrine-tombs is the same, where they are not extensive enough to serve for church or chapel. They are square; they have *arcosolii* (lunetted niches) in all the sides except that occupied by the door; they have a shallow dome above, and a mummy-pit under the floor. They give evidence of two facts—that the Arabs took Roman models for their medieval tombs, and that the Christians mummified their corpses for the first few centuries.

There are other tombs of the common classical pattern—coffin-shaped graves cut in the surface of the ground; these too had been ransacked by the Americans, who, in carelessness or clumsy pleasantry, had left the mummies propped up in them in all sorts of absurd and eerie attitudes, half-sitting. The mummies here have no cases, only their wrappings. The rock-tombs, fitted with iron doors, served as kitchens, store-rooms, and museums.

The low hills of the city of the dead were dominated by loftier buildings on the loftier hills. El Nadura, the Roman castle chosen to serve as the prison of Nestorius, contains two heathen temples of no great size or interest, though one is of the age of the Antonines. The fortress walls, two hundred feet by one hundred and twenty feet, are lofty still, and they rise from a rocky plateau brilliant with the dyes of cobalt. The whole oasis is one of Nature's paint-boxes, in which deep purples and oranges mingle with the delicate rainbow-hues of chalcedony.

On the opposite height is a strange monastery going back to Nestorian times. It is hewn out of the face of a cliff. You enter at the top, and it goes down forty feet or more, with cells so low that they could only be used by men who sat on the floor and were satisfied with any hole that protected them from the merciless sun. From the top of this monastery there is a sweeping view over the distant, mountain-girdled desert, the nearer fields of bearded wheat, the waving palm-groves round the temple of Hibis, and the city of tombs between.

We were with English people; we had seen few Arabs; we might almost have been in Italy till we mounted our asses and camels and rode to Kharga village, with its strange, serf-like inhabitants. This was Africa in grim earnest.

The entrance to the village is like the entrance to a catacomb. You dive through a low opening into a long, dark passage, hardly higher than a man, and not two yards wide. Right and left mysterious dwellings, mysterious passages, open off it, and through the darkness you see odd, barbaric figures doing odd, barbaric things. No one seems to think about the light of heaven. Yet a whole township is hived in this honeycomb, a relic of the days when the fierce Bedâwin of the desert used to raid the sheepish villagers, and kill the males and carry off the women and cattle. To defeat the Bedâwin the townsmen devised this city of abject darkness, with sharp stakes planted in the streets to impale the invader in his charge, and recesses where watchmen could stand and spear him from behind. Even the Bedâwin would not face the perils of storming this abode of blackness. The precautions are needless under the beneficent guardianship of the English; but the inhabitants retain their preference for living like rabbits, though a few of them, like the Omdeh or headman of the village, have established themselves in proper houses surrounded by groves of oranges, which grow better here than anywhere else in Egypt.

On our way to see the Omdeh we passed, to our horror, a sort of village pump surrounded by all sorts and conditions of Arab children, sufficiently unsophisticated to be frightened by a kodak. They are very modern about water-raising appliances in the oasis. The men were all wearing their cloaks—gray here instead of black—though the temperature was well over ninety degrees Fahrenheit.

It is no joke to go and see an Omdeh. He keeps you an hour paying you preposterous compliments, to which you have to concoct preposterous replies (through an interpreter, of course); and when you have made up your mind that you cannot stay any longer, he offers you oranges or more coffee. Our hearts sank within us as we thought of our afternoon tea. But no sooner had we entered the dwelling of this most modern old gentleman than tea was served in cups labelled 'Mena House,' with the Garibaldi biscuits which schoolboys call 'squashed flies'—a most suggestive proceeding, as the room was so full of flies that you murdered some every time you moved. The Omdeh was conscious of the pest, for he made a present of a fancy fly-switch to each of us as we entered.

Tea over, he conducted us in person to the wonder of the oasis—a beautiful lake more than half a mile long, surrounded by palm-trees, which sprang into

existence (literally) in a single night, and has a most engaging lot of saints' tombs with elegant white domes round it, and possibly under it. Its origin was in this wise. The Pasha had a machine for cleaning out wells; the village had a well of Roman antiquity and high repute which was giving hardly any water. The Pasha asked to be allowed to clean it out to show the merits of his machine. The villagers acquiesced incredulously, and he set about his task. When they woke the next morning they found a lake half a mile long, and thought the end of the world had come. But the water, having used up its accumulated force, behaved reasonably, and the well now gives just the right amount to keep the lake going.

We walked round the lake in semi-state, headed by the dignified Omdeh, past the saints' tombs, to a causeway with a conduit running down the centre which connects the well with the mainland. The well is in the middle of the lake, just above its level. This does not surprise people in Egypt, where there are wells protruding from the inundation the whole way up the Nile valley. It is not an artesian well, but more like the springs of the fountain of Cyane near Syracuse, the public gardens at Nîmes, or the river at Petrarch's Vaucluse. It has beautifully clear water. Our animals were waiting for us on the bank—not even the authority of the Omdeh could make them behave properly; but the best riders took the worst beasts, and we contrived to get somehow to the temple of Nadura, passing one of the curious ancient 'water-manholes' on the way.

These manholes communicate with a network of subterranean aqueducts—ten miles of them—one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet below the surface, hewn out of the rock by the ancient Egyptians—another wonder of the oasis, just explored by Mr Beadnell, and the subject of a thrilling chapter in his book, *An Egyptian Oasis*, the only book which deals with Kharga adequately.

We were not sorry to get back to the rest-house after the long, hot day. We had baths with water drawn from a natural hot spring, and the rooms were delightfully cool because they were built of the local material—mud. Five men made the bricks, and as fast as they were made three others built them up. The walls were very thick, and were finished off with a pleasing brown cement. The floor was mud with an extra quantity of straw in it. The ceilings, the windows, the doors, and the lattices were made of fragrant pine, without paint or varnish. The windows were very cheerful—long and low, like weavers' windows. The whole house was built in a month, and the rooms had camp-beds and furniture which met with general approval; the mirrors had not yet arrived. The kitchen was a low building on the other side of a compound of deep, soft sand, which looked like a slice of the desert. Here our dragoman (dressed in some one else's black frock-coat, which came down to his heels, a fancy waistcoat, blue serge trousers, ragged tennis-shoes, and a golf-collar but no tie) and another Nubian cooked us quite a hotel-dinner with a few charcoal embers and a fan; its only flaws were that the beer seemed to have been cooked too, and the soda-water had been forgotten. We were soon lying in our cribs, either to sleep or think.

Long as the day had been, I could not help thinking. I was lying in a rest-house of that far oasis in the desert, the 'Island of the Blest' of Herodotus. Of the room I lay in I could make out nothing. But opposite my bed was a large open window, through which I could see the stars of Egypt clustered and coruscating like the Shah of Persia's diamonds, and through which came flooding the cool, sweet desert air, with the night-sounds of Africa, the barking of dogs and the cries of wild beasts, accentuated by the stillness of men.

Living on the Karnak fringe of Luxor had accustomed me to the barking of village dogs. I was soon asleep, only to be awakened at dawn by the angry roars of an animal. I rose and looked out of the window on the side from which the sound came. It was not a lion; there are none in the oasis. There, in the desert courtyard, lay five or six camels—one in the gorgeous caparisons of a Bedâwin chief. Camels always vent their ill-humour on the world.

I will not describe the mounting of a camel—how he first nearly throws you over his head and then over his tail as he gets up in instalments. We were going to the splendid Roman castle ten miles across the desert. The ladies thought camels more romantic. I preferred an ass; I could write notes as I jogged along, and slip off and leave him when I wanted to take a photograph, knowing well that he would wait for me.

Our road varied. In some parts the wind had swept away all the sand, leaving a surface of clay as hard as a pavement—in one place this was strewn with the worked flints of some prehistoric cutler; in others it had piled up the deep-golden sand in heavy drifts which an ass could hardly cross. As we drew near the *der* there were evidences of a considerable settlement, a church whose elegant columns and arches and windows were all built of mud, and two or three chapels. In this *der* there was no convent—it was built to guard the first pool of the oasis, which the traveller struck after crossing the desert from the Nile; and in the mountains all round there were mines worked by the Romans, with the paths to them still marked by cairns of stone. The ancient Roman well is still there, but it has not been cleared out; so in the paved *jebbia*, large enough for a game of lawn-tennis, there is no water. But its presence is indicated by a tangle of greenery which looked so snaky that I instinctively felt for my lancet and my manganese crystals, just as the presence of the well inside the castle is shown by the doum-palm in the centre of the mighty drift of sand which almost fills a splendid ring of walls and towers forty feet high in places.

We lunched in the shadow of that palm, with a

camp-saddle for a table, sitting on the packing-cases of the American oil-well sinkers who do the artesian work of the oasis. The heat as we rode back was terrific. I put my waistcoat inside my helmet to break the downpour of the sun, and rode on the lee-side of a camel for the crumbs of shade.

When we got home they told us that it was one hundred and fourteen degrees in the shade. Of course it would have been more in the desert, if there had been any shade. I believe the donkeys would have died of heat on the way back, if donkeys ever do die; for in that merciless sun sometimes they were ploughing through drifts, as fair and smooth as snow, of that wonderful golden sand; at other times they were stumbling over a beach of chalcedony or the workings of a prehistoric flint-mine. Great waves of heat struck us as we rode along.

As the sun got lower I went out to see the farming of the oasis. There was harvesting on the last day of March. I thought it was barley, but the Egyptians are fond of bearded wheat. Hot as it was, most of the reapers had their gray—and here and there black—cloaks on. They sat down to cut the corn, and threw it over their shoulders as they cut it. Wherever the corn was green and backward they left it. The *reis* stood in the middle, giving his orders. This part of the oasis must, ere these words are printed, be full of shady willows; for the Pasha had planted willow-sticks all along the conduits used for irrigation, and in Egypt a willow-stick with water beside it becomes a willow-tree in a couple of years. Vegetables grow marvellously in the oasis; but, of course, cotton will be the staple here, as everywhere else in Egypt, if the Government has the sense to retain English inspectors, without whom Egyptian cotton will become a drug in the market. Socialist majorities in Parliament may approve of trusting the Egyptian, but the cotton-broker never will. He knows Egyptian morality too well. It is likely, too, that date-palms and orange-groves will be planted on a large scale, for Kharga dates and Kharga oranges have the reputation of being the best in Egypt.

There were artesian well-heads springing from the sand everywhere, like knights' helmets pouring out floods of water from their visors. With a steady water-supply anything can be done in Egypt.

At one place we passed an artesian well in the making; lovely pools of clear, fresh water were flooding the desert like the turn of the tide.

Hot as the desert was, we could revel in its beauty; it was a lovely sand-world, with glorious golden drifts whose edges looked as sharp as razors, though it is mathematically impossible for sand to pile itself up at more than a certain gradient.

At sunset the mountains which surround the oasis and its rim of desert seemed to draw so near that they hemmed us in like castle walls—chief among them Jebel-Um-el-Ghennaim, the noble mountain which dominates the oasis as Etna stands over the plain of Catania.

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# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EDGAR WARRISTON.

## CHAPTER VII.—THE VIGIL.

MRS WILLIAMS made her way to Edgar Warriston's chambers. She was very calm now, beatified, as she thought, with the divinity of a high purpose. But she found that her victim had not yet returned.

She walked to her hotel, and sat for hours thinking of how her purpose was to be accomplished. Gradually there came into focus a definite and simple plan. To perfect it she would require money. She had spoken long enough with Warriston's landlord to discover that he had caught the speculative mining-fever and was longing to discover a short cut to fortune.

That same afternoon Mrs Williams reappeared at Seton's office and was admitted.

'I don't see my way to agreeing to your request for silence,' she said, 'except on one condition. I must have money.'

The mere suggestion of money sent a swift ray of hope into the lawyer's brain. After all, this might be mere blackmail, and all his tragic worry might have been in vain. But, he told himself, if the woman could be kept quiet the money would be well spent.

'The amount?' asked Seton.

'Oh, I don't want much,' answered the woman bitterly.

Her reply convinced the lawyer that it was not blackmail after all; and even though her story might be untrue, yet she believed it to be otherwise.

'Will a hundred pounds be enough?' he asked.

'More than enough,' answered Mrs Williams. With the notes in her possession, the woman returned to Warriston's home, where she had a long interview with the landlord.

She unfolded a story, carefully concocted, which caused no little surprise. She gave herself out as Edgar Warriston's wife, whom he had deserted some years ago. She had sought him in different parts of the world. At last her search had proved successful. She wished the landlord to help her. She asked that she might be permitted to wait for her husband at his home. She would like to come every morning and stay till midnight. If the man would help her in this way she would help him in another. She used the word 'mines,' and held out the hundred pounds. His consent came with a pretended show of protest, but she gained her point; and from that moment 'the

Avenger,' as it was her pleasure to name herself, took up her watch in the house of Edgar Warriston.

Installed in his sitting-room, she went over the possibilities of her plot. Warriston would return. They would be face to face. After she had passed sentence, recalling every incident of the past, magnified by the imagination of years, she would use her weapon. After that the alarm would be given. The police would arrive. She would invent a story. The papers would write of a great man escaping disgrace by suicide. Her life would be safe.

'Yes,' she murmured, 'life is a poor thing, but after all it is life;' and having uttered this truism, she burst into an indignant cry: 'Imprisonment, indeed!'

So the woman sat on and waited. She occasionally rose from her seat and looked about the room, but for the most part she sat still in her chair and waited, motionless, patient, inexorable. From time to time the landlord would appear and bring her food. The man was generous, and gave her wine, which nerved her purpose. She waited on till nine, ten, eleven, twelve; then she arose, sick at heart, and returned to her hotel.

She reappeared next morning, and recommenced her vigil—the same long, weary hours of suspense. Her eyes seldom left the clock as it circled the hours—nine, ten, eleven, twelve. But when she heard a footstep on the stair or a movement outside the window she rose and listened as if to catch the faintest breath, and with her right hand in her pocket she gripped her silent companion. When the sounds ceased she would sink back in weariness, and her thoughts would wander away to a spot in the jungle of Africa where lay the man out of whose death she had woven her poor little romance, and she wondered whether in some other clime he looked down and pitied her. Then again came the tense nerves waiting, the ears listening, the eyes wide in suspense and hope. But the second day was as the first.

The third morning found her again at her post, and through a long day she waited—waited—did nothing but wait. At ten o'clock at night the landlord appeared and apologised for the fact that he was tired and intended to retire for the night. Would she mind putting out the lights before she departed? he asked.

Then she resumed her waiting. Eleven struck, half-past eleven. She was beginning to feel the strain of her long guard. She struggled against her fatigue. Her thoughts became fantastic and unreal, her eyes drooped, and her breathing became heavy. Suddenly she started, opened her eyes, and looked at the clock. It was one o'clock! She must have slept. What had awakened her? Yes, there was some one moving in the paddock! She rose slowly from her seat, and with caution approached the window and peeped out around the edge of the blind. A man was coming towards the house. In a flash she realised what a fool she had been, how she had been gulled by her quondam friend the landlord. Warriston had been warned, and only returned at night when 'the Avenger' had flown. But she laughed quietly at the thought of how he, not she, had become Fortune's fool. All her languor and fatigue had fled. The hour had come, and with it a woman strong, confident, and self-controlled. She moved from the window and stood in the shadow of the room and waited. Ah! this was to be fruitful waiting, not like the sterile hours of the two past days.

Some one was opening the window. He was coming! Her heart thumped fiercely against her breastbone; her hand held her revolver with a grip of iron. The blind was moving, a hand drew aside the curtain, and a man stepped into the room.

Mrs Williams, keeping in the shadow, took one step forward and looked. The light of the lamp fell full on the face of the intruder as he paused and gazed around him. The woman's eyes dilated to their fullest, she put her hand to her throat, and with a moan fell in a faint upon the floor.

When consciousness came to her and she was able to realise her surroundings, she began slowly to recall the incidents of the past. She remembered the strained moments of waiting, the gradual approach of her victim, the gripping of the revolver, and then—the ghost. Was it all a dream? Yet it could not be. Had she ever forgotten that face in life? Had it not haunted her down the years? Had its memory not been to her as a friend in still places? She became terrified, she feared to look about her; but she was roused to action by the sound of footsteps in the next room, which told her plainly that at any rate it was life with which she had to deal, not death.

She raised herself with difficulty from the sofa upon which she was lying, and, supporting herself on an elbow, listened. Then her eyes travelled to the door which separated the two rooms, and through it she saw coming, in the dim light, with all the vigour of life, the figure of—she looked closer; she rose to her feet—yes, the figure of John Maxwell!

'My God!' she said in a whisper; 'it is you, and alive!'

The man who stood looking down at her seemed a striking figure. Tall and broad-shouldered, he gave every evidence of a personality that counts. His hair was iron-gray, and his pointed, well-clipped beard was of the same tinge. His skin was tanned with the sun-fire, which emphasised the clear whites of his eyes, in which were bedded circles of clear blue.

'You are Mary Porter!' he said very quietly, but in a voice of curious depth.

'I am now Mary Williams,' she said, a curious joy surging in her heart to know that he gave such patent proof of his being unspectral.

'Why are you here,' he asked, 'and at this time of night?'

She touched his hands; they were warm and living. Gradually she told him the story, very

humbly and quietly; and he listened with some amazement at this new revelation of the heart of a woman.

'No, Edgar Warriston did not kill me,' said Maxwell. 'There was a shot fired, but it missed its object. As you see, I am still alive, and'—here he paused and looked around him with a fateful air—'waiting for Edgar Warriston.' He crossed the room and lifted up the revolver which lay on the table.

'We shall not need this,' he said quietly as he opened it. The woman saw that it had been unloaded. 'His punishment must come in a different way.'

Maxwell passed to the door, and, opening it, listened. 'The good man sleeps soundly, but we must be cautious,' he went on. He crossed the room and lifted a bag from the floor. 'I have not played the burglar,' said Maxwell. 'I have simply recovered certain manuscripts that belonged to me. Now, quietly.'

He opened the door and the woman passed out. Maxwell crossed the room and turned out the lamp; then he followed Mrs Williams down the stairs. In a few moments they were out in the road.

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### CHAPTER VIII.—THE RETURN OF JOHN WILLIAMS.

THE next day John Williams returned to Sydney, and immediately made his way to Warriston's rooms. He rang the bell, and the landlord appeared. Then he learnt startling news: Edgar Warriston had departed, and was not expected to return. 'Yes, he had discharged all that was due to the landlord—very liberally indeed,' volunteered his informant, whose beaming face stood out in contrast to the infuriated countenance of the company promoter.

'Will you give me his address?' asked the latter, stifling a curse.

'That I cannot, for I do not know it,' answered the landlord.

On his way back to the inn Williams decided that Warriston must be a greater fool than he had thought him if he imagined that he could evade him for any length of time. He was too well known in the colony to keep long in hiding. This action on Warriston's part merely meant a delay in a scheme that had now become urgent.

Williams found his wife sitting in her room. He was too perturbed to notice a remarkable change in her expression. He gave her a perfunctory greeting, and turned to a table on which a number of letters were laid. He picked them up and glanced over the envelopes. He gave a sigh of relief. There was one from Edgar Warriston. He tore open the envelope, and unfolded the sheet and read:

'When you receive this letter I shall have escaped from your toils. After all, they were but feeble threads in which you wound me, though I did not guess so at the moment. But now I know. John Maxwell is not dead.'

'John Maxwell not dead!' cried Williams, looking up.

'No, John Maxwell is not dead,' repeated his wife, drawing a hand across her eyes. 'I have seen him,' she added with great composure.

'Then all my project is in vain,' muttered Williams.

'You too sought revenge?' asked his wife.

'I too! I alone!' cried the man.

'Oh no!' said the woman in an agony of fury.

Williams looked at his wife, and there came to his memory certain half-confidences of the past. He began to understand.

'When you saw him did he say why he had come to Sydney?'

'No; but I fancy to claim his legacy.'

'Ah, you have been reading the papers!' he muttered as he turned again to the letter before him:

'Despite this fact, I have instructed my bank to pay to your credit at Sofala the sum of one thousand pounds, on one condition—namely, that you sail from Sydney this week, and desist in your company-promoting scheme. Should you persist in staying in the colony, a statement as to your fraudulent scheme, which has been prepared, will be handed to the police. You need not attempt to discover my whereabouts. You will fail.—Yours,

'EDGAR WARRISTON.'

Williams felt himself ruined. The word 'police' had a potent terror for him. There could be no doubt that John Maxwell was alive. His wife had nothing to gain by inventing such a story.

'But,' he asked himself, 'if John Maxwell is alive, why has Edgar Warriston disappeared?' This puzzled him. He turned to his wife for help. He handed her the letter, which she took from his hand and read.

'I suppose he is afraid to meet John Maxwell,' she volunteered.

'But would a man in his position be afraid of the libel of a stranger?'

'It is the very fact of his position that makes him fly. He has everything to lose.'

The woman rose and began to put on her hat.

'Where are you going?' asked her husband.

'For a walk,' answered Mrs Williams.

John Williams looked at her suspiciously. 'That is no answer.'

'I am going to see Mr Seton.'

'Seton?' he cried. 'Ah, I remember. That is the lawyer of the advertisement. What have you to do with him?' His voice rose. 'You have been scheming behind my back!' He approached his wife threateningly. 'Tell me what you have done!' he demanded sternly.

'I went to him when I read the advertisement,

and told him that John Maxwell was dead,' answered his wife calmly.

It was fortunate for Mrs Williams that she made the confession after her husband had read Warriston's letter, otherwise her life might have been in jeopardy. As it was, the man turned on the woman the whole accumulated bitterness of his disappointment. The richness of his damnatory vocabulary received full swing, and he blasted his wife as the fountain-head of his failure. Giving expression to his feelings only served to impress his own senses with the loss which he had sustained. So furious was his passion that he did not hear the door open behind him. The contemptuous silence of the woman roused him more, and in a sudden fit of remorseless anger he raised his stick and struck a blow at his wife, but the weapon missed its mark. His arm was pushed aside, and he turned, to find a tall, gray-haired man looking at him with disdain.

'You silly bully,' said the new-comer fiercely—'you blackmailing coward, if you touch that woman I'll throw you out of the window!'

Mrs Williams had risen, and now stood as if seeking protection from the man she had idolised.

'My name is John Maxwell,' said the intruder, 'if that information is of any value to you.'

Williams cowered before the stranger. He was a bully without real courage. He felt himself in the presence of a powerful personality, which left him without capacity for retort.

'You have no right here,' he said tamely, 'interfering between man and wife.'

'I gave him that right,' protested the woman.

Williams threw his wife a look which promised punishment at a favourable opportunity.

'I propose to make you an offer,' said Maxwell. 'I should like your wife to have some happiness in her life, and as I gather that you do not seem inclined to give it to her, I am prepared to make such arrangements as will enable you to live apart. Does such a suggestion meet with your approval?'

It was not the man but the woman who answered the question.

'Oh no, sir,' she replied in a piteous voice. 'I don't think I could leave him—for always.'

Maxwell looked at her in amazement. After all she had gone through with this man, all the long months and years of suffering and pain and deadness of heart, she could still cling to him!

Under the woman's confession, John Williams was silent. In that moment, perhaps, he learnt more of the human heart than all the past years had taught him. Even now he did not profess to understand, but something changed within him. He could never be transformed. Human nature is too vast for miracles, but he knew and the woman knew, by a curious interchange of sympathy—perhaps this was the first occasion that real sympathy had passed between them—that from that hour they would enter upon a new life. It would not be a life of real happiness—neither he nor she was moulded for that; but there would be less pain, and that was something.

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### CHAPTER IX.—THE IDENTIFICATION OF JOHN MAXWELL.

ROBERT SETON sat at his desk idly fingering a pen. Before him lay a letter from Edgar Warriston. It was very short. It simply stated a fact: 'John Maxwell is alive.' The receipt of the message had been a relief to Seton's feelings, but had aroused a sensation of self-disdain. For, despite his scepticism, he had taken the statements of Mrs Williams seriously, and he felt himself a traitor for having doubted his friend. The woman, after all, was a mere blackmailer, and he had been foolish enough to traffic with her. But he saw that, in some mysterious way, this woman and Edgar Warriston had been connected, and the fact that his friend had never mentioned such an incident in his life, although he had made him the recipient of his most sacred confidences, told him that it was not of a trifling nature. Seton knew that Warriston was aware that John Maxwell was being sought for. Why, then, had he not informed him that they had been acquainted?

Seton was interrupted in his reflections by the entrance of a clerk, who informed him that Mrs Williams and a gentleman wished to see him.

Mrs Williams entered with a diffidence which was in marked contrast to her former air of impatient bravura. But it was not upon her that Seton's gaze was directed; it was upon her companion. He was convinced that this man and this woman were not man and wife. He had been an observer of mankind too long to doubt his belief that between the two there stood a great and impassable social gap.

'This is Mr John Maxwell,' said Mrs Williams nervously.

'I am glad to meet you, sir,' he said frankly as he rose from his chair.

'I have come to apologise for much I said to you the other day,' said Mrs Williams. 'I did not then know that Mr Maxwell was alive.'

Seton resumed his seat, and taking out his keys, unlocked a drawer in his desk. From it he took a bundle of papers, and from them he selected two photographs, which he examined closely. He then looked at Maxwell, who sat silent in a chair before him.

'There can be no doubt of the likeness,' said Seton. 'Now, will you kindly sign your name on that paper?'

Maxwell bent forward, lifted a pen, and, with a rapid movement, obeyed.

The lawyer lifted the paper and compared it with

another by his side. 'A fac-simile!' he said with enthusiasm. 'Where were you born?'

'In Kippen, Stirlingshire.'

'Your mother's name?'

'Jessie.'

'Had you any aunts?'

'Two. Mary and Elizabeth.'

'Do you remember anything connected with your sister Mary?'

'Yes; she ran away from home with Henry Bouchier.'

Thus the questions ran on, and Maxwell answered without hesitation, though his voice seemed hoarse and strained.

After five minutes of this cross-examination Robert Seton paused. 'I am quite convinced that you are John Maxwell,' he said. 'To further convince the law, have you anything in your possession that might be of use as evidence?'

Maxwell put his hand into a pocket and drew out a bundle of papers. 'These are letters to me from my mother, my uncle, and my sister,' he said as he handed the papers to the lawyer. 'I am sorry,' he added with a laugh, 'I have no such things as strawberry-marks on my legs or elbows.'

'Those are hardly necessary,' answered Seton. 'I may require some sort of general statement from you as to your movements during the past few years.'

'You shall have it,' said Maxwell calmly. 'There is one thing I wish you to do for me as soon as possible. I wish you to invest the sum of twelve thousand pounds in a safe security, and pay the interest half-yearly to Mrs Williams, who will give you an address in East Africa.'

'Mr Maxwell,' cried Mrs Williams, 'I have done nothing to deserve this!'

'You have done more than you think,' answered Maxwell with conviction. 'Now, good-bye, my friend,' he added. 'I shall come and see you before you leave on Friday. I have some more business with Mr Seton. Let me again thank you for all your goodness to me.'

The woman's emotions were too strong for her, and for some moments she sat with head bent, striving to control her sobs. Mr Maxwell had been too kind to a lonely and distracted woman; but this was the end to her poor little romance, and she had not the power to hide her feelings.

Maxwell put a hand on her shoulder, and his touch comforted her.

'Now, good-bye,' he said in a voice of exceeding peace. 'Yes, good-bye. God be with you.'

Mrs Williams passed out of the room.

There was silence between the two men after her departure; then suddenly Maxwell spoke, and though his voice seemed curiously strained and unnatural, he spoke with firmness. 'Miss Bouverie will shortly be here,' he said. 'I wrote to her. I wish to speak to her of Edgar Warriston.'

Seton sprang to the defence of the girl. 'What will you tell her? Surely'——

'She must learn something of the man she loves.'

'You knew of this?'

'I did.'

'How?'

'Edgar Warriston told me.'

'You have seen him?'

'Yes.'

Seton paused and looked at his visitor. 'May I ask if you are aware what Mrs Williams confided to me?' he said.

'Perfectly.'

'And you would tell this to Miss Bouverie.'

'I could tell her more,' answered Maxwell sadly.

'But I protest. Have you no feelings? Would you break the girl's heart?' Seton asked almost fiercely.

'No; you misunderstand me. I wish to clear the air of lies; that is all. You must trust me.'

A clerk entered. Miss Bouverie was waiting. Seton looked at Maxwell, who nodded his head.

There was a silence in the room for a few moments.

'Show her in here, please,' said Seton, rising to his feet.

As the clerk left the room Maxwell passed to the window, and taking a chair, drew it into the shadow.

Miss Bouverie entered. She came in fearlessly, but her face betrayed many things. There was a look of one who had suffered long in silence; but there was also on her face the expression of a woman who was conscious that she had come to a crisis in her life, and that before she left this office she would learn that which would alter the whole trend of her existence. But she looked brave—very strong and self-reliant; and as John Maxwell observed her he told himself that here was the very woman to face difficulties and dangers, a woman among ten thousand, who could breast the waves of life however fierce they might be.

She shook hands with the lawyer, and then turned towards where John Maxwell stood.

'This is Mr John Maxwell,' said Seton.

'I wish,' said Maxwell, 'to have a talk with you about Edgar Warriston; and as Mr Robert Seton is his greatest friend, I decided that he must know what I have to tell. It would be best if he heard my story at the same time as you did.'

As Maxwell spoke, anxiety, doubt, suspicion, mystery, chased themselves in the girl's mind. She looked at Maxwell as if for a solution of something which puzzled her. Her brain was at war with her heart. She had never felt the struggle so fierce before. Which was she to trust? She had no answer to the question.

'If you will be seated,' said Maxwell, 'I will tell you my story. You will pardon my voice. My throat troubles me, and it is with difficulty I speak; but I shall not keep you long. The one thing I ask is that you will not interrupt me, but wait patiently till I have finished, till I have revealed to you a very strange record of events which have influenced the lives of many people. I am afraid my preamble may tire you, and you may wonder what bearing it has upon my relations with Edgar Warris-

ton, but I ask for your patience. When I have finished, the relevancy of all I tell you may appeal to you.'

Muriel sank into a chair. A curious stillness filled the room. Seton, too, felt the strain of the atmosphere. His tension showed itself in a short, nervous cough.

*(To be concluded.)*

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# STRANGE WHIMS OF WILL-MAKERS.

By Clive Holland.

SIMPLE and unromantic as is the operation of making wills, there not only frequently occur most extraordinary blunders and the perpetuation of equally remarkable whims and oddities of testators, but there also enters in very frequently an element of romance which most people would scarcely associate with legal proceedings of this character.

For example, quite recently a certain church in Gloucestershire lost a substantial amount of money by reason of the officials not having paid a last tribute of respect to a benefactor of the church by attending his funeral. Not one of them apparently thought it worth while to be present. One can imagine their chagrin when a few hours later the will was read, and it was found that the deceased gentleman had left a codicil bequeathing the sum of one hundred pounds to the chapel in question for each deacon who attended the funeral. As there were nine such officials, the loss caused by this omission was a very considerable one.

Recently an elderly lady died in Paris, leaving directions as to her funeral which were of an extremely eccentric character. A nephew who had always expressed his affection for the old lady, and had 'cultivated' her assiduously, knew that he was the sole executor, and upon him in consequence devolved the duty of carrying or not carrying out her wishes. Although the deceased was believed to be well-off, she was not supposed by any one to be really wealthy. Amongst the directions for the disposal of her body, the funeral, &c., were the following: That her executor should watch for two nights beside her body, which was then to be encased in a glass casket specially made and roughly shaped to the figure, and hermetically sealed, which was in turn to be deposited in a coffin made of mahogany, lined with lead and padded with most expensive satin; and, further, that her remains were to be taken to her native town of Arles, in the south-east of France, and there ultimately buried in a mausoleum which was to cost a very considerable sum. The old lady finished her directions in the following words: 'It is left to my dear nephew to see that my wishes are carried out, and he will have the satisfaction of knowing that he is pleasing me even though the expense entailed should be more than my means entirely justify.' The will itself was not to be opened until after the interment, which, owing to the building of the mausoleum, was delayed several weeks. This fact might have put some men on the *qui vive*, and made them at least presume that the disposition of the old lady's property would largely depend upon the faithful carrying out or otherwise of her last wishes.

M. Boutet, her nephew, however, was of a suspicious and parsimonious nature, and he concluded that the old lady had arranged for the reading of her will and the discovery of her property to be postponed till after her burial lest he should decline to go to the expense, or, if her wishes were carried out, should have perhaps even to bear a portion of it himself. M. Boutet decided that the old lady's wishes were preposterous, and as the discretion was left to him as to whether or no they should be carried out, he decided neither to provide the glass casket nor to build the elaborate mausoleum, which would have cost five or six thousand francs. His relative's remains were placed in quite an ordinary coffin, taken to Arles, and buried in the cemetery in a cheap grave leased for a period of ten years.

When the will was read the day after the interment, it was found that the old lady had really been a wealthy woman, who for a period of thirty-five years had been saving and investing three-fifths of her income, and that the fortune she left behind amounted to nearly a million francs, or forty thousand pounds. In the will occurred the following passage: "To my dear nephew, Leon Boutet, I leave my entire property of whatsoever nature, provided that he has carried out in every particular my wishes regarding the disposal of my body which were set out in the letter addressed to him. In the event of his not having complied with these injunctions, I leave the whole of my fortune to the five charities hereafter named, after payment of the sum of five thousand francs to the maid who shall be in my employ at the time of my death; the sum of one thousand francs to the *concierge*, if any, of the house in which I am living at the time of my decease; the sum of two thousand francs to the medical man who attends me in my last illness; and the sum of one hundred francs to my said nephew, Leon Boutet, for the purchase of a souvenir.'

One can imagine the disgust with which the 'dear nephew' heard the provisions of his aunt's will.

Amongst the most romantic wills of comparatively modern times was undoubtedly that of the Austrian merchant Becheimer, who, though the owner of an immense fortune, yet lived a double life, going to business daily, and returning to a small tenement in one of the poorest quarters of the city in which

he lived, where his expenses did not amount to more than twenty kroner a week (roughly, eighteen shillings), and where he was looked upon as not only a poor man, but as a rather 'near' customer. He changed his clothes at a small restaurant close to his business quarters before going to his office, and again ere returning to his home.

When he died at the age of just over fifty, he was found to be worth upwards of one hundred thousand pounds sterling, the whole of which sum, save for a few legacies to charities and to his humble friends in the tenement house in which he lived, was left to the beautiful daughter of a restaurant-keeper with whom he had for some years carried on an intrigue. By this stroke of fortune, a girl who was accustomed to serve in an obscure restaurant, and to wash up the pots and pans, was suddenly made one of the richest young women in Hungary.

Another Continental will of a strange character was that of an eccentric German professor of Berlin who died about a century ago. For his only near relative he entertained a great dislike, but left him the whole of his property upon condition that he should always wear white linen clothes throughout the year, and not supplement them in severe weather by any other garments!

A very brief and sarcastic will was that of a certain Bristol tradesman who only left his wife a shilling to buy walnuts with, as 'being the only things she really cares for, and which she many times wasted much time in cracking instead of darning my stockings.'

A Canadian will, that of a certain Dr Dunlop, has been often quoted. It probably contains some of the most maliciously expressed bequests on record. To one brother the doctor left his books so that he might learn to read and acquire common-sense; to another brother he left his big silver watch, that the said brother might know the hour at which men ought to get up of a morning. To his brother-in-law he left his best pipe, 'in gratitude that he married my sister Maggie, whom no man of taste would ever have taken;' and to the eldest son of a friend he left a silver tankard, lest, if he left it to the friend himself—who was a rabid teetotaler—the latter might melt it down to cast temperance medals. To one of his sisters he left a silver drinking-cup, 'for reasons best known to herself;' to another the Family Bible, so that she might learn as much of its spirit as she already knew of its letter, and become a better Christian; and to his eldest sister a five-acre field to console her for being married to a man that she had to henpeck.

Sometimes humour of a less acrid character is found in the clauses of a will. A famous French marquis left a will of this kind.

To a M. Boussey he left his blessing, to compensate him for the curses which a neighbour appeared to have heaped upon him every day, with the pious hope that the said blessing might be useful to the recipient on the judgment-day. In another clause he withdrew legacies of considerable amount left to two friends by a former will, because they had so frequently proclaimed the testator as a man who would cut a farthing into four pieces; adding that he would on no account be the means of obliging them to alter their opinion.

One of the old soldiers of the Guard located in the Invalides received the handsome annuity of twenty thousand francs (eight hundred pounds) from the circumstance that one day, whilst on guard at the Pont des Arts, he had paid the toll of a half-penny for the marquis, whose shabby attire had led the old soldier to esteem him in need of charity. The final clause of this singular will read: 'I leave to my relatives oblivion, to my friends ingratitude, and my soul to God. Regarding my body, it belongs to my family vault.'

An illustrated paper for the month of January 1877 contains a brief extract from the will of a lately deceased Scotchman whose son happened to be a medical man: 'I bequeath my two worst watches to my son, because I know he is sure to dissect them.'

A revengeful and terrible will by a west-country squire of the early part of the last century provided a handsome legacy amounting to several thousand pounds for a ne'er-do-well son that he might have the means of drinking himself to death and going to the devil as fast as possible.

Another well-known will was that of Philip, fifth Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, who lived during the disturbed period of the seventeenth century, which contains some peculiar phraseology as well as equally strange bequests. It runs:

'Firstly, as to my soul. I do confess I have even heard men speak of the soul; but what may be these same souls, or what their destination, God only knows, for myself I know not. Men have likewise talked to me of another world which I have never visited, nor do I even know a knowledge of the ground that leadeth thereto. When the king was reigning I did make my son wear a surplice, being desirous that he should become a bishop. As for myself, I did follow the religion of lay minister; then came Scotch, who made me a Presbyterian; but since the time of Cromwell I have become an Independent. These are, methinks, the three principal religions of the kingdom; if any one of the three can save a soul, to that I claim to belong. If, therefore, my executors can find my soul, I desire they will return it to Him who gave it to me.

'Item: I will have no monument, for then I must needs have an epitaph and verses over my carcass; during my life I have had enough of these.

'I give all my wild beasts to the Earl of Salisbury; being very sure that he will preserve them, seeing that he refused the king a doe out of his park.

'I give nothing to my Lord Saye, and I do make him this legacy willingly, because I know that he will faithfully distribute it unto the poor.

'Item: I bequeath to Thomas May, whose nose I did break at a masquerade, five shillings; my intention had been to give him more, but all who

shall have seen his *History of the Parliament* will consider that even this sum is too large.'

Then followed a sarcastic bequest to the Lieutenant-General Cromwell, to whom the testator gave 'one of my words, which he must want, seeing that he hath never kept any of his own.'

Several testators have made wills leaving large sums of money conditional upon the early rising of the beneficiaries. Perhaps one of the most notable of this kind was that of a man named Sergeant, of Leicester, who left his considerable fortune to his nephews, failing other heirs, on condition that they were only to have the use of the money so long as they observed the practice of early rising; and the onus was laid upon them of proving to the satisfaction of the executors that they had risen during the period from 1st April to 5th October in each year at five o'clock in the morning, and for the rest of the year at seven, occupying themselves for two hours after rising either in open-air exercise, study, or business. Illness alone was to be held as an exemption, and even then the lost time was to be made up after recovery by the defaulters rising half-an-hour earlier each day until the time was worked off. At all events, the worthy Mr Sergeant of Leicester was gifted with common-sense to a larger extent than many other eccentric testators.

Many curious directions have been left from time to time regarding the disposal of the testator's body after death. That this matter has been one of concern since very early times is proved by the will of a Comte du Chatelet, who died towards the end of the thirteenth century, and left directions that one of the pillars in the church of Neuf Château should be hollowed out and his body placed in it in a standing position, in order, as he says, 'that the common people may not walk upon me.'

Quite the opposite spirit animated one of the greatest dukes of Normandy, Richard Sans Peur, who directed in Norman-French of the time that he wished to be buried before the porch of the church, so that all who entered might tread him under foot. His desire was carried out, and for a considerable period he lay in the position he had chosen outside the Abbey of Fécamp, until at last one of the abbots, considering that so great a personage deserved more decent burial, exhumed his body and reinterred it in front of the high altar.

A very curious desire was that of a farmer in Hertfordshire, who asked in his will, which was opened at his death, that as he was about to take a thirty years' nap, his coffin might be suspended from a beam in one of his barns, and not be nailed down. It might be locked, but then only on condition that a hole was left in the coffin through which the key could be pushed, so that the farmer might let himself out when he awoke. When the thirty years had elapsed, his nephew, who inherited his property, seeing that the deceased showed no signs of awakening, after giving him a year's grace, had the coffin taken down and interred in the usual way.

Probably one of the earliest examples in England of cremation being prescribed by a testator was that of a Mrs Pratt, of George Street, Hanover Square, London, who decreed that her body should be burned to ashes in the new burying-ground adjoining Tyburn turnpike.

Many wills containing curious bequests to wives have from time to time been made. Perhaps the most common practice is to insert a clause depriving the wifely beneficiary of any interest left her in the case of remarriage; but surely Walter Frampton, Mayor of Bristol, who died in December 1838, carried this somewhat further than usual in providing that the executors should not only repossess themselves of all the property and interest bequeathed to the said Walter Frampton's widow in the event of her remarriage, but should declare such action by the sound of trumpet at the High Cross.

Another testator left his wife the sum of five hundred pounds, which, he somewhat humorously added, 'she was not to enjoy or use until after her death, so that she might at least be assured of a burial suitable to her position as my widow.'

Yet another somewhat vindictive husband left his wife the sum of two thousand pounds 'conditional upon her wearing red garments for at least a period of five years from my death, indicative of the joy that I know she will really feel at my decease, having never disguised the fact that such an event would please her.'

Yet another husband, whose wife may or may not have proved a trouble to him, left a large fortune upon condition that she published 'at least three times in the columns of the —— *Herald* a statement that she has for years nagged me and flouted my wishes and opinions;' and as though this was not enough revenge, he added, 'and that she shall for the first year after my death attend the parish church at least once on every Sunday of the year barefoot, and with her dress of sufficient shortness to allow this fact to be apparent.' The fortune concerned was a matter of upwards of ten thousand pounds, and one wonders whether the possibly ill-used widow complied with the conditions or sacrificed the fortune rather than her self-respect and comfort.

We could give many other examples of strange bequests, some of which would seem to indicate something more than mere eccentricity on the part of the testators, but space will not permit.

# THE BORDERLAND.

By A. M. SCOTT-MONCRIEFF.

JACK DALRYMPLE stretched out his right arm very cautiously and groped feebly, with a hand which hardly seemed his own, for the wall of his tent. No, he could not reach it; and he dared not move an inch, or, his slowly reawakening faculties told him, something terrible was bound to happen. But what? Pain—horrible, grinding, unendurable pain—came the answer.

He lay in a strange, unreal world, where loud noises he could not understand worried him, and where everything was dark. His hand fell wearily to his side, and in falling struck against a stone. With the slight shock his senses returned more fully, and he remembered! Not all at once, but little by little. First, the long day's advance—a wearisome business—during which the troops were incessantly sniped at by an invisible foe, who hid snugly behind rocks and picked off man after man; then, at last, when patience and endurance were nearly exhausted, the order to charge! It had been good to hear; and good, too, it had been to see the Afridis driven back! But that was soon over; and then came the slow, weary retreat—a retreat which was one continuous rear-guard action, with a harassing foe always pressing them more and more closely.

The country was very difficult, and every moment matters grew more critical. Each casualty added to their difficulties, for officers and men alike were determined to leave none of their wounded to the tender mercies of the tribesmen. They all knew too well what that would mean. Slowly and painfully the encumbered column forced its way to the mouth of the ravine. The position was one which called forth dogged powers of endurance, for no reprisals were possible now; they could only bear, and hope for the end—an end which was almost in sight, for the increasing width of the valley meant the cessation of hostilities.

How well 'A' Company had done! It gave Dalrymple a glow of satisfaction even now to remember the steadiness and devotion of the men, every one of them known to him personally. The post of honour in rear of all had been theirs. They had retired steadily by half-companies, and he had remained with the rear half-company, and had kept a few of his best runners to pour a heavy fire on the enemy while the rest retired over an open space of two or three hundred yards; then, the retreat covered, he with his handful of men had made a dash to rejoin the others. Hay fell just in front of him. He remembered stopping to help Hay, and then nothing more; but the pain in his right leg and in his head told him plainly enough what had happened. His leg was broken, and in falling he had doubtless struck his head against a rock.

And so this was the end!

It was night, and very dark and cold. He wondered how he had been overlooked. But then Hay had fallen among the rocks, and either they had not been missed or the men had thought them dead. They would never have left them otherwise—unless, indeed, it had been impossible to come back for them. That might well have been. Surely, however, they would send out a party from camp. He could not feel sure of that, though. It had been a bad day, with many casualties, and there was bound to be a certain amount of confusion. Hay was his colour-sergeant, too—worse luck! Where was the poor chap? he wondered. He felt round very cautiously, for the slightest movement was agony. Ah, here he was! His hand touched something cold—cold and very still. Yes, that was Hay; and such a good fellow, too—so keen on 'A' Company. Any man in the company could have been better spared. Well, war was a cruel, impossible business, not to be understood.

Presently he felt very worried about the company. He would miss Hay terribly. He wondered whom the colonel would give him in his place, for the last few days' campaigning had knocked out many of the best sergeants by sickness or bullets. Then quite suddenly the thought struck him—came right home to him—that in all probability his connection with 'A' Company was as much ended as Hay's! That was a facer; and he lay very still, trying to think.

It seemed quite impossible that he, Captain John Colin Dalrymple of the Blankshires, was to die—come to an end, here, now, this very night, on the Afridi hills. And yet he knew—unless help came, and that before morning—nothing was more certain. He did not feel the prospect so unnerving or surprising as he would had he met it in the ordinary garrison life of the plains. Death in many forms had grown sadly familiar in the last few weeks. Drummond, Scott, Grey had all gone that way; Scott and Grey in a moment of hot fighting, poor Drummond after sufferings that made death a relief to all. The pain of his wound, too, claimed the greater part of his attention; it was agonising, and his thirst was terrible, and he felt too weak to care much what happened. On the whole, he rather envied Hay. His troubles were over. It would be a long, long night, for the moon had not yet risen, and at the best there was no prospect of help for some hours. A bad lookout! How his shattered leg ached! If only he could sleep, or lapse into unconsciousness again, what a mercy it would be!

With great care he shifted his position slightly, and as he did so he saw some figures groping about among the rocks. At once, with reviving hopes, he felt better; a few more moments and he would

be cared for and safe—comparatively, at least. He raised himself painfully on his elbow. He could manage to shout, he thought; and then he noticed that these figures had none of the outlines of Europeans. True, the light was bad; but he could see well enough the shape of the turbans and the clumsy fur coats they wore. His disappointment was terrible, and the revulsion of feeling from intense relief to shrinking dread almost unbearable. He fell back half-fainting as he realised that these were the scum of the enemy—midnight thieves and murderers! Horrible stories of tortures practised on helpless prisoners came back to him. It would have been bad enough, a desperate position indeed, if he had been well and strong; but *now*—now, when he felt the tenderest touch would be torture! His heart failed him, and the longed-for unconsciousness came very near. He thrust it off; he knew he must keep his senses and summon up all his courage. He was a really brave man—a hardy Scotchman, with great powers of endurance and a very strong inducement to live. And yet—and yet—he was possessed, plagued, haunted by a few lines which he had read in some idle moment long ago, and which he only partly remembered. Half-a-dozen times already he had refused to think of them, had banished them resolutely from his mind; but now they were hammering in his head, keeping time to each intolerable throb of pain, clamouring to be heard:

When you 're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains,
An' go, go, go, like a soldier of the Queen.

Well, perhaps it wasn't such bad advice. He could see those groping devils busy with a group not so very far off. All those men were dead, though—lucky chaps!

Hay's rifle must be somewhere quite near. As for rolling, he didn't think he could roll; but he might crawl. And here there came a long blank in his thoughts, an interval when pain filled everything, when there was nothing but pain everywhere. But there! it was done. He was shaking and gasping, his breath coming in noisy sobs which he tried in vain to stop; only half-conscious, but with sense enough to know he had the rifle under his hand. How long had he taken to reach it? He had never known in all his healthy, strong young life that any one could suffer as he had done. He lay flat, half-fainting. For the time he was spent. He cared less about everything now he had the rifle. There was only one cartridge left, but he was not likely to bungle a shot like that. Later, he wondered if he ought to be afraid to die; but after a little thought he found he was not. He had a great confidence in the God of Battles, who would surely make allowances for His soldiers. Just God and himself, with no religions or dogmas or priestcrafts. No, he did not feel afraid; he knew he would be understood.

Had Scott and Grey and Drummond got too far in the strange other world for him to overtake them? he wondered. He hoped not. Poor little Drummond! It seemed only an hour ago that he had been writing to Drummond's mother a long letter, and mostly lies—but lies that would be forgiven, he knew; and soon some one would write much the same kind of letter to Molly.

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'Go, go, go.' Yes, that would be very easy, and over in a moment; and what chance had he of seeing the morning?

It seemed to Jack Dalrymple that he lay still for a long time; the pain died away slowly, and now he only wanted to be left in peace. He slipped in his precious cartridge and waited, and by degrees his nerves settled down again and his head felt clearer. He could think things out now in the little time he had left; he even dared to think of Molly—Molly, who had been deep in his heart and mind all the while.

It was all very fine for those foolish lines to jingle-jangle in his head; but what would become of Molly and the boy? Molly would forgive him if she knew, and she was never likely to know; but he should know himself for a coward if he gave up one chance of life. But then, again, the chance was such a small one, and the risk fearful. He shuddered and strained his eyes. Yes, there they were, prowling from rock to rock. The moon was high now, and he could see distinctly. They were taking their time, the brutes! Sometimes they carried a man away, sometimes apparently rifled his pockets; but always kept steadily on, missing no one. He shivered. Surely it was nearly time to use that cartridge. Nearly, but not quite; it wouldn't take a moment. He turned his thoughts back to his wife. How would she live? And little Jock? There was her pension—forty pounds, and ten pounds for Jock. He thought Government would double it, as he was killed on service—that would be one hundred pounds—and he had about one hundred and fifty pounds a year of his own. That made two hundred and fifty pounds—that was all, two hundred and fifty pounds a year for the rest of her days. Just enough not to starve on. His poor, pretty Molly, and he had meant to give her such a happy life! Well, they had been happy; but three years was too short. He couldn't die and leave her—so soon; but he dared not let himself dwell on that. How often they had made calculations together—or rather he had, and Molly had listened! It had been all rather a struggle and an anxious time, and then only two months ago he had got his company. How delighted they had been! The rise in pay was considerable to their modest ideas, and perhaps they had been rather rash; but the new furniture had looked so nice, and Molly had been so proud of her pretty house, and in a few months they would have paid everything off. But now—— There was part of his new uniform, too, that wasn't paid for either. Of course it would be sold with the furniture, but neither would fetch what it had cost. What day of the month was it? The 6th or

the 7th only, and his pay would stop from to-day. The Queen's Military Widows' Fund would pay her way home, that was one comfort. How glad he was he had joined when he married!

Molly was at Pindi, the nearest she could get to the front. Poor little woman! how would she hear the news? He knew the house where she was staying with his colonel's wife. Thank God! she wasn't alone; and Mrs Ames was a kind woman, and would be good to his poor little darling. They would tell her that he had died instantaneously, never moved again. It was lucky that no one would ever know. The colonel would telegraph, he supposed. He could see the unconcerned telegraph-coolie slouching up to the veranda, and the two women sitting there.

And then he dozed off again, but he roused himself with a new idea. Molly was very pretty; she might marry again. Oh, not soon! He could not bear the idea of that—his own little wife! She would never forget him, of that he was sure; but *sometime*. It would be the best thing for her—the only thing, in fact; and of course there were lots of good fellows who would be good to her, and good to little Jock too. But somehow none of them seemed good enough for Molly. His thoughts just wandered on of themselves—he really had very little control of them; and presently he found himself going through a list of his friends. Some of them were married, and several were dead—dead in the last few days. How about Graham? He was quite a good fellow, but what you would call a man's man—a good sporting chap—and with money, too; but Dalrymple had an idea he was a bit spoiled, and he would want his wife to go *his* way in everything. He'd take her out shooting in the hot weather, and expect her to be as strong as a horse, and Molly was not strong. Then there was Lister. He was more dependable, certainly, and he would take care of his wife; but then he was of a jealous temperament, not too good-tempered, and poor too; and Dalrymple was strongly of opinion that his successor had better be well-off. And so he wandered on, rejecting one possible husband after another. No, he really could not afford to die. He could not, would not, leave Molly yet if by any means in his power he could escape.

He took a good look round, and the stronger light showed him that if he could only crawl a few yards he would be much more securely hidden. He measured the distance with his eye; only a few yards, and could he do it? He—one of the best runners in the army—and he was wondering if, to save his life, he could cover those few miserable yards! He must take the rifle too. He unloaded it first, and that was no easy matter; his strong brown fingers were as weak and useless as a child's. But it was done at last, and he was ready to move. How he wished he could drag Hay with him! But that was obviously an impossibility. He could not feel quite certain Hay was dead. Then he started. How his broken leg dragged behind! He was stiffer now, and the progress more agonising even than before; but inch by inch he made his way. There were long pauses, when he lay flat on his face and felt he must give in; but the thought of Molly had reawakened his love of life, and always after a few moments' respite he struggled on afresh, until at last he lay exhausted under the friendly rock.

The sinister figures were very near when he recovered sufficiently to look out from his shelter. They were proceeding as systematically as before; very soon they would reach Hay, and after Hay his turn would come—if they saw him. Suddenly a new and horrible thought struck him. How could he lie there and see them ill-treat Hay, one of his 'men'? Just suppose Hay were still alive! Could he keep that last cartridge to save himself pain while he watched Hay suffer? And yet to part with it, when Hay might be beyond suffering, would be a bitter sacrifice. Surely he was not called upon to do that? And all the time he knew he was, and that the moment Hay was touched he would fire; every instinct of his nature and all the traditions in which he had been reared drove him to that decision. He, an officer, protect himself while one of his men was tortured! No; he might be coward enough to tremble at the thought of more suffering, but he was not coward enough to purchase escape at such a price. His mind was made up, and yet the extraordinary fact remained that a voice in his ear urged him against his decision. Surely his guardian angel—his subconscious self, his conscience, call it what you will—*might* have applauded; but no! All the while he heard quite distinctly the words, 'Do not shoot!' 'You must not fire!' 'Do *not* shoot!' repeated over and over again. Now it was only a murmur, now so loud that he thought the tribesmen would hear; the voice urged him all the time insistently; it assured him Hay was dead, quite dead, and repeated over and over again, 'Do not fire! Do not fire!' Dalrymple felt so certain once or twice that an actual living voice was speaking that he looked over his shoulder; but no one was there, only an icy wind struck on his cheek. He was on his face now, with the rifle held against his shoulder. He couldn't miss at this distance. One of them had nearly reached Hay, and he covered the stooping figure; but his hand shook a little, and he waited, trying to steady himself, when 'Do not fire!' sounded still more imperatively in his ear. It was not a suggestion this time, it was a *command*, and he hesitated with his finger on the trigger; and just at that moment the man who was stooping raised himself suddenly and shouted in excited tones, 'Brandy *jeldi lao!*' ('Bring brandy quickly!').

The rifle slipped from Dalrymple's hand, fortunately without an accident. So that was Major Cameron, their warm-hearted, able Scotch doctor. He remembered now the doctor had been wearing a turban for days, and all the officers wore *poshteens*. The other men must be the native stretcher-bearers.

The noise of the rifle falling brought Major Cameron running to him.

'By Jove, man, this is grand!' he exclaimed. 'I've been here two hours seeking ye. Why did ye no' gi'e me a call? Man, I am thankful! Can ye hold out a bit longer? There's just a chance for the poor fellow yonder. I'll be with ye in a moment or two.' And he was gone.

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So the terrible experience ended. Dalrymple does not often speak of the time when a corner of the veil which divides the natural world from the supernatural was lifted for him. This is a sceptical age. When he told Major Cameron, the man of science said, 'Fever, I'm thinking.' His friends say, 'You were wandering, old chap.' But he knows the voice was real, with his own ears he heard, and he and Molly believe it came from the 'Great Beyond.' Sometimes he wonders if he will ever hear it again, and where, and when. But of this he never speaks—not even to his wife.

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# SNOW AT SEA.

## THE RESCUE OF THE 'GOTHIC' BY THE 'OLDHAM.'

By Commander E. Hamilton Currey, R.N.

On the eastern horizon the sea cut the sky in a dark, hard line; there was no colour in either sea or sky, nothing but an all-pervading darkness, and the windless floor of the ocean showed up as a dull, opaque, seemingly endless space. There are times when the sea shows no lights at all, and when the surface appears to be of the colour and even the consistency of a dull, badly painted iron plate. It was so on the day in question. There was no hint of movement, and yet at half-ebb the vast body of water was racing eastward to where grayish-black joined bluish-gray out there on the confines of space. Overhead, the sky had the aspect of one great smudge—an even surface indescribable, as if some celestial plumber had smoothed it down with a palette-knife. Only in the north-eastern quarter was there a hint of the change which was to come. Here the overhead smudge was broken ever so slightly, faint pencils of light breaking here and there through the even deadness which prevailed; and thus the weather held as the tide drained out to its uttermost limit. It was deathly cold, and so deadly still that, as the shoals showed forth from the murky waters, there was not even a line of foam around the brown patches and humps of sand which were now momentarily appearing, and above which hovered the gulls, white and silent ghosts in a dark and formless world; ice scummed the surface of the shallow sea-water pools left among the hollow spaces of the now bare shoals. The stillness and the frost had held for nigh upon forty-eight hours; but on the last quarter of the ebb the glass dropped a tenth. As the flood asserted itself there came a further and more decided downward movement, and with it came the wind and a break in the stillness of the weather conditions.

There was no mistaking the signs and tokens. Very gently a light zephyr sighed languidly forth from 'the brave north-east,' with force not sufficient at first to ruffle the shoreward-going tide. At the same time the smudge overhead broke and split—so much so, indeed, that at one time in the afternoon a vagrant and errant shaft of sunlight shot a lurid red pathway athwart the bows of the steamers racing for 'London river.' The mariner who had cleared the shoals and had a snug anchorage under his lee was one to be congratulated on this particular January afternoon.

It was an attack in force, but also in form, and the clerk of the weather spared the seaman none of the usual preliminaries. From under the dark line of the horizon of which we have spoken rolled up the black, violet clouds which hold the snow, and piled themselves in the quarter between north and east from the sea-rim to the zenith. At half-flood came the wind; no more at first than a gentle breeze, but it bore on its wings the first hint of the snow in a fine, dry, impalpable powder, deluding the inexperienced into the idea that 'after all it wasn't going to be much.' Not so thought the men of the lightships, who made ready the great sirens which roar through the darkness and the smother when no lights can be seen. The glass still dropped, and the wind rose all the afternoon, until in seamen's parlance it was blowing half a gale; but still the snow was nothing to bother about particularly, for the forces of evil were in no hurry, and were leisurely 'working up,' even as does a new steamship for an important trial of her engines. It came at last on the third quarter of the rising tide, a gale and a snowstorm in one, and the snarling waves racing in front of the wind were blotted out in that white mantle of terror which is the worst foe the mariner has to encounter.

By the time it came to high-water the bottom had dropped out of the barometer, and the weather in the estuary could hardly have been worse; but we are not concerned with what was happening there, but with something which occurred in the North Sea.

Shallow, and in places choked by shoals, tormented by writhing tides which seem to have no room for their deadly convolutions, this space of the ocean seems to have a brand of 'weather' peculiarly its

own; and on this particular night it seemed as if the demon who presides at such occurrences was out to show what he really could do when he had made up his mind. Methinks he had some warrant who wrote the following lines:

There's a bitter cold in the driving blast, and over the headlands lower
The menace grim of the storm-fiend's breath which gathers hour by hour;
And it comes at last from the 'brave north-east,' the quarter the seamen dread,
With its menace white as the winding-sheet which covers the rigid dead.

There's never a gale of the equinox, or of all the winds that blow,
That issue forth from the gate of fear, which can compare with the snow.
With sea-room plenty the mariner laughs, no matter how fierce the wind,
For when he can see his danger it is faced with an easy mind.

Now, no seaman that ever was born likes a gale of wind, no matter how much the landfolk may insist that when it comes he is 'in his element;' but 'when he can see his danger' he makes shift with it as one of the inevitable disagreeables of his calling, and when he cannot see it he is invariably in for an anxious time. Fog is bad enough, but in these latitudes it is seldom, if ever, accompanied by a gale of wind; but it is quite otherwise with the snow, which takes on a gale as often as not, and thereby considerably complicates the situation. When snow comes at sea, you can, in the first place, see nothing at all, and in consequence of the bitter wind you are rendered so numb with the cold that the extra vigilance demanded is a terrible strain upon the mind. And yet there are men who can so far rise superior to all this as to do what was done by the men of the Grimsby trawler *Oldham*.

And now, hats off, my brother-mariners; and you of the landfolk also, stand by to cheer; likewise those who are so ready to insist that the English are a decadent race, let them hide their diminished heads as they read the tale of a North Sea rescue:

'Early on Tuesday morning the Hull trawler *Gothic* was clean swept, her bridge, boat, and funnel being carried overboard. The crew had to take to the pumps to keep her afloat, and everything inflammable, including the whole of her nets, was burnt for flares.'

It is thus that the newspaper report of the disaster begins. There was a raging gale and a blizzard of snow, and all day long the crew toiled at the pumps. Think of it—bridge, funnel, and boat gone, all round them that blinding whiteness, and the steep, cliff-sided North Sea combers climbing aboard and mocking the puny efforts of men who must have considered themselves doomed. A waterlogged, disabled little ship wallowing unheeded in the heart of the tempest!

But on the Tuesday night, by the mercy of Providence, there arrived upon the scene the Grimsby trawler *Oldham*, 'and Captain Marshall launched his boat and took off four of the *Gothic's* crew.' He 'launched his boat'! It all sounds so simple, but to those who know the North Sea what a whole world of heroism is contained in these three words; and how humble it makes one feel when one thinks of the men who went in that miserable cockleshell in that weather! One can only speak of 'weather' in this connection, for the thing has got far beyond adjectives. And then the account goes on to state that the small boat of the *Oldham* 'was broken to pieces.' One would like to hear the details of this catastrophe; but there are none, and we can only conjecture the despair that must have filled the hearts of the remainder of the unfortunates on board the *Gothic* when they witnessed this last and apparently supreme and irremediable disaster; for now surely all hope was cut off, and to them there seemed to be nothing left but to wait until the inevitable end came and their vessel should founder under their feet.

The account continues: 'The *Oldham's* skipper intimated that he would stand by at any cost, and throughout the night, in a storm of snow, he repeatedly tried to get near the *Gothic*, and several times threw a rope, which fell short.' Consider the risk that the rescuers were running all that night. There was no boat left, and in consequence the two trawlers had to approach each other sufficiently near to allow of a rope to be thrown from one to the other, and in that weather, and in the dark and the falling snow! The seamanship, the nerve, the dogged, splendid courage of it all, hour after hour be it remembered, when a wrong turn of the wheel, a shove too far ahead with the engines, and then—collision, and the end. Neither ship ever heard of again.

'Early on Wednesday morning the *Oldham* again managed to get near enough to cast life-lines on board the *Gothic*. These were seized, and the remaining five hands lashed one end round their waists, and then jumped into the sea. The *Oldham* men dragged them through the water, and finally got all on board.' And now the sequel: 'The *Gothic* sank within twenty minutes of the five men being rescued.'

One poor fellow died from the hardship and exposure; the rest came safe to port in the ship by which they had been rescued. Such is the tale of the Grimsby trawler *Oldham*, and of Captain Marshall and his crew. Is there a man or a woman in England to-day who does not feel proud to number such men as these among his or her fellow-countrymen? I trow not, for to read of such a deed as this is to call to the surface all that is best in human nature; and while we admire with all our hearts and souls the heroism which prompted it, the seamanship by which it was accomplished, we also humbly hope that should we ever be called upon we may rise to somewhere near the level of these Grimsby fishermen.

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# THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

IN present times many things are taxed, and very particularly is some levy made upon the pleasures, the indulgences, the weaknesses of the people. It may be direct, or it may be indirect; but in one way or another it is done. Thus it is brought to pass that the Commissioners of Customs and Excise come to know something considerable about the manners and the private lives of the people. Now, the other day there came out from their offices a book of tables and statements which at the first glance was uninviting enough. This book tells me some queer things about the habits of the people of Britain at the present time, and what are the tendencies of the people in the matter of those habits. How many private motor-cars are there in the country? If you made that the subject of a dining or drawing room guessing competition you would have the wildest variations in the answers given—probably from ten thousand to a million. Well, these Excise people can and do tell you to a single car, and it turns out that there are nearly fifty thousand. And think upon it, that the taxi-cab and the motor-omnibus, which only seemed to make their faltering way on the streets for the first time the other day, are now nearly twenty-five thousand strong. Such is the modern advance. The customs that belong to the old past of quiet and respectable dignity die away. You may take many samples and find that this is so. Once upon a time there was no family of pretence that could live without its armorial bearings; but now, though families increase, those who have arms become fewer; and, in comparison with a decade ago, they are full three thousand less. It is a strange fact also that within the same period nearly four thousand fewer people have licenses for guns, so we must decide that St Grouse, St Partridge, and St Pheasant days are festivals of less account than they were wont to be; and indeed there is sufficient evidence without the confirmation of Somerset House that motoring on the one hand and golf on the other have weaned away many ardent sportsmen from the hills and moors, and have at the same time prevented the supply of new recruits from coming up to the average. We have more than three hundred thousand dogs in the country in excess of what we had at the beginning of this century, and this is not taking any reckoning of farm and sheep dogs either. May it not be that with all the dullness, the monotony, the grinding—yes, that ever-ceaseless grinding—of the modern machine-like existence, the man's dog, the mongrel terrier though it be and most often is, stands to him for almost the only morsel of pure nature that is left for him to behold and to contemplate and to enjoy, and one of the best things in sincere companionship and faithfulness that the world has now to give him?

* * *

Then there is a subject for a moment's reflection in the circumstance that within the period we have been speaking of the revenue that is derived by the State from the sale of playing-cards has increased to the extent of more than seven thousand pounds. There can hardly be a doubt that it is the modern game of bridge that has made such a craze of card-playing as it would hardly have become without some such expedient. And now the craze is being redeveloped through a new game which they call auction bridge, and perhaps the result will be that there will be more thousands for Somerset House. Bridge gained it over the old-fashioned simple whist, in which there was yet more play than in any other game of its kind, because it contained more of the gambling element in it, and auction bridge may win over bridge because it has more gambling still. It is the feverishness and excitement of gambling that the semi-neurotics of the present time feel to be necessary accompaniments of their leisure time. There are not any more days of complete composure left for us. I would give back to Somerset House a very large bundle of its best statistics if it could give me in exchange for them

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one small table which would show the number of hours given to men and women of brain capacity, intelligence, even of some intellectuality, that are absolutely thrown away, cast unused upon the rubbish-heap of time, through cards alone. Most truly distractions of kinds are a necessity to human existence, and never were they more so than at a time like this, when the pressure of life is so intense. But from nearly all distractions there is some educational value to be derived. From such as card-playing there is clearly none, and yet in the minds of some people it takes equality among entertainments with the theatre and the concerts. It shall be the theatre on Tuesday, they say to each other, and they will have bridge on Wednesday, perhaps bridge on Thursday too, and on Friday they will see what the weather is like before deciding. If distractions of this kind are necessary, it must still be added that never were they anything like so extensively practised as at the present time. So we get nearly thirty thousand pounds a year to help our crying revenues, and might it not be suggested to the Chancellor that this amount might easily be doubled or trebled and nobody be a penny the worse? It would be a justifiable tax. This bridge is taken too seriously. There are scores of people in the Metropolis, professors of bridge, men and women, who make their living by nothing else than teaching this game. They conduct schools, hold classes, and give private tuition to individuals and parties. At some of these schools the young ladies and gentlemen who wait upon you in the shops attend, and there are also viscounts and countesses, and the wives of multi-millionaires and ordinary stockbrokers who do not make a penny less than ten thousand a year, who go to be coached in the mysteries of declaring hearts and no trumps. These schools and classes are advertised extensively. And then there are numerous bridge clubs. I do not mean ordinary clubs at which bridge is played as a matter of course, but clubs specially formed for the playing of bridge and at which nothing else is done or played. There must be hundreds and hundreds of these in London at the present time. They abound particularly in the northern, north-western, and western districts. A number of people, bridge enthusiasts, make themselves the tenants of some ordinary house; they furnish it with carpets, chairs, and card-tables; establish within it a servant; stock some cold meat and pickles in the larder; form a committee among themselves; and then advertise for candidates for membership, who are elected as they come along provided there is no very good reason why they should not be elected. The prime quality in a candidate is the ability to play and the possession of sufficient money—not generally a large amount—to play with, and a certain agreeableness of manner. The rest does not matter very much. And so they sit and play during much of the day and all the evening; they are absorbed deeply in their game, and as each hand is played they have discussions on the alternative methods that there were of playing it, and what might have been the result in each case. Some one may come in with an evening paper in his hand, and, with much temerity, at the end of a rubber may mention that there has been a bloody revolution in some European state. They do not hear him; one of them is wondering whether it would have been better to have played the seven instead of the nine, and another is convinced that her partner made a grievous error in leading trumps so soon. Maybe some half-hour later, when one of them has to rise and leave, he recalls vaguely that the man who had entered while the game was in progress had mentioned something of importance, and he asks him now what it was that he spoke of. As I have said, the bridge clubs are very numerous, and they are very popular and increasing in numbers. They are of different grades. Some of them are of tolerably good social standing—they border on exclusiveness; others, the majority, are easier of admission. When I say that I do not for my own part quite understand what is the position of the law in regard to these clubs, suspecting that it must vary in different cases, it is not being suggested that there is any need for interference by the law. I know of none. The abiding reflections after contemplation of this subject are that millions of hours are wasted at this popular game of cards in these days—yes, in the bulk millions and millions of hours; and remember that the people who play must have a certain keenness of intelligence—and partly through this means a few thousands of pounds extra make their way to the Excise funds.

* * *

These things are interesting enough in their way, but they are not what most arrests one's attention and moves one to thought and wonderment on receiving and reading this volume of facts concerning the private life of the people that the penetrating commissioners have made up for our edification. It is the disclosures which are made about the drinking habits which are of most account and give us at the same time most cause for serious consideration. For we have been led to believe during many years past that this question of the drinking habit is one of the most serious consequence, that a certain proportion of the nation is being wasted through it, that the proportion is decreasing, and that on the whole there is cause for rejoicing in the very evident advances that are being made by the temperance movement in all classes of society, and most notably in the middle and upper-middle class, where the newer kinds of beverages and non-alcoholic drinks are asserting a considerable popularity. Now our servants the commissioners give us facts and figures which establish beyond any doubt that, as a people, and man for man—woman for woman too, if you like—we drink less whisky, less spirits in general, less beer, less wine than we have ever done before in modern times. Observe, in 1901 the total quantity of home-made and

imported spirits that were retained for consumption in this country was a little over forty-five million gallons, giving 1·1 gallons as the amount consumed on the average by each head of the population. It was ascertained that the average Scot drank 1·86 gallons, the Irishman 1·09, and the more moderate Englishman just the even gallon. That was nearly ten years ago; and what is the state of affairs to-day? The Scot has brought down his annual supply of spirits to the most inconsiderable trifle over the gallon, the Irishman consumes only 0·63 of a gallon, and the Englishman is now content with only half-a-gallon, or, if not content with it—that is a point on which there will be something else to say—he manages to get on with so much only. That gives us an average for the United Kingdom of only 0·58 of a gallon; and so it has happened that in the financial year most recently concluded the total spirits retained in the country for our own consumption were twenty-six million gallons—twenty-six millions against the forty-five millions that we needed ten years ago. Now this is a very remarkable difference, and some enormous significance must be attached to it. In a general way, statisticians, sociologists, and others are somewhat prone to deduce great morals from slender premises; but here the differences are such that it is not to be doubted that the habits of the people are changing, and it is a most momentous change that has taken place within the short period of one decade, the extent of change that we look to occur only in the wide space of a century or more than that. Only about half the spirits are consumed in this country that were ten years ago; it is almost difficult to realise, for though the change has been so swift, it has been so unnoticed that there must have been some concealment of it. It is not as if, either, the taste had merely changed to one form of alcohol from another. Within that decade the consumption of beer per head of the population has gone down from 31·5 gallons to 25·8, and the consumption of wines from 0·37 gallon to 0·25. The set that is being made against alcohol in all forms is complete. There was a gradual reduction all through the decade, much accelerated towards the end; and if it could proceed in the same way that it has done—which is surely impossible—then in a dozen years from now there would be no more spirits drunk in this country, and by the time our young men became aged they would live in an absolutely teetotal country, a temperance Utopia where there was neither beer nor wine to slake the thirst or please the palate. That, we may be sure, is a consummation that will never be achieved, and only the most advanced of the temperance reformers, doing the splendid work that they are doing, would consider it to be desirable. We are provided with some other facts which must be considered in conjunction with those which have already been quoted, for the two sets have a bearing upon each other. Within that same period the consumption of tea has increased by 2 per cent., and of cocoa by 18 per cent. The commissioners are not concerned with the quantities of mineral waters and other non-alcoholic drinks that are taken by the people; but if they were, one would not be surprised to find that they had increased by 200 per cent., or even more than that. But consider now that there are at the present time more than forty-two thousand licensed makers or sellers of patent medicines, which is eight thousand more than there were at the beginning of the century; and that the tobacconists have gone up in numbers by nearly 10 per cent., so that there are now more than three hundred and eighty-three thousand of them. And it is apposite to mention also that the pawnbrokers have appreciably added to their numbers. Thus we find that it is necessity and nerves and the terrible difficulties of the time that have led to the decrease that is registered by the commissioners, that it is not due to the better or wiser instincts of the people, and that in the causes that have brought it about there is much to regret and something to give occasion for anxiety. Of course the increased duty on spirits has had much to do with the decreased consumption, for the fall between the March of last year and the March of this was the greatest there has ever been; but still there had been a decline all the way down the decade up to then; and it must be remembered that the great probability is that the big reduction in the last year, due to the greater cost of spirits, was brought about more by the abstention of the very moderate consumers, to whom such abstention meant nothing at all in loss of comfort and pleasure, than to any reduction in consumption by people who drank more than was to their physical advantage, for such people, closely addicted to their wines and spirits, will have them whatever the cost may be. If we take this view there is less satisfaction in the effect of the duties than there would otherwise be.

* * *

In these days the temperance cause is splendidly supported by facts and arguments. The special circumstances of the times, as they have been indicated, are one strong argument. Great doctors with their constant preachings against alcohol provide us with another. Just now, for the first time for many years, we have a teetotal Lord Mayor of London, and it is a fact that does not pass unnoticed and will not be without a certain influence. People like excuses for temperance, and so in London you may now encounter people who say they will be abstainers while the present Lord Mayor is in office at the Mansion House. A little while since one of our most eminent generals was speaking from the platform of a temperance association connected with the army; and, praising the virtues of a temperance which he had never attempted to practise, he declared there and then that it was incumbent upon him, if he were to speak with any sincerity on that occasion, to set the good example. And having given a recital of the

number of gallons of wine and whisky that he had consumed, he signed the pledge to be an abstainer for one year. Forthwith there were hundreds of people, reading of this resolve, who said they would keep him company. It is all to the good, to the very good. But the temperance cause has traditions and instincts to fight against; and lately also there have been some doctors who have departed from the common way, and declared that too much temperance is not such a good thing as it has been made out to be. Then when people take to reading histories and romances they do not generally find much encouragement towards the strictest temperance, and they need to take their comfort from the cold reflection that times have changed and new necessities have arisen. They will read in some place that no nation ever did great work on comparative abstention; that the strongest and most virile nations have been, to a certain extent at all events, drinking nations; and that no nation will ever thrive on gingerbeer alone. The laws of nations apply to individuals, and it is pointed out how small comparatively is the number of the world's greatest who have been abstainers. An uneasiness of a certain kind is developed in some minds when it is read that Bismarck, one of the greatest drinkers of his age, astonished the Brandenburg cuirassiers by emptying at one draught the regimental cup, which held a bottle, and that on one occasion while hunting he swallowed in a mouthful as much champagne as could be held in an enormous stag's horn pierced at both ends. When at Bordeaux in 1862 he wrote: 'I have drunk Lafitte, Pichon, Mouton, Latour, Margaux, Saint-Julien, Cantenac, La Rose, Armaillac, and other wines. The temperature is thirty degrees C. in the shade and fifty-five degrees C. in the sun; but one does not think of that when one has good wine in one's body.' But Bismarck did not drink spirits, and the British people are not Bismarcks either in constitution or in other ways. Then, again, we are told that the customs of the peoples from time immemorial show that Nature intended grapes and alcohol to have their definite place in the life of the world; and, again, there are those who say that some fortification of the system by alcohol is more or less of a necessity to people who live in cold and damp climates; and there was St Paul with his recommendation to Timothy to drink a little wine for his stomach's sake. The conspiracy in the arts against temperance is complete. When the wildest, most voluptuous, passionate songs have not had women and the love of country for their subjects, they have been giving praise to Bacchus; witness as one among many the drinking-song in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The poets from the temperance point of view are incorrigible. There was even the gentle Tennyson, of the pure and careful life, with his pints of port; and the others had more of their pints of everything. Search where you will among the writers whose fame has lived and will live, and you will find little that is written in the praise of water as the beverage. There are songs of sparkling streams as pictures, things of beauty; there is a word of thanks and gratitude to bubbling fountains for the relief they have given to parched lips and throats, but nothing more. Even those of gloomy lives and moods have roused themselves to a certain ecstasy, a view of life that is rosy and bright, when a thought of wine has flitted through their minds. But all this is of the past, of another and an easier age of life. The necessities have changed. We are not a people of poets. The disposition of men and women increases more in the opposite direction to that of the poetic temperament. Romance and music die out of our lives; the prevailing sounds are the grindings of machinery. The writings that make most appeal bear in dull lines upon the cost of living, on the improvement of business methods, and the cure of physical and nervous diseases. The examples of the past do not apply to our case. What was good for our old men when they were young is not good for the young men of our day. There is no doubt about that. And therein is the great and complete justification of the temperance reformers of the time. They and all others have reason to rejoice in the report that the Commissioners of Excise have just made to us. The necessities must have their way.

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# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EDGAR WARRISTON.

## CHAPTER X.—JOHN MAXWELL'S STORY.

'WHEN I was about twelve years of age,' began Maxwell, 'my dear mother died of cancer. I need not dwell upon the relationship that existed between her and me. Hers is a holy name, a blessed memory. Her death had a curious effect upon me. I think I must have been strangely mature for my age, for I held very definite views on the subject of death. My only brother was killed in battle; I accepted that fact as in the order of things. My father was killed whilst hunting; that I had recognised as a price that might have to be paid. The death of my grandparents was in the nature of things; they were old, and had played their parts. The death of an uncle at the age of thirty-five was also of the kind that did not oppress me; he had been a hard liver, and there was a logical sequence in his disease. Naturally I felt all these losses, but I did not complain. You may gather how keenly I was alive to the inexorable laws of nature when I tell you that my grief at the loss of a dear boy-friend of mine

was assuaged by the knowledge that he was the victim of hereditary disease. "The sins of the fathers were visited upon the children," according to the divine, if stern—you may call it cruel if you will—law of nature. But with my mother it was different. I searched in vain throughout her family history for any hereditary taint, and I needed little inquiry to know that she had lived a thoroughly healthy, careful, and blameless life. She had one of those transparently beautiful natures that come to bless the earth once in a century. The beauty of her nature was set in the beauty of her person. She was very strong, one of the strongest women I have ever known. So you may imagine my feelings when the cruel disease swept down upon her.

'From that dread moment I had but one idea. I took an oath that I would apply the whole of my life to the solution of the terrible scourge. My father, as my grandfather, had belonged to a famous Highland regiment, and it had been my ambition to follow in their footsteps in the old Seventy-fifth. But the death of my mother changed my object in life. I determined to take up the study of medicine.

'Accordingly I matriculated at the University of Edinburgh. I was at the time an orphan, and the only relation I had was Harry Bourchier, who had married my father's sister. Uncle Harry was one of those stern old Tories who looked upon a doctor as an apothecary, and medicine not the profession for a gentleman. A brave soldier himself, he despised me for giving up my military ambition, and from the moment I entered the university he refused to own me as his relative. Harry Bourchier was very rich, and I was his only nephew; but this did not deter me in what I considered my duty.

'At the university I applied myself heart and brain to my researches. But in doing so I concentrated my attention too closely upon one branch of my professional studies, with the result that I failed in my second professional examination. This was a great blow to me. I determined, therefore, to modify my methods so as to remedy the evil. After six months I appeared again for examination; but although I passed in three of the subjects, I was "ploughed" in the fourth. This fact, besides having a dire effect on my self-confidence, caused consternation amongst my friends; for, though only a student, I had already contributed papers to the Royal Medical Society which had attracted the notice of the profession and stamped me, I may say with all humility, as a man of mark. Though my self-confidence was shattered I made one more effort, and would, I think, have succeeded had it not been for one of the examiners who, either from prejudice or mere pig-headedness, had given me an oral examination on subjects which had not been included in the university course. I was again rejected. That was the final blow. My nerves were distraught, my pride was injured, my confidence a wreck.

'To emphasise what I felt, I may mention that a fellow-student, a friend of my own, without either ambition or especial mental qualifications, passed his examination at the same time that I failed. But I bore no resentment towards him. He was an intimate friend of mine. I had been attracted to him by his loneliness. He, like myself, was an orphan, and—less fortunate than I—he had not a single relation in the world.

'My object in life, as I have said, was almost a monomania, and I had recovered sufficiently from my despair when information reached me which was destined to change the whole course of my career.

'I was speaking to a patient suffering from malignant disease, when he indulged me with a piece of confidence. He had been in Sofala, and he assured me that not one hundred miles from that town there were diamonds. Now, I never had any desire to go chasing after wealth; but the doctors having given it as their opinion that I should take twelve months' rest from my studies before I appeared again for my examination, it struck me that it might at any rate be amusing to see if there were any truth in the patient's story. I confided in my friend, and without hesitation he offered to accompany me.

'We set sail and arrived at Sofala. There certain incidents occurred which caused the first real rupture between us. Their nature I will not dwell upon at present. To curtail my story, I may mention that, having obtained an escort of a couple of natives, we went up-country. I need not detail our various adventures, though they were notable enough. At last we arrived at the district spoken of by my informant in the hospital, and we forthwith commenced our search. We continued this for days without any success. My companion, however, was more enthusiastic than I, and on several occasions, when I awoke in the morning, I found that he had already set out on his explorations. This brings me to a very fateful day both for him and for me.'

Maxwell paused and looked at Seton, who sat staring at him in wonder and bewilderment.

'It was one of those days when I discovered that my friend had been early abroad. I waited for his return, but as he had not appeared by noon I set out by myself. I had come to the brow of a steep decline, a sort of miniature precipice, and was looking around me, when I caught sight of a figure bending down some three hundred yards below me, at the foot of a narrow crevice. I focused my glasses and discovered that it was my friend. I became deeply interested in his movements. I saw him examining something which he held in his hand, and, to my astonishment, I saw that what he held glittered in the fiery rays of the sun. Once or twice his right hand went to his pocket as if he were dropping something into it. As he did so he looked around as if afraid that he was being watched. After a time he rose and walked up the narrow valley in my direction. When he was near enough to hear my voice I called his name. As I

did so he gave a sudden start, and a hot flush passed over his cheeks. But he responded with a smile, and in a short time he was standing by my side. He seemed ill at ease, and questioned me as to the length of time I had been there. Now, I was not feeling well that day. Fatigue and disappointment had unnerved me, and when he informed me that once more his search had been in vain, his lie stung me to protestation. Hot words followed, and when I demanded him to show me what he had in his pocket, he suddenly drew a revolver and pointed it at me. I was staggered at this stroke of treachery; but, my foot suddenly going forward, he tripped, and as he fired the bullet passed over my head. As the shot reverberated through the air I heard a movement on my right, and saw one of our natives rushing away in the distance; but my attention was needed for much more serious business, for my companion had closed with me, and was dragging me towards the edge of the cliff. But I was a strong man, and in a few moments I had him down and was standing over him with my blood rioting through my arteries in fiery indignation at such a diabolical betrayal. I was standing thus, wondering what I should do with the cur, when I again heard a sound in the bush near me. I turned. In a second my man had seized me by the feet, and with one sharp wrench had brought me to the ground. We rolled down, and before either of us realised our danger we were over the edge of the cliff. It was not very precipitous, but we must have fallen some forty feet.

'The next thing that I remember was awakening to the fact that I was lying in a dense scrub with a very sore head and an aching ankle. I must have lost consciousness for a few moments, not longer. I looked around me. My companion lay by my side very still, and as I gazed at him I knew at once that he was dead. He was under me when we alighted, and his neck was broken.

'Everything had happened with such startling swiftness that I could not for some time realise the whole tragedy. When I did so a curious fear stole over me. I began to argue with myself that events might be hard to explain and very difficult to justify. But I have always believed that the best solution in all difficulties is the simplest one. I would speak the truth and would not be afraid of the consequences. That was my fixed resolution. Then suddenly came the temptation. Here was a man qualified to practise medicine, with degrees that would give any one an entrance into the world of science. He had not a friend in the world. Out there on the Pacific, in Australia or New Zealand, no one would be able to identify me. My great ambition was the source of my temptation.

'I secreted the body as well as I could and returned to the tent. To my surprise, I found only one native there. The other had fled. I soon discovered the cause. He had robbed my companion of all he possessed of value. My heart grew sick until I discovered that he had left a packet of papers in which I found my friend's diplomas.

'I need not detail my return to the coast, my avoidance of any one who might make inquiries, my sailing for Port Said, my arrival in Sydney.'

Here Maxwell paused and looked at Muriel, who sat silently waiting for the moment when her particular interest was to be called into play.

'On the day I arrived in Sydney there arrived also Dr Edgar Warriston.'

Robert Seton took a swift glance at Muriel, whose face betrayed her newly stimulated interest.

'I shall leave my story for a moment,' continued Maxwell, 'and refer to his. I need not, however, narrate what is as familiar to you as to me. But I will supply a little information to you, Miss Bouverie, and to you, Mr Seton. One day a man called at Edgar Warriston's room and charged him with a crime.'

The pale cheeks of Muriel told of the effect of this statement, but no words escaped her.

'What do you think was the nature of that crime?' asked Maxwell. 'Nothing less than that he had murdered me, John Maxwell, in Africa six years ago.'

'I don't understand,' murmured the girl. 'It was—surely'——

'Whether the charge were true or not,' went on Maxwell, 'Warriston disappeared.'

'It is untrue!' cried Muriel. 'Edgar was worn-out and distracted with his work. He went away for his health.'

'So he gave out,' went on Maxwell remorselessly; 'but why has he not returned?'

'He will return to refute this absurd and cruel charge,' said the girl.

'He will never return,' said Maxwell quietly.

Seton rose to his feet. Pity for Muriel surged in his heart.

'Edgar Warriston lies dead in the heart of Africa,' concluded John Maxwell.

It was now Muriel's turn to rise to her feet. Her brain was in chaos. She struggled to probe a mystery which was no mystery now to Robert Seton, who stared fixedly before him at the still, self-controlled figure of John Maxwell.

Suddenly the voice of John Maxwell changed; all its hoarseness and strange depth vanished as by a miracle, and his words rang out clear and resonant. As he spoke he rose from his chair and moved slightly towards Muriel, who stood as one mesmerised.

'It was not Edgar Warriston who left Sydney a month agone,' he said; 'it was I, John Maxwell, and I have returned.'

The strain of her mental searchings, the agony of her drawn-out suspense, the tumultuous emotions which had run in full cry through her feelings, were too much for Muriel, as with a long-drawn sigh she fell forward in a faint into the arms of John Maxwell.

CHAPTER XI.—'A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME.'

HEN Muriel recovered consciousness she found herself seated on a chair, and John Maxwell kneeling at her feet. As she opened her eyes she was able to realise her surroundings. She looked closely at the man before her, and through the new presentation she caught the clear image of the man she loved, and a pressure of the hand that held hers was more eloquent than any words. As she looked at his gray-streaked hair and pointed beard she smiled. 'John Maxwell is a better-looking man than Edgar Warriston,' she said.

'But you loved Edgar Warriston!' protested the man.

'I loved the man who called himself by that name,' said the girl. 'I should love him whatever his name.'

'You can hardly realise,' said Maxwell with a sigh, 'what it feels to be one's real self again after six years' masquerading. Whatever I have to face now, I can no longer be haunted by the feeling that at any moment I might be denounced as a fraud. But even you, Muriel, despite an occasional mystified and quizzical look, never inquired if I dyed my hair or not.'

'I must confess,' admitted the girl with a laugh, 'that I was doubtful about the colour of your eyebrows.'

'But, despite what I have told you,' said Maxwell seriously, 'can you love me still? All these years I have acted a lie. That is my only crime; but it is a crime, and I must take my punishment.'

'If there be any punishment,' said the girl, drawing the man very close to her, 'I will share it with you. But you are guilty of no crime. As far as I know, no man has ever been committed for impersonation unless there has been an attempt to defraud.'

'That is why I would never take a halfpenny from any one in the name of Edgar Warriston,' said Maxwell.

'And you have given much—oh, so much!' said the girl proudly.

At this moment Robert Seton, who had judiciously disappeared as soon as he realised that Muriel was returning to consciousness, re-entered the room. One glance was sufficient to tell him that the girl before him had not found much difficulty in forgiving her lover.

But there was a difficulty which no doubt had not been overlooked, but which appeared to the lawyer a matter of no little moment. 'Have you thought of the matter from the public's point of view?' he asked. 'Edgar Warriston's name is familiar in our mouths as a household word. He will not be as easy to get rid of as it has been for you to be discovered.'

Maxwell turned to his critic with a smile. 'A letter will shortly arrive for you from the man you name. In that you will learn that he had purchased a sailing-boat at the North Shore. When it is found it will be without an occupant; and I fancy the disappearance of Edgar Warriston will for ever remain a mystery in the colony.'

'And what of Miss Bouverie?' asked Seton.

'Oh, leave me to my own sorrow. I shall be a humbug for the first time in my life. It will be worth while—won't it, Ed—Jack?'

'I hope so,' said Maxwell. 'As soon as my affairs are settled I shall return to England; from there I shall go to Edinburgh, and this time I shall not fail. In the Old Country I shall renew my experiments, and one of my first duties after I take my degree will be to publish the researches of Edgar Warriston; and if I am spared I hope to carry them to a crowning issue in my own name. When I have taken my degree, when I have a name in the world, then I shall come to you, Muriel, and ask you to be my wife.'

A light of joy passed over the eyes of a beautiful woman.

'What I have done and what I have left undone,' said Maxwell, 'have all been for the great cause I have at heart. I took an oath once that nothing would stand in its way. Fortune, or misfortune, worked for my ends. I bear that man no ill-feeling. He has gone to his account, and I have, I think, saved his name from oblivion. But I have something still to wipe out; for though the end be good, I am not a believer in the doctrine that it justifies the means. But my lie was not very black, though it was a lie. I am not sophistical enough to defend what I did; but if a life's service in the cause of suffering will wipe it out, then I shall make my record clean.'

THE END.

## TAME ANIMALS AT SCHOOL.

T is generally argued that between ourselves and the animals that we have domesticated for various uses there exists a mutual debt. They work or provide food for us, and we in return give them board and lodging, and generally stand between them and the hardships of the natural state. Now, there is a fallacy in this reasoning. It is quite true that we protect our lambs against frost and our poultry from foxes. On the other hand, we are, apart from our own interest in their welfare, morally bound to do so, since by our very care for these animals of the house and farm we have robbed them of their natural cunning.

In short, domestic animals are without exception

more stupid than their wild cousins. Consider the stupid manner in which, with a mere butcher's lad behind, sheep follow one another through a gate. Contrast the foolishness of these simple animals with the superb sight, hearing, and wariness of the moufflon or the burrhel, which tax all the stalker's science. Consider even the hopeless manner in which the semi-domesticated dogs of Constantinople allow themselves to be run over by passing vehicles. How does this compare with the cunning of the fox and the wiles of the wolf? Any one seeking conviction of the helpless condition to which our tame fowl have been reduced has only to watch a hen trying to cross a road in the presence of traffic. The bird's mental condition is so well known that it is not long since a bicyclist who had been upset by a hen on the public highway failed to recover damages from the owner because, in the opinion of the Court, he ought to have known how hens behave under such circumstances, and to have provided accordingly. Yet in the Far East the wild cousins of our barndoor fowls give splendid sport, flying high and clear of the guns; and there are Frenchmen stationed in Cochin China who have more than once in all seriousness advised their introduction into the depleted coverts of French landowners.

The tendency of domestic animals is in course of time to lose those wild instincts which guard against starvation or other natural dangers to which their flesh is heir. A writer in the press lately expressed the belief that our outdoor dogs are even losing the habit of burying their food. The trick of eating to repletion, and then burying what is left with a view to returning for another meal, is common to many wild animals, to tigers, hyænas, and wild dogs. It is a very elementary piece of foresight about which there is no need to rhapsodise. If tame dogs are forgetting to provide against a rainy day, it is because they are demoralised by the luxury of life under artificial conditions. With thoughtful owners to provide meals at regular intervals, such economy becomes superfluous. This is all very well so long as the owners are thoughtful; but if, through neglect, the pet animals should once again be called upon to look after themselves they feel the pinch. If one of those tame rats which schoolboys love to keep were set free in a hedgerow in the country it would fare very badly, for if it did not first fall a victim to stoat or weasel, it would quickly die of starvation.

Apart from the systematic training of some breeds for the chase or the gun, it is probable that all our domestic dogs are far more stupid than the wild material from which they are derived. In indoor dogs, the pampered minions of the hearth-rug, such degeneracy is too evident to need discussion. Yet even the more robust companions of our outdoor rambles have fallen sadly away from the standards of the wild. Sporting-dogs, subjected to scientific education and bred from highly trained parents, are highly specialised products that must be left out of the comparison. The sporting-dog, from the greyhound, praised by Martial because it catches the hare for its master and not for itself, down to the winners of last season's field-trials, stands on a different plane. Ordinarily speaking, the tame dog gains in courage and determination what it loses in cunning. The stolid ferocity with which, anxious to win approval from its owner, a bulldog will hang on like grim death in spite of kicks and blows, has no parallel in the wild dogs; but the Cape hunting-dog, in running down a sable antelope, bites the fugitive's flank and then drops out of reach of the sweeping horns. Nothing is more instructive in this study than the contrast between the persistence with which a pack of fox-hounds will hang on to the fox and the sulky way in which the only half-tamed cheetah gives up the chase when the antelope gets away at the start. Some of our outdoor dogs are fairly alive to ordinary dangers; but in his latest book of sport, Mr Abel Chapman tells a story of the jackal which surpasses anything recorded of domestic dogs. He once came on a sleeping jackal close to the camp, and the animal, on seeing him, darted off, leaping high in the air at every few yards. This action is quite foreign to jackals escaping in the ordinary way, and the only inference seemed to be that the animal had heard and seen guns fired and sought thus to avoid being hit. At first sight perhaps the inference seems far-fetched. Yet any alternative explanation presents still greater difficulty.

Rarely does cunning come with domestication. A few semi-domesticated animals, like the camel and the elephant, appear to have maintained a mental *status quo*, but the vast majority have deteriorated. A single instance of what at any rate looks like improvement occurs in the reindeer. In the wild state, particularly at the season of the year when it is changing its coat, the animal suffers tortures from the attacks of botflies, and from these tormentors it has no other means of escape than standing up to its ears in water. The tame reindeer, herded by sturdy Lapps, feed over the same territory as their cousins, and have to be jealously guarded against the 'call of the wild,' which constantly tempts them to revert to liberty. Yet they have one advantage at any rate over the ownerless herds, for they are said to have found out that the stinging smoke of a peat fire is anathema to the botfly, and they lose no opportunity of crouching near the huts whenever the fires are alight and the insects on the warpath.

# A MAN OF AUSTERLITZ.

By J. O. Francis.

MUFFLED to the eyes, Père Loujanne brought the pitcher into the cottage, grumbling querulously about the cold.

'Name of a dog!' he said; 'it's going to freeze, Héloise.' Then, noticing the visitor, he bowed and blew upon his fingers.

'Madame Bonnar has news,' explained his wife. 'It is serious.'

Loujanne shrugged his shoulders. 'So? The Prussians have been stealing the chickens again—eh? Name of a dog! if we had one regiment of Soult's division — one General with a spark of Napoleon's fire — these pigs would be made to grunt!'

'Your nephew Jean is hiding in my cottage,' began Madame Bonnar.

'Name of God! what's this? Hiding? My nephew hiding? The nephew of a man of Austerlitz in hiding?'

Loujanne's anger was feared by every dweller in that countryside of northern France, for it was passionate and unreasoning, though it passed as quickly as it came.

'No, no!' said Madame Bonnar soothingly. 'He is carrying a message'——

'Why didn't you say so?' snapped Loujanne. 'That's quite another matter.'

'He says he must get on at once, and his way lies through the wood yonder,' continued Madame Bonnar.

'But,' put in Héloise, 'it is well over two hundred yards to the edge of the wood, in full view of the Prussians.'

'Jean says it's the only way,' insisted the other woman. 'The message is urgent; it *must* get through to-night.'

'Name of a dog!' growled Loujanne; 'this is no woman's business. I must do what I can. But these Frenchmen of to-day—what are they? Children and imbeciles! They could not hold France against the beer-swillers of Prussia. We—the soldiers of the first Napoleon—we broke the tyrannies of Europe! We planted our banners broadcast from the Danube to Pyrenees! We loaded wagons with the spoils of every capital'——

In such a vein Loujanne might run on for hours. Héloise plucked up courage and said hesitatingly, 'But Jean and his message?'

'Ah!'—the old man began to shuffle about the room, as his custom was at times of strain—'I have it! In less than half-an-hour Jacques Meyer goes by to the village with the cart. Tell Jean to hide in it, and to slip out as it passes our door. We shall watch for him. Quick, now, and look as stupid as you can.'

The woman went off, and Loujanne pottered aimlessly about the cottage, railing against the Prussian invaders and prattling with the inconsequence of age about the glory of that Napoleon in whose memory he lived and moved and had his being.

'Watch, Héloise—watch!' he besought. 'My eyes are weak. What is it?'

His wife had made an exclamation of concern.

'Is it the cart—already?'

'No; it is Sergeant Bepler coming this way.'

'Name of God!' snapped the old man. 'If that fool of a Prussian is here when the cart comes, slip out and give warning.—Come in, come in!'

In strode a bulky Prussian—Sergeant Bepler—now in charge of the outpost stationed in the village.

'Good-evening, my valiant man of Austerlitz,' he said gravely. 'I am told that Faidherbe is trying to communicate with the French forces this side of Paris, and I have come to tell you that any villagers found aiding his messengers will be shot.'

Bepler was a strange man. He took the war with calm philosophy—willing to drink with a Frenchman in the amenities of to-day, and equally willing to shoot him without compunction in the need of to-morrow. Loujanne interested him immensely. He would listen for an hour while the fierce old fellow rattled on about the glory of the first Napoleon.

Loujanne lied readily. 'I know nothing of Faidherbe or his messengers. I only know that you Prussians are about us like locusts, eating us out of home.'

Planting his feet wide apart, Bepler looked down at the irascible Frenchman with tolerant amusement.

'And you still think France will win—eh?'

'Win? Win?' Loujanne laughed mirthlessly. He was already beginning to forget Jean in the anger that Bepler roused in him.

'Yes, Prussian, we shall win at last. It is not yet sixty years from the days of Napoleon, and in so short a time the ancient spirit cannot all have died. Yes, Prussian, we shall win at last! Gambetta goes through France like a flame of fire. Bourbaki is advancing along the Loire. By-and-by they will all be round about you—the brave men of the cities of the south, the gallant lads from every village of the north and west—all ready to strain and starve and die to rid France of the Prussian stain.'

A smile flickered over Bepler's face.

'What are you laughing at?' Loujanne cried passionately.

'I was thinking of Metz and of Sedan,' was the soft reply.

The old soldier writhed, and made answer in

tones choked with grief and anger. 'Yes, curse you! laugh, beer-swiller; laugh while you may. I have laughed also—in my time. I laughed at Jena, when our Napoleon routed the Prussian king, and in one splendid day took sixty standards, three hundred guns—yes, and twenty Prussian generals. Oh, it was superb! I hug the memory to my old heart. I dream about it in these sad days when I hear the tramp of Prussians along the roads of France. My eyes grow wet with tears—tears of shame for this dear France, and sorrow that I did not die knowing no more than Jena!'

'It was a splendid victory for you—a great defeat for us,' admitted Bepler.

Héloise tried to attract the old man's notice; but he, in his dotage, mindful only of the things of other days, paid no attention. His face softened a little and his eyes were full of memories.

'I can see it all again,' he said, his voice full of a thrill of exultation. 'A damp mist lying on the plain, hiding the Prussians, hiding even our French divisions from one another—Augerau on the right, Lannes in the centre, Soult on the left, where we wait for the dawn and battle. And the song of victory goes throbbing through our hearts as we wait the slow coming of the dawn; for he is with us—our great Napoleon, whose single word can send us crashing into the mouth of hell. Suddenly we feel a stirring of the breeze. The mist begins to clear, and, on the moment, Mollendorf comes charging down. It is hot work—hot work indeed, for they can fight, these men of Mollendorf's. Then we know that our centre is advancing. The tumult of the battle spreads all along the line. Stubbornly Lannes pushes forward, and the Prussians begin to yield. Then our splendid Murat dashes his brigades of cavalry upon them—crash! crash! crash! They break in confusion; they turn to escape; all is carnage and confusion—men, horses, wagons pell-mell upon the road to Weimar. What a rout! What a victory! Losing no moment, we follow in pursuit, crushing each fugitive division as it sprawls about the country. Mollendorf, Kalkreuth, Prince Eugene—we take them all like rats in a trap'——

'Excepting, of course, Blücher, the silent man of iron,' interpolated Bepler with another slow smile. 'You heard of him again, I think—*at Waterloo!*'

'Grin on, grin on!' shouted Loujanne, stamping with rage at this reference to his Emperor's defeat. 'I grinned too—at Austerlitz, when Napoleon crushed the Emperors of Germany and Prussia—crushed them as babes would be crushed in the hands of a giant.'

Then his voice took a gentler tone as he went on to tell of the incident which he had related a hundred times beside the cottage fires of that little village.

'And it was on that day, the second of December eighteen hundred and five, that I spoke with the Emperor—I, poor old Père Loujanne, useless now except to carry water from the well! I spoke with the Emperor, do you know that? It was over fifty years ago, when I was hardly more than a boy; but I have remembered, and his words will be with me until I die. I was keeping guard by a watch-fire, thinking of the chances of battle, and of Héloise far away in this village on the edge of the wood. Suddenly, in the dead of the night, I saw him coming towards me—him, the great Napoleon, the idol of the army, the god of France. My heart thrilled with joy at the sight of him, and I drew myself up, waiting for my Emperor. And he—the conqueror of Europe—he spoke to me there in the silence—to me, an unknown grenadier in Soult's division. I could scarcely answer him for the tears of pride and gratitude that came into my voice. I did not know what to say. I only knew that I would die for him—die slowly and with torture for my Emperor, who had broken the strength of kings, and yet did not disdain to talk with a poor charcoal-burner from the north. For an hour he slept by my watch-fire with my cloak about him, while I stood on guard near by. Then, just as he was going away, he laid his hand upon my arm, and, looking towards the enemy's lines, he said, "Comrade, I think you will always be proud to know you are a man of Austerlitz." It is of this that I am always thinking as I doze beside the fire. It is because of this that I sometimes groan when I remember that I shall not have a soldier's death, but must slowly rot and rot, like a palsied cur.'

With this last sentiment Bepler could sympathise entirely. 'Never mind, my valiant man of Austerlitz,' he said kindly. 'You did your share, and if the men of these days were like the men of Austerlitz I dare say we Prussians would have good cause to regret it. It is time I went. Don't forget my warning. We are on opposite sides, but I should not like to see a man who was with Napoleon come to harm.'

'Thank Heaven he has gone!' said Héloise, 'for Jacques Meyer's cart is coming down the road.'

'Name of a dog!' muttered Loujanne; 'I had almost forgotten. Tell me when to open,' he ordered, with his hand upon the latch.

For a little there was the silence of intense anxiety.

'Now!' whispered Héloise as the cart rattled by.

A man crept in through the half-opened door and straightened himself with a sigh of relief. He was young and vigorous, but pale with concern for the success of his errand.

Loujanne looked with disgust at his nephew's army cloak and regimental cap. 'Name of God!' he said scornfully; 'I wonder you didn't bring a brass band!'

'There was no time,' explained the soldier hurriedly.—'Aunt Héloise, give me something to drink.—Listen, uncle,' he went on, producing a paper from his tunic. 'I *must* get this through to-night. General Faidherbe sends me because I know the country. You remember that the Prussians under Goeben beat us back to Arras in December? The day before yesterday we met Goeben

again at Bapaume and worsted him. Faidherbe means now to push south towards Paris to join the relief forces raised by Gambetta. But the Prussians have been strengthened, and will block the road about St Quentin. If Faidherbe is beaten there, the war is over, the cause in the north is ruined. Reinforcements must be found—at *any* cost. The first thing is to get into the wood'——

He looked towards the old man for some helpful suggestion, and started wildly; for Loujanne, pale, and trembling with excitement, had his eyes fixed furtively upon the window.

'What is it?' Jean whispered hoarsely.

'A Prussian helmet,' was the low answer. 'No—for God's sake, no!' besought Loujanne, grippiug his nephew's hand as it stole towards his revolver. 'That will ruin all!'

'Draw the curtain,' suggested Jean, his features white and drawn with terror lest his mission should be defeated.

'Too late for that. We must talk on'—— whispered his uncle.

Héloise, swaying as if about to faint, supported herself by gripping the mantelpiece.

'I think he is gone,' she said faintly.

Old Loujanne, talking with forced naturalness, peeped through the window and pointed to the door, indicating that the spy was listening at the keyhole.

'I have a plan,' he murmured, smiling bravely. Then, more loudly, he went on. 'Jean, my boy, you must rest a while—for three hours at least. No one will come here to-night. You can sleep here by the fire. I have plenty of dry sticks in the hut in the wood yonder. Now, you just make a good meal, while I stir up a bit of a blaze. Then, later on, when it gets darker, you must slip into the wood.'

He listened intently for a moment. 'He's gone,' he added with a long sigh.

Jean smiled wanly, saying with despair, 'It's all up. They'll shoot us both!'

'Not yet,' snapped the old man grimly. 'He's gone to tell Bepler what he's heard. They won't expect you to move for three hours. You must go now.'

The young man laughed ironically and glanced out through the window.

'There are two Prussians watching the road. They will shoot me down before I go twenty yards'——

Loujanne silenced him with an impatient gesture. 'Héloise, get the lantern and the bill-hook.—Jean, listen! Every evening I go into the wood to get sticks from the hut. The Prussians have seen me go, evening after evening, and they have never stopped me. The dusk is thickening. It is almost dark. This time you must take my place. Because of the cold I always muffle my head and neck. That will help you. If you are careful they need not detect you. After what has been overheard they may interfere. We must risk it.'

As he spoke, Loujanne stripped off his long blue blouse, while Jean divested himself of his cloak and cap.

'What if they find you out?' asked Jean in hesitation.

'Name of God! I shall laugh in the teeth of Bepler, who has laughed too much.'

When the disguise was complete it was quite possible that, muffled about the head, carrying the lantern and the bill-hook, and imitating Loujanne's doddering slouch, Jean might pass in that dim light for the old man bound upon his evening errand.

'Don't hurry, whatever happens—unless they make straight for you. Once in the wood—run!'

Jean nodded and went off.

'Through the window—watch, Héloise!' cried Loujanne, his face working with anxiety. 'My eyes are feeble! I cannot see! I cannot see!'

It was a tense moment: within the cottage, only the quick breathing of the watchers; without, silence—and the balance wherein was poised the fate of the army of the north.

Suddenly, a sharp cry from Héloise.

'What is it, Héloise—what is it? I cannot see!'

'They are moving towards him—one, two, three—four black shadows!' panted Héloise.

'God in Heaven!' groaned the old man piteously. 'The army in the north is ruined. Oh France, France—my bleeding, wretched country!'

'Jean is not half-way yet. He has seen them. He goes more quickly,' said the woman, pushing the window open. 'They do not suspect. I hear them laughing. They will reach him. If only something diverted them for a few moments, he would do it'——

Suddenly Loujanne gave a hoarse cry, full of rage for France—a cry in which there beat the wild heart of that young grenadier who fought with Soult.

'He *will* do it!' he muttered between his teeth; and, laughing grimly in a strange abandonment, he snatched up the cloak and cap that Jean had left behind.

With a flash, Héloise had grasped his plan. She reeled against the wall, stretching her hands imploringly towards him.

'It must be so?' she whispered.

'It is for France!' he said with a quick glance of farewell. Then he opened the door and crept out stealthily.

'Halt!'

No answer.

A volley rent the silence; and Héloise, crouching against the wall, shrieked, and fell to babbling, incoherent prayer. Some one came staggering towards the door. It was Loujanne, all splashed with blood.

'He's through,' he said, and fell dead upon the threshold.

# THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### THE HEALEY WIRELESS TORPEDO.

THE Healey wireless torpedo is constructed on a different principle from other accepted methods. It follows the usual outward appearance of torpedoes in regard to its shape and size, but is entirely different in its system of control. It is the invention of two Australians, Messrs F. J. Healey and A. J. Roberts. First brought under the notice of the Federal Government of Australia in the year 1907, the invention was favourably reported upon by the experts, and the Government ordered Mr Healey to carry out a further series of demonstrations with it at the torpedo station in Adelaide, South Australia. These demonstrations took place under the direction of the Federal Government experts, who, after repeated trials, again reported most favourably on the invention. The Healey wireless torpedo is completely controlled by Hertzian waves, and was the first torpedo in the world to be so controlled. It can be directed with precision from any distance at a moving ship or other object. There are no wires or other impedimenta to connect the torpedo with the person operating it. The impulse is transmitted through the agency of electric waves travelling at the rate of four hundred thousand kilometres per second. These impulses are picked up by the torpedo immediately they are sent out from the coil by the operator, and can be used to control the various movements of the torpedo, in deflecting, sinking, or exploding it. The Healey wireless system is also non-interferable, and uses no aerial.

### THE AERIAL WIRELESS TORPEDO.

The Healey aerial wireless torpedo is a weapon also invented by Mr F. J. Healey, and is intended to serve practically the same purpose on land that the ordinary submarine torpedo serves on water. It comprises an envelope of approved shape containing gas, and of sufficient capacity to lift to any altitude desired the necessary motors to propel the envelope through the air, together with the electrical apparatus that controls the various attachments and the explosive charge. This practically completes the aerial wireless torpedo. It is directed, steered, and discharged by means of Hertzian waves, and was the first aerial wireless controlled torpedo ever constructed. Immediately the aerial wireless torpedo is released from its bearings for action all its movements are controlled by the operator by means of a coil, from any position on land or elsewhere. As the torpedo rises in the air, the operator, by means of the specially designed switch attached to his coil, sends out certain impulses, which are instantly picked up by the receiver on the aerial torpedo, and made to operate certain parts of the apparatus at the discretion of the operator. By this means the operator can successfully manœuvre his aerial torpedo over a city, building, or an army, and it can be discharged at will with disastrous results to an enemy. The Healey system is non-interferable; that is, it cannot be got in touch with by an enemy, and is also worked without an aerial.

### INCOME-TAX AVOIDANCE.

The author of the article under this title in our October issue writes: 'Several readers have drawn attention to the fact that one point was not stated with exact accuracy. It concerns dividends paid "free of tax." It was stated that if a shareholder receives a dividend of £30 per annum "free of tax," then if he is entitled to total exemption from tax by reason of his whole income not exceeding £160, he is entitled to apply for return of £1, 15s., being 1s. 2d. per £1 on £30. It is quite admitted that this is not strictly accurate. It is an understatement of the claim for return. The strict procedure is: Ascertain the amount of gross income which, after deducting tax, will leave £30, and then apply for return of the tax on that gross income. In terms of simple proportion, the problem is: If £1 is the gross income which yields net 18s. 10d.—that is, taking off 1s. 2d. per £1—what is the gross income which yields net £30? If this be worked out, the amount is £31, 17s. 2d. The tax on that at 1s. 2d. is £1, 17s. 2d; net income received by the shareholder, £30. So the claim should be for the return of £1, 17s. 2d. If the above prove too intricate or too troublesome, a rough-and-ready way is to take the net income, £30; the tax on that is £1, 15s.; add tax on the £1, 15s. itself, 2s. 0½d.; and if you claim back £1, 17s. 0½d. you won't lose much.'

### LARGE WATER-POWER SCHEME.

A large demand for power, in conjunction with costly and inferior fuel, practically assures the success of any easily developed water-power which may be available. These conditions are to be found in Bombay, where a company has been formed with a capital of one and a quarter millions sterling to generate electricity by water-power at the Western Ghats, and to transmit it to the city for driving a large number of textile mills. Two enormous reservoirs are to be constructed in the hills, where natural conditions facilitate the damming-up of large volumes of water at a low cost. From the outlets of these reservoirs steel pipes will be led down to the valley one thousand eight hundred feet below, where four turbines are to be installed, each capable of developing ten thousand horse-power; these turbines being among the largest in the world. A dynamo will be mounted on each turbine-shaft to generate electricity at eighty thousand volts. Electric current resembles water in that a small quantity at a high

pressure, which can be carried by a small pipe, will transmit the same power as a large volume at a low pressure involving a large pipe. Hence, when electricity has to be carried a long distance, it is far cheaper to transmit at a very high pressure, for which quite a small wire will serve. In this case the distance to Bombay is forty-three miles, and unless a high pressure were used the cost of the wires would be prohibitive. Before being supplied to the power-users, the pressure—or voltage, as it is called—will be reduced, as current at eighty thousand volts is far too dangerous to be distributed to the consumer. This operation is effected by means of an appliance called a transformer, which has no moving parts to get out of order; the current simply goes in at one end at a high pressure, and comes out at the other reduced to any voltage which may be safe and convenient. The rainfall where the reservoirs are situated averages one hundred and seventy-five inches a year, and is sufficient to keep three of the turbines running continuously at full power. Current is to be supplied for about a halfpenny per horse-power, and the promised demand is so great that the works will probably have to be increased to a capacity of fifty thousand horse-power in the near future.

### A TEA SUBSTITUTE.

An attempt is being made to place maté, the substitute for tea so universally used in South America, upon the European market, and especially in France. In Paraguay, in the Misiones district of Argentina, and in Paraná, Brazil, the preparation of the leaves of this species of holly is a staple industry; the export to various parts of South America from Paraná amounting in value to about one and a half millions sterling. The shrub grows wild in the forests, and thousands of labourers are employed in gathering the leaves, which are dried over fires made of woods giving forth aromatic fumes. The shrivelled leaves are ground to coarse powder, and sewn up into bags ready for the market. To infuse maté, boiling water is poured on the powdered leaves, and the liquor is sucked through a long silver or china tube. It has similar effects to tea on the human constitution, although some think it slightly less exhilarating. It gives Paraguayan soldiers, however, increased power of physical endurance; and the War Ministries of Germany and the United States have made experiments in its use. Cowboys often do a long day's work on a bowl of maté taken in the morning, coming in to a heavy meal in the evening. An analysis shows tannin, saccharine matter, salts, and caffeine in a slightly less proportion than tea. It has an agreeable aroma and a pleasant though somewhat bitter taste. A British resident in Buenos Ayres reports that the habit of taking maté there is rather in disrepute, owing perhaps to the practice of handing the tube by which the liquid is sucked into the mouth from one to another without washing it. But there is no necessity for adhering to this untidy and anti-hygienic mode of using the herb.

### ROUND THE WORLD IN THIRTY-SEVEN DAYS.

The early circumnavigators took years to sail round the world, and the story of Drake, Dampier, Anson, and Cook, in their adventurous voyages, is most thrilling. Lord Anson left with six ships and returned with one only, laden with half a million of Spanish treasure. He was three years and nine months in sailing round the world. A traveller from London to San Francisco won a wager by covering the distance in two hours and thirty-five minutes less than ten days; the trip being made by the *Mauretania* to New York, the Twentieth Century Limited to Chicago, and the Overland Limited to San Francisco. A passenger from Lima, Peru, in making a hurried trip in response to a call to London, left Lima the same day by steamer to Panamá, crossed by the Panamá Railroad, took passage in a steamer for New York, and caught the *Mauretania* for England. With a good Atlantic voyage this whole trip might be covered in nineteen days. When Jules Verne wrote his book *Around the World in Eighty Days*, there was a feeling that he was romancing as to the fact as well as in the fiction. Now, as Mr E. Reynolds-Ball tells us in *Travel and Exploration*, the circumnavigation can be done in thirty-seven days. Owing to the recent improvements in the Trans-Siberian Railway service, the journey between Vladivostock and Moscow has been accelerated twenty-four hours. By leaving London on a Monday the passenger would reach Yokohama on the second Monday after his departure, and by taking one of the fast steamers of the Canadian Pacific Line (which leave Yokohama on a Tuesday), Vancouver could be reached in twenty-six days from London, and if the steamer connects at New York, London could be reached in eleven days after leaving Vancouver. The P. & O. Company announce their intention to issue special tourist circular tickets to China and Japan from January next, *viâ* the Siberian Railway one way (either outward or homeward according to the passenger's choice). January to May, Mr Ball thinks, will be found the best season for this trip, so as to enable one to arrive in Japan in April, the season of the cherry-blossom.

### SUPERHEATED STEAM OVEN.

The early experimenter who tried to make water red-hot in a sealed-up gun-barrel showed a knowledge in advance of the times he lived in. It is quite possible to make water red-hot, but at an enormous pressure. The boiling-point of water varies with the pressure, and even in the imperfect vacuum to be found in the ordinary steam-engine condenser water will boil at about ninety degrees instead of two hundred and twelve degrees. Another interesting point is that when water is boiled in a closed vessel until steam is produced, the steam will always

remain at the same temperature as the water. Thus, if you take a sealed pipe, say, ten feet long, with an inch or two of water in the bottom of it, and plunge the end into a fire, the water will boil and give off steam. As the steam cannot escape, the pressure inside the pipe will increase, and the temperature will go up with the pressure; moreover, the whole pipe will show the same degree of heat, although only the bottom end is in the fire. These features are taken advantage of in the modern baker's oven, which is heated by a number of steel steam-pipes. These pipes, which are enormously thick and have solid ends, contain a small quantity of water, which is introduced before they are sealed up. The ends containing the water are placed in the furnace, whilst the remaining portions of the pipes pass through a firebrick wall into the oven. The temperature required for baking may be as high as six hundred degrees. To keep the oven at this heat the pipes must be considerably hotter, and the corresponding pressure sometimes reaches two thousand pounds to the square inch. These pipes gradually become thinner from rusting and the heat of the fire, and many persons have been injured by the bursting of old steam-pipes in bakers' ovens. The 'hotso' system of heating ovens has been invented to overcome this drawback by using superheated steam at a low pressure, one pound to the square inch being quite enough. Although it has been stated that temperature and pressure correspond, this rule only works one way; that is to say, you cannot cool the steam below the temperature corresponding to the pressure without affecting the water. But the steam can be made hotter to any extent, and this is done in the system above referred to. Steam is produced in a small boiler, and then passes through a number of pipes in a furnace, where it is superheated to one thousand degrees before being supplied to the pipes in the oven. After being used for baking, there is still sufficient heat in the steam for boiling or other heating purposes, which have the effect of condensing it to water again, when it is pumped back into the boiler to start on another round. The system is safe, economical, and clean, and may be applied with advantage to domestic cooking and heating.

### PRODUCTION OF RADIUM.

A recent reference was made in these pages to the production of radium from Cornish pitch-blende at the Trenwith mine, St Ives. At a demonstration of the various processes in connection with the extraction of radium at the Corporation's London factory at Limehouse, Sir William Ramsay exhibited five thousand milligrams of radium, containing 10 per cent. of pure radium bromide. At the market value of twenty pounds per milligram of pure radium bromide, the small amount exhibited would be worth about eleven thousand pounds. Sir William said its therapeutic uses were as yet quite imperfectly understood. It had, however, been demonstrated that rodent ulcer could be successfully treated, and highly encouraging results had been obtained by a well-known Paris physician in the treatment of cases of cancerous growth. From a popular point of view, perhaps the most interesting of the effects of radio-activity were to be found in the therapeutic uses of radio-active waters in the treatment of rheumatism and gout.

### ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE FOR RINGING LARGE BELLS.

A great deal of labour is expended in ringing bells to summon children to school, to call men to their work, and to give an alarm in case of fire or burglary. Small electric bells have been in use for many years, but it is only recently that electricity has been applied to the ringing of large bells for the purposes above mentioned. The mechanism in either case is operated by an electro-magnet which attracts iron in the same way as the familiar toy magnets, excepting that it may be made attractive or dead at will. An electro-magnet consists of a piece of soft iron round which is wound copper wire, the latter being covered with silk or cotton to prevent the electricity from passing between the turns. By these means the current is compelled to traverse all the turns consecutively from one end to the other. When the current is switched on the iron core becomes powerfully attractive, but may be made dead instantly by stopping the flow of electricity round the copper wire. An electric bell of the type in question has a clapper hung upon a spindle to which an iron tail-piece is attached. When the clapper is at rest this tail-piece is a short distance from the end of an electro-magnet. By pushing down a button, current is switched through the copper wire coil, the tail-piece being immediately attracted and pulled down to the magnet. This action pulls the clapper aside ready for a stroke, and the same movement works a contact-breaker which cuts off the current and deadens the electro-magnet, thus releasing the tail-piece and allowing the clapper to swing back and strike the bell. In most cases bells of this type have to be rung for a considerable time, perhaps for several minutes, and it would be irksome to keep on pressing the button for each stroke. To overcome this drawback the clapper is made to switch on the current again as it strikes the bell; hence it will keep on swinging backwards and forwards by making contact at one end of its travel and breaking it at the other. With this arrangement an ordinary lamp-switch is used, and when the bell is to be rung it is only necessary to turn on the switch for as long a time as the ringing is to continue. For larger bells, where heavy striking is needed, another electro-magnet is installed which pulls down the clapper on the striking swing, thus giving a harder blow. These devices are sufficient for the purposes already indicated; and, moreover, the switches for starting and stopping can be fixed anywhere. Thus in a factory the bell can be operated from the office, whilst a schoolmaster is enabled to summon his pupils without leaving his study. Then, again,

alarm-bells may be rung from bedrooms or other desirable positions, and it is quite practicable to ring one bell from a number of different places by fixing extra switches. For ringing single church bells a further device is added which will give any number of strokes a minute, from tolling upwards. The saving of labour and attendance by the use of these electrical bells is obvious, whilst the amount of electricity used is so insignificant that only a small, inexpensive battery is needed where electric current is not laid on from a public supply.

### PEAT AS FUEL.

Here is another to add to the many methods of turning peat into a useful fuel. Herr Franke, a German engineer, has succeeded in producing an excellent fuel, called 'franketts,' from the worst kinds of peat. The process is as follows. Any form of peat is mixed with about 10 per cent. of coke (which has been prepared previously by the destructive distillation of peat), and placed in a hydraulic-press. A fairly strong pressure is then applied, and the moisture from the peat runs out through small holes in the case containing the mixture. In a few minutes the pressure is taken off, and a compact, blackish-brown briquette is obtained. This contains from 10 to 12 per cent. of water, which is left in the briquette, as it increases the heating-power and durability of the fuel by giving rise to water-gas at a comparatively low temperature. If left exposed to the atmosphere the briquette would absorb more moisture. To prevent this, it is glazed by a dip in the distillation products obtained in the preparation of coke from peat. On the large scale it is found advantageous to give the peat a preliminary pressing in order to rid it of some of its moisture before the admixture of coke. It may be added that it is this mixing with 10 per cent. of coke which distinguishes the process from all other attempts to extract the bulk of water from peat. Peat, if pressed strongly alone, will merely force its way through the holes intended for the water. The coke when intimately mixed with the peat seems to have the property of absorbing the moisture of the peat, only to give it up again when pressure is applied.

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MOTOR-CAR ACCIDENTS.

A correspondent in Berlin writes: 'Truly we live in an age of scientific explanation when even accidents may be explained away. Philosophers of the old school, culminating in Schopenhauer, wrote volumes to prove that an accident is nothing more than chance. It was the latter who used the famous illustration that if you happen to be going from your house at the moment a brick falls from the roof, from any cause other than intentional, and hits you on the head, it is chance, which in this case is an accident. Manifestly he did not live in the days of psychological research and motor-cars, when the vagaries of chance, together with other superstitions, have been reduced to a fine and exact scientific theory. In the old days of common-sense there were many maxims for avoiding accidents: the sailor would tell you to "keep your weather eye open," while the landsman would invariably advise you to "keep cool." A South German professor warns us that in these days it is necessary to add to cool observation some knowledge of dynamics. According to this investigator, motor-car accidents, presuming that the driver is a man of undoubted skill, are generally to be accounted for by the supposition that at the moment of danger the mind entirely loses its capacity for action. The writer proceeds to make this clear, taking for his standpoint the fundamental axiom of psychology—choice and reaction. By "reaction" is meant, in this instance, the consequence following any impression made upon the brain through the eye, the time required for such consequence being fixed at three-tenths of a second. By "choice" the psychologist designates the act of reflection which takes place in the mind in considering two or more signals before responding in action. Although this reflection is, under ordinary circumstances, an unconscious act, it nevertheless results in a longer or shorter delay of the reaction. When we reduce these two principles to practice and apply them to motor-car accidents, we find that on the approach of danger the driver has generally two courses open to him: either he must alter his course so as to steer clear of the danger, or he must put on the brake. He must be in a position of readiness, and have the capacity of deciding between these alternatives, at the moment of the appearance of the obstacle. In the most favourable cases five-tenths of a second elapse from the time of the reception of the idea until the consequent action takes place. Assuming that the vehicle has a speed of sixty kilometres an hour, it must in half a second cover a stretch of eight metres. Consequently it is clear that for an automobilist to be in a position to avoid any obstacle on the road, he must notice it at a distance of at least eight metres. To this must be added the fact that the steering-gear and the brakes do not act immediately, some time being lost before the muscles respond to the will and the mechanism responds to the muscles. Therefore, in order to avoid a narrow obstacle, such as a tree, it must be observed at a distance of, at the very least, ten metres—the broader the object to be avoided the greater the distance must naturally be. Under ten metres no presence of mind on the part of the driver, nor dependence on the steering-gear or brake, can prevent a collision. There are, at the same time, a number of additional circumstances which help greatly to increase the danger. For instance, the given speed of sixty kilometres an hour is often exceeded in ordinary driving, whereas in racing it may increase to one hundred and twenty kilometres an hour, as was the case with the unfortunate car during the recent Prince Heinrich tour through Germany. In such an instance the time and distance of observation necessary for avoiding a collision must be more than doubled. Then, too, it must be borne

in mind that these computations apply only to persons whose mental faculties are perfectly clear and not weakened by over-exertion or by the use of alcoholic stimulants. In conclusion, the professor says that the danger of driving at more than eighty kilometres an hour increases in such a way that even the strongest nerves, and the greatest care on the part of the driver of the most perfect of motor-cars, cannot always ensure certainty from accidents.'

### GAS-DRIVEN CARGO-VESSEL.

There is every reason to suppose that the steam-engine for the propulsion of ships will gradually die out as the difficulties in connection with large oil-engines and gas-engines for this purpose are overcome. Progress in this direction is shown by the gas-driven cargo-ship now being constructed at South Shields. This vessel will be propelled by a six-cylinder gas-engine, for which gas will be made on board by producing-apparatus of the usual type to be met with ashore, excepting for certain alterations to suit rolling and pitching. Gas-engines and producers have already been described in these columns, hence no further explanation of this feature need be given; but the advantages of gas for ship propulsion are worthy of mention. Amongst these, perhaps the most important is the saving in space and weight both as regards the machinery and the size of the coal-bunkers. This saving enables much more cargo to be carried by a vessel propelled by a gas-engine than can be carried in a steamship of similar dimensions; consequently the earning-power of the vessel is increased without any addition to the expenses. In fact, the expenses are actually reduced by the lessened number of stokers and coal-trimmers required. Then, again, the amount of coal burnt is less, and the cost of labour and supervision when getting up steam is almost done away with. In a large vessel a chief engineer will often demand thirty-six hours for raising steam, whereas gas machinery would be ready in an hour. An interesting feature of the vessel above mentioned is the hydraulic change-speed and reversing gear between the gas-engine and the propeller. One great drawback to a gas-engine or an oil-engine is that you cannot easily reverse it or reduce the speed below certain limits. This difficulty has been overcome by Dr Föttinger of Stettin, by means of whose invention any number of revolutions a minute in either direction can be given to the propeller whilst the gas-engine is running full speed ahead. This gear is a combination of water-turbine and what is known as a turbine-pump. When water at a high pressure is forced through a turbine, the latter will run round and be capable of driving machinery. In a turbine-pump these conditions are reversed; the turbine is driven by an engine or other means, and forces the water backwards at a similar pressure. Now, if the turbine-pump is driven by a gas-engine, and the water pumped by it is forced through a turbine on the propeller shaft, we have a hydraulic driving-gear. Dr Föttinger's gear consists of a combined pump and turbine in which the same water goes round and round from one to the other, whilst speed-control and reversing are effected by one lever which operates suitable valves.

*To Correspondents* who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

### A DESIRE.

One summer day, when winter blows
Its chilling winds across the hill,
I oft desire;
And for the rest I'd tread the snows
Content, or sit at even still
Beside the fire.

One flower of June at Christmastide
Would breathe a scent so sweet and warm
For just a while;
When all the rest their beauty hide,
This little stranger's fragrant form
Would win a smile.

One cherished thought when years have gone,
And Time is calling me away
I know not where,
Within my heart to dream upon
Would be to me the summer day—
The rose so fair.

H. W. Cornelius.

### *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.
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*EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER.*

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CHRISTMAS 1910.

# THE DISCOVERY OF FELIX FABIENE.

BY MARION BOWER,

AUTHOR OF 'THE DUEL,' &c.

Just this or that poor impulse,
Which for once had play unstifled,
Seems the sole work of a lifetime
That away the rest have trifled.

IT was a glorious evening in May when the Citoyen Felix Fabiene, captain of a company of Bleus, as the levies of the Committee of National Safety were called, set out from the old city of Tours to cleanse the Château d'Artogone. 'To cleanse' was the accepted phrase of the Sansculottes for burning a house before its owner's eyes, and for carrying off that owner and his family to the prison which was generally but a prelude to the guillotine. For this was in the days when France went mad with blood-thirstiness, when she mowed down her sons and her daughters, as a reaper mows down the poppies in the corn, in the name of Égalité, Liberté, Fraternité.

The sun was slanting its last full rays across the landscape, in the west the sky was a blaze of glory, the woods which stretch from the banks of the mighty Loire right into the country were a soft green, the plum-orchards were white with their blossoms, the almond-trees as pink with their blooms, as Fabiene and his men, with a motley band at their heels, come out from Tours to see the fun, reached the Château d'Artogone.

On three sides the forest almost surrounded the old house; on the fourth, in front a space had been cleared to give a view of the river; and the château, built of stone, finished off with pepper-pot towers, looked down on a length of formal garden. The Sansculottes marched up the garden, trampling down the flowers that grew so thickly in the borders, slashing at the box-hedges with swords, sticks, with anything that would mutilate or destroy. They made their way to the foot of the steps leading into the house itself. They saw that the great door stood widely open.

'*Peste!*' growled Papa Brun, who was by trade a tanner. 'It looks as if the birds have flown.'

'The pestilentials must have left something behind for honest folks,' a Bleu suggested.

'For me,' declared a fat man, with a face as red as the cap he wore—he was a thirsty soul—

'I'm for the cellars. There is more there to my liking than in slipping upon a polished floor or entangling your heels in silken curtains.'

A laugh greeted this speech.

'The duty of every good patriot'—— began Pierre Drouet.

'Is to eat and drink at the expense of a pestilent, *citoyen*,' chimed in Papa Brun.

'I agree with Papa,' another voice called out. Then a third echoed the same sentiment; and, acting on this suggestion, Bleus and followers alike all began to move round to the back of the house, where experience had taught them they might expect to find cellars filled with great casks of wine from the Côte-d'Or.

Two men only resisted the general impulse. One was Felix Fabiene, the other Pierre Drouet. They eyed each other; and Felix, being nominally at least in command, spoke first.

'*Citoyen*,' he said, 'will you enter the house with me?'

Drouet did not answer. Had he not been directly invited he would certainly have persisted in accompanying his captain; as it was, he hesitated. Two forces warred within this man—had always done so. On the one hand was a burning desire for place, for power; on the other was the craving for indulgence. While he hesitated he heard an uproarious burst of laughter. The patriots had come on the wine-cellar. Drouet shuffled; he sidled towards the path which led to the offices.

'Some one must be in command; our friends will get out of hand,' he muttered. 'Since you, Citoyen Fabiene, would inspect the château, I will go where my duty calls me.'

Fabiene watched the heavily built man with the large head set on a short neck disappear, and then, with a smile which betrayed his opinion of the Citizen Drouet's call to duty, he looked up at the house again. Apparently not a soul remained within the building. He was by no means surprised. Several of the aristocrats—'pestilentials' they were dubbed by those who harried them—had escaped into the forest, and had joined themselves to others in a like extremity. There had even been some fighting between them and the patriots. A price was invariably put on their heads, and more than one *citoyen* found the hunting of them a lucrative employment. But for the moment Felix Fabiene felt decidedly aggrieved. He had not marched all the way from Tours on a hot evening merely to set a house ablaze! He wanted to attract notice; he wanted to earn approval, the approval of the mob who ruled in the city; he wanted to become popular. He saw the career that was open to a man who was not too particular as to the means by which he climbed over the heads of his followers. The comet-like rise of such men as Robespierre, as Tallien, was but just beginning; but Felix was clever enough to perceive the possibility of something of the kind. To hasten his own ascent he had calculated upon attracting attention by marching a captive back to Tours—the Marquis d'Artogone or the marquise, his wife.

Felix Fabiene made his way into the dim, shadowy hall of the château. There he pulled up and looked around him. The room remained just as it must have been when its owners lived their daily life in it. With an involuntary turn of memory, Fabiene's mind went back to the dimness, the coolness, of the old seminary in Tours. As the clever son of Baptiste Fabiene, who sold the celebrated *conserve des pruneaux* at the sign of the 'Golden Plum' in the Rue Anne de Bretagne in the old town, Felix had been destined to the priesthood, and sent to the archbishop's seminary. He had ability and to spare; but it only required a very short stay to show him that he had no vocation for the ecclesiastical life. He turned his back equally on the cassock and the shop of the 'Golden Plum.' He led a wandering existence, doing little, making less; and then began the upheaval of the Revolution.

That seemed to Felix Fabiene to be his chance. He hurried back to Tours. No patriot was more ardent in his language, more energetic in hunting down a pestilent. He had but one formidable rival, and that rival was Pierre Drouet, who, like himself, had been at the seminary, but who, renouncing the priesthood, had remained in his native town, and had risen to be president of the local 'club' before Felix returned. Each man instinctively knew that it would profit him if the other were out of the way; each of them up to the present had concealed his knowledge.

Now Pierre Drouet had fallen before the wine-cask, and he, Felix Fabiene, with all his wits about him, was standing in the old château, wondering how his self-control might be turned to profit. He glanced about him, moved to the right, to the left, then stopped again. He saw—but a bit of woman's work, a garment apparently for a little child, with the needle sticking in it; and, not far from it, half-finished, cast aside as if it had been discarded for something of greater importance, one of those portraits on silk fashionable in that day. The dress and the accessories were being worked in fine stitchery, but the face—it was the mode of the moment—was painted in colour and with sufficient care to give some notion of the loveliness of the original.

'*Nom de nom!*' began Fabiene, and then the oath—an oath of a good patriot—died on his lips, and he looked again. 'What a face, even if it be that of an aristocrat!' he owned reluctantly to himself. He put down the frame, and saw that his thumb had left a smudge on the white background. With another turn of his mind that he did not understand—that he did not want to

[*Christmas Number.*

understand—he rubbed his hands hastily down his breeches.

The next instant he knew that the impulse in his mind was to leave that portrait where he found it, was to leave the château just as he found it, because that inanimate thing of silk and paint and woman's work was lying there within it.

He would, of course, have recovered from such an unaccountable wave of feeling; but as he walked a step nearer the staircase he heard the rustle of a dress. The sound—it was the *frou-frou* of silk—drove the man back to his customary point of view.

'Then all the rabbits have not left the hole,' he muttered. 'I hope this one will be worth the taking and worth the showing to our good friends in Tours.'

He thrust his hands into his pockets, planted his legs well apart. The picture was behind him, and he had forgotten it.

In a moment a woman appeared on the stairs. She was tall; she was slender. She came down step after step; she did not hurry, neither did she hesitate. Felix looked at her, and drew in his breath sharply. There before him was the original of the portrait, and the living face was infinitely more beautiful than the counterfeit one.

She reached the last step before he could make a movement, so overcome was he. She saw the man before her, swept him a curtsy.

'Monsieur '—— this woman began in a soft, low voice.

'*Citoyenne* '—— ground out Felix Fabiene.

The girl—she was quite young—raised her great eyes. 'Ah,' she observed, 'then you do belong to them?'

Fabiene hung his head. He might have been ashamed of himself, of those he represented. He whispered to himself that the eyes looking at him were bluer than those of the picture, that the gown being fashioned stitch by stitch in the little frame was just the same shade of gray as the one he was looking at; then he tried to recollect that he was Felix Fabiene, captain of the Bleus, with a future before him if he kept his head. He thrust out his chest, pushed back his cloak, and fingered the tri-coloured scarf which went round his waist.

'I am here,' he began defiantly, 'to arrest Henri d'Artogone, *ci-devant* marquis of that name, and Clarisse, his wife.'

'I am Madame d'Artogone,' the girl returned.

'Then '—— began Felix.

Madame d'Artogone stopped him with a gesture. It amazed him, but his mouth opened and shut, and he was silent. He looked across the little space to where this woman stood, her dark hair, with no powder in it, rippling about her brow, her mouth so tender and so serious, her lips so red and so soft, and he looked as a man does when his eyes seek a woman's face not because he wants them to rest there, but because he cannot help their doing so.

'*Citoyenne*'—— he began again.

'Monsieur,' returned Madame d'Artogone—and he knew that she purposely used the forbidden title—'I suppose you are come to burn the château and to carry me to prison. My husband thinks I am safe—for the present, that is—in the woods with some friends. We are in strength there, you know; we fought the Bleus a few days ago. But come,' she went on, with a change in her tone, 'and I will show you why I stayed here.' She turned about. There seemed to be no doubt in her mind that, since she had bidden him, the man she spoke to would follow.

Felix Fabiene reminded himself that he was a patriot, that it was his business to drag aristocrats after him, not to follow meekly when they beckoned. He thought of doing twenty things other than obeying, and then Madame d'Artogone looked back over her shoulder at him.

Something which again was not the will within him, but which was greater than that will, made him put his foot on the stairs. Madame d'Artogone let her gown trail behind her, and Felix was careful not to step on it lest he might soil it as his thumb had soiled the background of her picture.

And as he went warily, recollection which seemed purposely to mark all the contrasts and to draw his attention to them reminded him of another woman—she was a duchess—and how he had treated her dress—and her.

Madame d'Artogone came to the head of the stairs. She waited by a door, listened. She carefully turned the handle, held up a hand for the man behind her to tread softly, and entered. Felix followed. He knew that this must be madame's own room, and it gave him a thrill to enter thus, where she was especially at home, with her by his side.

The sun still flooded in; it glittered on the gilded ceiling; it shone on the polished floor; it showed the soft satin of the upholstery, the dainty appointments. Across the farthest window a curtain was drawn; in the shade there was a little bed.

Madame d'Artogone went towards it, bent over it. 'Look!' she said to Felix.

He went up, saw two children, who were apparently twins, sleeping side by side.

'These belong to you,' went on Madame d'Artogone. 'I have no children. I have often wept because my arms were empty, but now I know that I was spared, not afflicted. These are yours. They are the children of one Jean Crusot, and you know, monsieur—you must know—that he was what you call a patriot. When the Bleus pursued my husband and his friends, Crusot showed them the way into the woods. He fell. His body lay in the open a

night and a day. Your people fetched it in. But none of you thought of Jean Crusot's children. He had two, and no wife. She died when they were born. She was my foster-sister, and Jean was not a good husband. When the end was at hand she begged me to take charge of the babies. They lived here in the château until the times changed. Then Jean demanded them back, saying I had stolen them. He was rough to them, and they were not happy with him. His cottage was at the foot of the gardens—he was one of the gardeners—and I could hear them crying as I sat alone by my window. Then came the day when we knew—my husband and I—that we must leave this house or die. My husband reached the woods first, was sent farther into the forest. I lay concealed until the evening. In the darkness I passed Crusot's cottage, and I heard the children—they are very little—crying with hunger and cold. Monsieur'—and here the beautiful woman raised her eyes to the face looking into hers—'I could not leave those two little ones. I came back here with them. Sooner or later I knew that some of you would visit the château. You have come. Will you tell me your name?'

The patriot hesitated. 'Felix Fabiene,' he muttered with an effort.

Madame d'Artogone drew back a step. 'The man who is our most cruel enemy!' she whispered—'the man who burned the château of Hedaye, the château of'——

Felix stopped her. 'I am that man,' he confessed.

There was a pause. Madame d'Artogone looked from the patriot to the children and back again.

'Monsieur,' she began anew, 'these are yours—indeed they are yours. There are the rags they were wearing. It has made the time pass all yesterday, all to-day, while I waited for you to come, to make some of my own things—I shall not want any very long, I know that—small enough. You will take them, Petite Marie and Bonhomme Jean; and, monsieur, I pray you—indeed I pray you, they are but children—to be very kind to them.'

She paused, stood, waiting in her beauty, in her dignity, before the man who, she knew, had been guilty of horrible cruelty to others such as she. Felix looked at her. Aristocrat or not, a force within clamoured to him that she was a woman, a slender woman, a woman to be protected, a woman to be shielded, loved, saved.

Suddenly he cried out, cried out in spite of himself. 'By Heaven, madame,' he swore, 'you shall not die while I live!' He stepped back as he said that. He looked at himself in a mirror. To himself he was all at once a new man, a man whom he had not known before, and he wanted to make sure that his face even was the same.

Madame d'Artogone turned as she heard the cry. 'Monsieur,' she answered, a little tremble in her voice, 'I asked your protection for the little ones, and now you say I shall not die. I do not understand.'

She stopped. Felix Fabiene faced her, mute. There it all lay. She did not understand. Even he did not. He put up his hands before his eyes. What had become of Felix Fabiene, patriot, self-seeker, tyrant? Again out of the past memory returned to answer him. He heard again the Père Thomas, the old priest who lived so beautiful a life that even the scoffers were silent, speaking to him. He heard again the soft, old voice. 'My son,' said the wise old father close on twenty years ago, 'one day you will find yourself. There are some who have no better self to find, but you are not of them. Some day you will find yourself. I do not know who will hold up the glass that you may see—or what. But the day will come.'

Felix knew that the day had come, knew who had held up the glass. He stood silent, but his head no longer hung down, his eyes no longer blinked. He could face the day, the light. He could even face this woman who to him was beautiful as no other woman in all the world could be.

Then, breaking in on the flash of revelation, spoiling the peace, interposing the world and the pitifulness of it between him and his exultation, came a chorus of noisy voices chanting the '*Ça ira*.'

Felix knew that could mean but one thing. His troop must have drunk their fill, must be ready for other game.

'Madame,' he repeated—'madame, you shall not die. I swear that, if I can save you, you shall not die.'

Madame d'Artogone smiled back at him. She had deliberately chosen her lot, and she did not yet believe that there was any escape from it.

'Madame'—— he began again, and then he saw that which hurried him. A puff of smoke came up to the window. The band must have found some straw and set some on fire without. In another moment they would straggle through the open door, they would light more straw, this time within the house.

Fabiene hurried to the long casement, opened it. He stood on the balcony. Fronting him was the garden; below him, on the terrace, were the band whom he was supposed to command.

'*Citoyens*,' he cried out, 'what are you about to do?'

Pierre Drouet looked up. He had drunk enough to make him quarrelsome, to make him show his suspicions instead of hiding them, but not enough to incapacitate him.

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Before he could answer, Papa Brun raised his fat face.

'We are going to smoke out vermin, *citoyen*,' he answered. 'Come down quickly and help us, or we might mistake you for what we intend to catch in our trap.'

Another man pulled Papa back before he had well finished.

'What is a good patriot doing lingering in the house of a pestilential, *hein?*' this man inquired; and then, his legs failing him, he lurched aside, repeating his question as he sank to the ground.

Felix looked down at Drouet, addressed himself to Drouet. 'Comrade,' he cried—and so great was his extremity that he tried to propitiate his rival—'there are two children here.'

'Let them perish!' snarled Drouet.

'They are the children of a patriot—of Jean Crusot.'

'How do you know?'

'Come and see,' flashed forth Fabiene. He gave the invitation in his desperation. He could not say who had told him of the twins' identity. He called out the first thing that came into his mind to gain time. When he saw that Drouet asked nothing better than to obey, he turned quickly about.

'Madame,' he besought of the woman behind him, 'do you know of any place where you can hide?'

Clarisse looked at him, a question in her eyes.

'Madame,' he urged, 'in another moment it will be too late. Is there any place where you can hide?'

This time she believed in him.

'Help me,' she whispered back. She opened the communicating door which led into her *cabinet de toilette*. She went up to a long mirror fixed by the side of the fireplace. 'Put up your hand,' she directed to the man with the red cap of liberty on his head; 'pull the second cherub's head in the frame towards you. There is a door behind that mirror. It leads to a way down by the chimney.'

It took but a moment for Felix to swing back the mirror, for Madame d'Artogone to slip into the aperture. Felix closed the mirror again and hastened back into the room where the children were sleeping.

Drouet pushed open one door as Felix closed the other, and with Drouet came the half-dozen of the troop who had the best use of their legs. The men stamped into the room, lurched up to the bed; but Papa Brun pushed them aside.

'*Ventre gris!*' he swore—he had once had a child and had lost it—'this is a pretty pair. I'm for carrying these two back to Tours.'

The solution chanced to recommend itself to a comrade; some one else wished to be sure that the babies were patriots, not the children of 'vermin;' a third sagely remarked that whatever the mites happened to have been born, it would be all the same twenty years hence.

'When Papa Brun there has completed their education, *bien entendu?*' rounded off a fellow-tanner.

But Drouet saw what had escaped the others. 'These children have not been here alone,' he said; and he looked searchingly at Fabiene. 'They have been fed recently, put to bed recently. Who attended to them? Ay,' thrust in Pierre, '*nom de Liberté*, now who did attend to them?'

Felix drew himself up. 'I have seen no one,' he lied.

'Have you searched the house?' Drouet went on.

Desperately Felix tried to think what answer would serve him best. Suddenly he saw all the triumph, all the malevolence, on his rival's face. In another moment Drouet would denounce him; these men, all of them drunk more or less, would listen and be but too ready to believe, and it might well turn out that the captain who led the band forth from Tours would return its captive.

There was but one way then—to speak before Drouet spoke, to divert the band to something new.

'Search the house yourselves, comrades,' he cried loftily.

'And you,' asked Drouet slowly, significantly—'what will you do?'

'I will come with you,' declared Felix.

The notion chimed in with the whim of the band. They set off, going from room to room. It pleased them to make ribald comments in the little chapel, to lop off the heads of the statues in the state *salon*, to rip up the hangings of the great beds, to shatter the mirrors. They searched the house from the garrets to the cellars; they even lingered in madame's *cabinet de toilette*—there were so many things they could destroy there; but though they tapped a wall whenever any one thought of it, they did not find the door behind the mirror, and at length they all returned to the room where the twins slept.

Fabiene drew them up. Now it was his turn; now he was going to try what he could do.

'*Citoyens*'—— he began. He looked from man to man, and he saw that Drouet alone was still suspicious, dissatisfied. '*Citoyens*,' he repeated, 'I will carry out these two children, or any patriot who pleases shall carry them out; but there is one thing I will do myself. One thing I insist on doing. It has pleased you—or one of you,' with a direct look at Drouet—'to doubt me, to insinuate that I, an ardent friend of liberty, a servant of the people, was not fulfilling my duty. Therefore I claim the right to carry in myself the straw to fire the château, to set it alight myself; and since this room has heard the doubts which dishonour me, Felix

Fabiene, I claim the right to start the conflagration here, in this room, myself.'

The proposition was generally well received. Papa Brun bent over the bed.

'Who likes can strike the flint against the tinder,' he remarked; 'I 'm for this little *citoyenne*.' He raised the little girl. The child stirred in her sleep, cuddled nearer to the fat man; and, bent on murder, bent on violence, as he was, he pressed the little thing closer. '*Parbleu! la petite* owns me, comrades,' he said.

Another man—he was a Bleu—picked up Bonhomme Jean. 'The boy for me,' he declared.

Papa led the way; the band trooped down the stairs; those who had been too unsteady or too lazy to follow them raised a shout when they saw the children.

But by the entrance-door Drouet turned to Fabiene. 'What are you going to do, *citoyen?*' he asked.

'To fetch straw.'

'And you return with it—into that room?'

There was a pause. The band were in a merry mood. They had gathered round their comrades who held a child each, had joined hands, and were lurching, dancing round them. The two who were left together eyed each other. Felix saw that if he valued his future, that career which he had pictured to himself, even his head, he must draw back now. He understood that the moment had come when Drouet stood forth his rival, determined to crush him.

The excited ring—howling, legs in the air, falling, rising, swearing, vociferating—brushed past him.

The perception of all that his intended action entailed, the consequences practically bound to follow, flashed into his mind.

While the riot around him grew faster and more furious, he thought it all out, came to a decision, drew himself up. 'I go back, *citoyen*,' he said to Drouet; 'and I go back—alone. I am in command. I order you to stay down here.'

A flash lighted up Drouet's sullen eyes. 'And I, *citoyen*,' he retorted, 'since I am a good patriot who puts duty first, will post a guard round the house. I will make sure that when the house begins to burn no pestilent tries—is allowed to try—to creep out of it.'

Felix heard. He was caught after all, and he dared not say anything. To object to the sentinels would be to lose his last, his only remaining, chance of helping Madame d'Artogone.

'Very good, *citoyen*,' he said aloud. 'I commend your zeal. Take what men you think fit. Post them as you think well.'

He turned away. He had intended that Madame d'Artogone should steal out through the garden while he held the attention of the band in front.

Now some other plan must be found.

'Madame,' he said softly as he went down the terrace and took up a great sheaf of straw under either arm—'madame, you shall not die.'

He hastened into the house, up the stairs, hurried into the room, threw the straw on to the floor, hurried into the *cabinet de toilette*, and, going to the mirror, bent back the cherub. 'Madame!' he called—'madame!'

Clarisse came to him at once.

'Is there a way that leads outside down there?' he asked urgently.

The woman just looked once into his face. 'Yes,' she answered; 'down into the garden.'

'How far away do the woods begin?'

'Close to.'

'If you could get to the woods, do you know of any place where you could hide?'

'Yes, monsieur,' answered Madame d'Artogone.

Felix nodded.

He hastened back into the big room, threw open the window again.

Drouet was below. Drouet was looking up. 'Your straw takes long to light, *citoyen*,' he called up dryly.

'It will be ablaze in a moment,' Felix answered him.

He dragged the straw nearer to the window, lighted it. If the patriots saw the smoke he had one minute, two, possibly more. As he told himself that, he saw that Clarisse had come into the room to him.

'You would set me on fire yourself!' she gasped.

He pulled her back, pulled her into the *cabinet*, shut the communicating door. There, face to face, he knew at last exactly what he must do. Hitherto everything had been vague, left to chance, to circumstance; now there was deliberation, a plan formed, a design to be carried out.

Felix threw off his great Bleu cloak; he stripped off his tunic; he unwound his tricoloured scarf.

'Madame,' he urged, 'throw that cloak over you; put my cap on your head; wind my scarf around you. You must escape by the passage; and while you cross the garden, if any of the band were to see you in that disguise they would mistake you for one of themselves.'

For one instant Madame d'Artogone stood motionless. A great shout echoed in to them; twenty voices roared out the '*Ça ira*;' little wreaths of smoke were beginning to worm themselves through the joints of the door, through the keyhole.

'Madame,' went on Fabiene, 'you must go at once.'

'And you, monsieur?' Clarisse asked.

The man smiled very gently. 'It is all right with me,' he answered.

'You will be safe?' she asked.

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'Madame,' answered Felix, 'all will be well with me.'

He led her to the mirror. In a moment she would step within the aperture; in a moment he would close the door. In less time than he could think of it she would be gone, and he would never see her again. All life had begun for him and ended on this one summer afternoon. He did not grudge the price—he knew all that he must pay—it was the speed with which everything had begun and ended that seemed to him so hard.

Madame d'Artogone looked once more into his face. 'And you?' she urged again.

The man beside her bowed his head. 'I shall never see you again,' he answered, 'but I thank Heaven that my eyes have looked on you. I shall never hear your voice again, but I thank Heaven that you have spoken to me. Because I shall never again ask anything of you, madame, grant me this, my first, my last prayer. Let me hold your hand; let me know that you forgive me for what I have been, for what I have done.'

Clarisse heard, and heard so much more than the words. 'What are you doing for me?' she faltered. She held out her hand.

The little room was growing thick with smoke. Felix dropped on to one knee, ventured—his eyes asked permission—to kiss the fingers he held.

Then he rose. The smoke was still denser. He pushed Madame d'Artogone into the opening.

'God bless you, madame!' he cried, he who had blatantly denied both the Deity and His blessing. 'God keep you safe!'

'God guard you, monsieur!' Clarisse answered.

They stood an instant longer, looking into each other's eyes; then, with a sob, Clarisse turned about. Felix pushed the mirror back.

He had no time for regrets, no time even to long to see her again. There was more for him to do. He opened the first of the great presses. A woman's dress must be hanging up in it, such other garments as would help him. He found a long cloak; he threw that about him. He found a big hat, a thing of fantasy and feathers; he thrust that on his head. He found a veil; he tied that across his chin. He took one look at himself in the mirror, in the mirror with the cherubs on the frame.

His disguise was sufficient for his purpose. He opened the door of the next room. A volume of smoke rushed in on him. With it enveloping him, whirling about him, curling round him, half-blinded, half-choked, he made to the window, threw it open. It too looked on the front, looked on to the garden.

A shout greeted his appearance. One, two, a dozen cruel insults told him that his ruse had succeeded.

'Comrades, here is fine sport for you,' he heard a Bleu call out.

The news was passed on. The whole band had seen 'pestilents' walk up the steps of the guillotine as if they were going to a ball, until they were tired of it. Here was something new. They were about to see what smoke and what flame would do for stubborn courage.

Felix saw the group watching him grow larger and larger. Every man must have deserted his post to gather there. Even Drouet was below, looking on intently. He made sure Drouet was there.

He folded his arms, kept his place, kept it until the smoke was followed by flame. When the end—the end that he had chosen deliberately—was not far off, he smiled, smiled happily. The words of old Père Thomas came back to him. Felix Fabiene had indeed found himself and that which makes life worth living—and losing.

## SHIP O' DREAMS.

WHITE sails, beneath the sun,
For hope and love,
For Life's swift race begun,
And joy thereof.

Black sails, 'neath gray skies wan,
For hopes bereft,
For days and dreams forgone,
And nothing left.

Brown sails, the sun turns gold,
The dream-ship bears
For every day; its pleasures manifold,
Its work, its cares.

MARIA STEUART.

# THE GUIZARDS.

BY A. L. HOLLAND,

AUTHOR OF 'THE UNTOLD TALE,' &C.

## CHAPTER I.

Hogmanay! Trollallay!
Gi'e us o' your white bread, and nane o' your gray!
*The Guizards' Song.*

PATRICK looked down from the ladder on Anne, as she carefully made a join in the last garland. It was Hogmanay, and the big barn at Kildowie was nearly ready for the annual tenantry-dance which was always held on the last night of the year. The winter afternoon had closed in so very quickly that, in order to finish her work, Anne had stuck a row of candles primitively on the bench beside her, where they guttered wildly in the draught. She cut off an end of string. 'There, that's done,' she said, looking up.

The evening light centred on her face; the straight, short nose, the fine mouth, the very dark-blue eyes that were just a trifle too small. It shone, too, on her fair hair that looked more silvery than gold, it was so thickly frosted with gray. Anne Hepburn was not generally considered good-looking, but Patrick found himself wondering why she was not. He had never really considered the question before. We are apt to take the people we live with for granted, not to look at them critically.

The credit of the decorations was hers alone. The gardener was an old and irritable person, and his helpers only good for rough work. She had sat there for many hours that week making ropes and bunches of evergreens. Patrick had only arrived that morning in time to put them up.

'We're just ready in time,' he said, driving in a last nail. 'It *has* been a scuffle. I've hardly had time to speak to you.'

'If you have any exciting news,' she said with a smile, collecting her goods rapidly, 'it must still wait. I must fly. Later on I hope to hear the latest romance—if there is one.'

They both laughed.

She was the only confidante in that unimaginative household of Patrick's many romantic devotions. They were as enthralling as they were harmless. He had too much sense of humour not to laugh with her at the lugubrious truth that his affections were generally centred on persons whom it was impossible for him to get to know.

Mr Drummond of Kildowie and his wife had no family, and Patrick was his nephew, whom they had adopted from childhood. It had been a strange childhood that. Kildowie was a lonely old house in a wide Scottish strath. The district was thinly populated, they had few neighbours of their own standing, and the household consisted almost entirely of elderly people who lived a life of dull routine. Anne was young, but still so much older than Patrick that she was not a real companion.

Her father had been a far-off cousin of Mr Drummond's, whom that gentleman (having the Scottish virtue of standing by his kindred) in a weak moment appointed factor on the estate. Here he befriended one of whom he knew very little. It was disastrous. The man was a good-for-nothing. He drank, he muddled affairs, and died very suddenly, as befitted his mode of life. It was then found that considerable sums of money which had passed through his hands were missing. His wife had died when Anne was born in the little white house at Kildowie gates; and he left his seven-year-old daughter exactly as many pounds a year.

She had no nearer relations than the Drummonds, who forthwith sent her to school (a cheap school, for she was only a girl), and insisted that afterwards she must make Kildowie her home. Then, by degrees, she had slipped into the place of housekeeper and companion for a trifling dress allowance. But that was not all her recompense. She had that wonderful devotion to one's native place that makes patriots and heroes. In this case it made a willing slave. She clung to the land where she had been born, and to the long, grim, white house (that strangers compared to a street) which had once sheltered her forefathers. She loved every old landmark on the place, and the people because their race had served hers long ago. She was now forty years old, and had spent her life among them. In Patrick's case he escaped by degrees from that narrow life from the time he went to college. An old cousin, too, left him several hundreds a year; and now at twenty-five he was living in Edinburgh, reading for the law. The law he abhorred, but to be an advocate (in training at least) was a tradition of the house, and he had been as carefully brought up to all its traditions as if it had been a kingdom. The estate was small, but its name had figured in history, in a

modest way, and it had been in the hands of the race for centuries. It was Mr Drummond's idol.

He was a thin, scholarly old man, narrow and obstinate, whose days were divided between the betterment of the estate and needless anxiety about his health. He gave the latter reason for his stay-at-home life and plain way of living; but it was meanness and the love of 'laying field to field.' Yet when he had to do a thing for the credit of the family he could be quite lavish.

His wife never was, and encouraged him in all sorts of petty economies. She was a robust, masculine old lady, with an ungovernable temper, and none of the fine feelings which, as a well-born woman, she might have been expected to possess. She had, however, brought the thoughtful Mr Drummond a small estate in Strathtay, from which she came, and whose rolling accents she had never lost. She was a selfish and a hard task-mistress.

Patrick found himself thinking that afternoon with compassion of what a life Anne's was with these two old people. He owed them everything, and yet he could not look on them with affection. It was a thing unknown in that grim house. He had thought of her life casually, now and again, coming home from school or college or on a visit. One always returned to find Anne at her work, and went away leaving her there. He wished that he had come home sooner and done the decorations for her. He was inwardly contrite as he took her basket and they walked back quickly to the house.

The outbuildings of Kildowie enclosed three sides of a courtyard, the fourth being a low wall, with shrubs and fir-trees behind it. Against the wall, in one corner, was an old well overhung by the low-growing fir-branches, and beside it was an ancient stone bench. The house was quite near.

The evening of Hogmanay had set in with all the glittering rigours of a keen frost. The stone kerb of the well was smooth with ice, the ground was like iron, the firs stood black against the green fires that were dying in the west, and one or two great stars sparkled brilliantly. The great evergreens on the lawn drooped their leaves limply; the intense cold had withered them like a flame.

On reaching the door, the two found before it in the gathering dark a giggling band of children, evidently debating who should knock.

'What's this?' Patrick said. 'Oh, I forgot. The guizards, of course.'

They turned their blackened and masked faces towards him, and the boldest squeaked:

'Hogmanay! Trollallay!
Gi'e us o' your white bread, and nane o' your gray.'

Patrick turned impatiently to Anne. 'Oh,' he said, 'look here, we can't wait.'

'They will be so disappointed,' she said, 'and they've come early, knowing there's more chance of seeing us.—What can you sing us —eh?'

The band exchanged glances of alarm and shyness, and there was a general nudging and jostling. Then they struck up in lugubrious, nasal tones:

'There was a wee bit mousikie,
That lived in Gilberaty, O!
It couldna get a bite o' meat
For cheetie-poussie-cattie, O!

'It said unto the cheesikie,
"Oh fain would I be at ye, O!
If it werena for the cruel claws
O' cheetie-poussie-cattie, O!"'

'It's not a lengthy affair now,' Anne said, as the guizards scampered away with their reward. 'The old guizards were different; they had a regular play. These ones never heard of "Galatian," I suppose. It was thrilling.'

As she spoke they entered the house, and she hurried away. Patrick, who had to return to town next morning, went to his uncle's study to discuss estate affairs.

Dinner that night was early, and they did not linger over it. Anne, who had helped to attire Mrs Drummond, had still herself to dress. The old lady was decked in her best, her person liberally garnished with a memorial brooch, a cameo, and a multiplicity of hair-chains. On such occasions, when dressing, she was wont solemnly to produce and unlock her jewel-case, as she innocently styled it, and hold it out to Anne (as one might exhibit the Regalia), saying, 'Look, Anne! Patrick's wife will have *all these!*' Anne had often thought, with a suppressed smile, that it was enough to cast a gloom over the future of any woman.

Patrick loitered behind in the dining-room. He heard another band of guizards making an assault on the door. His mind was still dwelling upon Anne, and there rose in it the guizards' rhyme about the white bread and the gray. Poor soul! She ate the gray bread of life, and no one seemed to think that she might crave for any other.

Surely no one of their kin had ever had a more joyless existence. He looked at the portraits round him, and met the grave eyes of the ancestor they were so proud of—the Covenanter who had left wife and child and gone to the scaffold for his beliefs. He had never noticed before that Anne had his eyes. The Covenanter had renounced happiness; she had known but little surely, no luxuries, few pleasures. He thought with contrition of certain extravagant offerings of flowers which he had sent anonymously to the objects of past romances, and it struck him for the first

time that at no entertainment had Anne ever had a bouquet or flowers worthy of the name. His uncle had put down the hothouses twenty years ago. It was too late now. If he had thought, and telegraphed even at noon! He wondered what she would have said, and cursed his thoughtless selfishness.

Going upstairs and noiselessly opening a door at the end of a passage, he suddenly saw the object of his thoughts.

She stood with her back to him on the threshold of his aunt's room in the act of leaving it. Mrs Drummond was within, out of sight, but not out of hearing. It was a scene he knew of old. Anne had made some mistake or displeased her. In the few seconds that he hesitated there he heard Anne called a beggar, and saw her stand silent under a furious storm of anger—and insult; and he turned and hastened downstairs again, black rage in his heart.

He could do nothing but spare her the humiliation of seeing him there. Once before, long ago, he had interfered, and the end had been worse than the beginning. Anne had afterwards begged him—the stupid, clumsy boy—never to do it again. Mrs Drummond, Anne urged, did not mean the half of what she said in haste. It was far better not to mind.

In this light his omission of the flowers assumed almost tragic proportions. Supposing they had been awaiting her now. He felt, somehow, that he would have expiated many an act of selfish neglect by that gift; he believed (rightly or wrongly) that they never could have been given in a happier hour.

Ah, Hogmanay is surely the night of regrets, and he had many as he went out to the barn!

## CHAPTER II.

THE dance had been in progress for three hours. Mr Drummond always opened the ball with the chief tenant's wife or some such person, and walked through a reel or two afterwards. He was a good host. Only the members of the household knew how he spent such nights in a secret anguish about draughts. He had been known after a reel to retire to take his temperature.

Patrick had not had time to speak to Anne again. She had entered the barn late, busy of course to the last, and he had only managed to note, with great relief, that there were no traces of the past scene. The sight of her unhappy had made him so too; now his spirits lightened to look at her. She held her head high; there was a faint colour in her cheeks (perhaps due to haste); her dark-blue, near-sighted eyes shone as she greeted old acquaintances with her shrewd, bland, kindly smile. She wore a dress of a dim blue, suggesting moonlight. It was new and well cut, the result of a generous gift from Mr Drummond. She had never looked better; she was a variable person, and looked like the passing mood she was in. Patrick was suddenly proud of her. It was as if he had seen her for the first time.

He had his duties, as son of the house, to perform, and in those three hours he did them faithfully. To do one's allotted task like this had all at once begun to seem a splendid thing. He was laboriously kind and civil; he led out bashful, awkward maidens to dance, knowing well that it was an honour, but also a terrifying ordeal in their eyes. He took part in 'Patronella' with the smith's immensely stout wife, who (resolute woman) had come without her husband, and was in danger of having no dancing at all. Had the smith been there, she would, of course, have been assured of a partner, for the etiquette in these parts is strict. If you have a wife (and can dance), you must dance with her. If you do not dance, you must sit together. I have heard of a hostess, new to the ways of the strath, who asked such a husband, sitting out a dance, to take Mrs So-and-so to supper. This, after hesitation, he agreed to do; but his wife, rising majestically, accompanied the guilty pair.

The merriment was well begun now. There was always a terrible period at these gatherings, early in the night, when every one was (apparently) resolved not to dance, and sat round the room stricken with silence. It is, I suppose, the Scottish nature making a last struggle against the spirit of enjoyment. Anne had set about starting the entertainment with all the energy she had at command; but after all her work, and that evening's scene with the old lady, it was less than might have been supposed from her look. Thus, when the guests began to enter into the spirit of the dance, she felt, with a sudden slackening of the nerves, that she was very tired, and most of the evening was still before her. It was just then that Patrick, free of duty for the time, sought her out.

'The Flowers of Edinburgh' was at its height, the whole room nearly had stood up to dance, and the garlands overhead twisted and swayed with the whirl of it. The room was very hot; a fine dust filled the air. The tune, repeated and repeated, had become as strange as a word does if we say it over and over again. It was a tale that was told, sad and final—a statement of an irrevocable end.

Anne Hepburn had come to regard it thus. It had become a statement of her life, a weary thing told over and over, with unvarying repetition in store. The dancers were fated creatures who had to perform an allotted narrow round, and when it was over patiently

take their stand once more to perform it again. It was the dance of life that could not cease until the music did.

It was then that Patrick saw her, as she sat with folded hands, all the momentary gaiety of her entry gone, her face very pale, a desperate weariness and sadness in her blue eyes. She did not see him. Her unhappiness struck him like a blow. He stood there, overcome with it, and with an immense pity — and something more. It was as if all his thoughts of her had been suddenly summed up. Now he knew what they amounted to.

The next minute he stood beside her.

'It's awfully hot here,' he said. 'You look so tired; do come out for a minute.'

Once outside, 'Do they want me?' she asked. 'Is there anything to do?'

'So that is why you came?' he said reproachfully. 'No, everything is all right; and no wonder. Think how you have toiled!'

She smiled faintly. 'Do you know what the grieve's wife said to me just now?' she asked. 'She put a peppermint into my hand, and said, "I hope, Miss Anne, that ye're enjoying yoursel'!"'

'I call that adding insult to injury,' he said, laughing in spite of himself. 'We toil from a sense of duty, but to be told it is enjoyable is really too much. Have you had a dance? Would you care to? Anne, why shouldn't you too enjoy yourself?'

'My idea of enjoyment just now,' she said, 'would be a seat beside the well for a minute. The heat and the noise have given me rather a headache.'

The sad old tune had become very remote as she sat down, drawing her cloak round her.

'What would Cousin John say?' she asked.

Patrick gave a short, perfunctory laugh. He was battling just then with all the forces of Scottish reticence.

Anne leaned back against the wall, closing her eyes for a minute. It was very pleasant to be off duty, with some one who was kind and considerate, who had actually realised that she was tired.

As she sat there, in the dusk, under the fir-trees, she was in Patrick's eyes the sad captive princess awaiting a deliverer. The old well seemed to pour forth in a low voice the tale of her gentle perfections. Through the tree-stems there was visible a peep of distant field and valley, whitened and ethereal with frost and moonlight, like a magical future before them. Oh, if it really were so!

She opened her eyes. 'Here is the time for you to tell me all your news,' she said, 'and if you are embarked on a new romance.' She leaned forward, with a trace of amusement in her voice. 'I am sure you are,' she said.

It was now or never.

'Anne,' he said, 'you—you're quite right. But—oh, don't laugh—the others were nonsense, this serious. There is some one I am devoted to, that I would do anything for. I am going to beg her to marry me. It is you, Anne!'

In the silence that followed, the distant music came to an end. She sat in a sort of arrested attitude. Even in the obscurity he saw that. He thought she would never speak.

Then at last she said incredulously, 'I, Patrick?'

'Yes, you,' he cried with vehemence. 'Oh Anne, say you will marry me! If you only cared for me enough! I would do anything for you. If you only knew'—— He broke off, but I think in that moment she did know, and she could not speak.

'Oh! let me put an end to this life,' he pleaded. 'I cannot bear to see you unhappy. You shall never be unhappy again!' he cried, with the rashness of youth; and he seized and kissed her hands with headlong devotion.

But she rose, drawing them away. 'Oh,' she said piteously, 'that is it! You have made me unhappy; you—you want to be kind to every one. You're sorry for me. Patrick, I could not consent to it. It is impossible.'

'Why?' he demanded. 'There is only one real obstacle—if you don't care for me enough.'

But to that she made no answer. 'Only think,' she said, 'I am fifteen years older than you are. I am penniless. My father'—— She suddenly broke off, and then went on quickly in a lower voice, 'I—I believe that you see me for a time in this light. But how long will that last? Don't think me cruel or thankless—indeed, indeed I don't mean to be; but this is only another romance, and it must go no further. If I took you at your word we should both be wretched in the end.'

'And what are we now?' he urged impetuously. 'No! It would be happiness such as we have never known, if only we loved each other. That is the one essential; nothing else matters.'

Still she did not reply, and as he tremblingly awaited her answer, in the silence, there was heard a distant hammering on the front door, the faint strain of a song.

'Oh Anne!' he cried entreatingly, 'here is a poor guizard that asks the white bread, but would take the gray thankfully from your hands. I deserve no more; I cannot expect it. If you even cared for me a little! You would not send the guizards away to-night. Oh beloved, will you send me?'

'Oh, I ought to,' she cried—'I ought to! But—but—the white bread, it is yours, after all!' And she dropped upon the seat, and,

covering her face, was shaken with a storm of silent tears.

. . . . . .

Surely no guizards who were out in the wide strath enacted so engrossing a play as these two, or received so rich a reward. The blind one of whom they asked their dole gave it them with a lavish hand—happiness so intense that it was a pain. Their lives, although perhaps they had never fully realised it until then, had been starved of affection; but now they ate the white bread in the guizards' hour. It was a wonderful hour that, which began when Patrick kissed Anne under the fir-trees beside the well, and they told each other a thousand things in a breath.

He told her of the flowers, and how he had pursued himself with reproaches. He told her that she should have them yet, as soon as mortal man could get them; and she laughed at his contrition, with tears in her eyes. She said she wanted nothing more; and indeed I think she held these flowers then in her hand, and they were not such as grow in any garden. Patrick wondered afterwards at the reckless prodigality with which they had crammed so much into that brief space. It had to be brief. There were their guests to be thought of. As they returned to the barn Anne asked him to tell no one yet, and he willingly agreed. It was a wonderful thing to share a secret with her.

It was a secret that might very possibly have been read in their faces by some one but that they re-entered the room unnoticed. Most of the company were rising to take their places for a reel. As Patrick made way for Anne through the crowd at the door, and saw the partners hurrying to their places, a strange sensation came over him at the thought that he had a right to claim this dance. He had danced with her often before, but this was different. The old guizards (it crossed his mind whimsically) completed their play with a dance; it was only a guizard's part. And yet an incredible timidity seized him; he almost trembled to claim it. The people were nearly mustered now. Did he dare? He turned in the crush, and met her eyes with a look of doubtful entreaty.

She laughed, and answered him as if he had spoken. 'Yes, by all means,' she said.

That reel was the climax of the first wonderful hour that was now so very near a close. Anne was one of the best reel-dancers in the strath; she performed all these old-world things to admiration, with heart and soul; it was a thing born in her. She was a delight to look on.

The music quickened; the dancers threaded in and out like creatures pursued. It was impossible even to be an onlooker without being carried away inevitably by the excitement. The fiddlers' bows could scarcely be followed with the eye. The tune was 'The De'il among the Tailors,' or rather the suggestion of it; haste had reduced it to a mere outline. The movement was at its height when, without warning, the tune suddenly faltered, paused, and came to an end upon a long-drawn note.

The dancers, breathless, arrested in the midst of their steps, turned to see what had stopped the music. It was Mr Drummond, who stood beside the players, watch in hand.

Hogmanay was over.

## CHAPTER III.

MR DRUMMOND'S speech was very short, and every one knew it beforehand.

It was, he said, exactly one minute past twelve, and he had stopped the dance to wish them all a Happy New Year. He would be brief; he would not hinder their enjoyment; he only trusted that they might meet here often and happily again. Amid loud applause the players struck up 'Auld Langsyne.' As they did so, Mrs Drummond, catching sight of Anne, signalled to her peremptorily, and she obediently slipped away, no doubt to go on some useless errand. Alas, at the time-honoured verse Patrick had to clasp the hand of the smith's wife instead of hers! The last verse was scarcely ended when a weak, gabbling voice was heard. It was the oldest tenant (known as 'Havering Willie') embarking on his annual speech, to the impatience of the young people. It would be a weary task to tell at length how slowly and ramblingly old MacTavish wished the inmates of Kildowie a Happy New Year, and rehearsed the praises of their ancestors and themselves. 'I could pushion thon auld scunner o' a man!' the keeper's pretty daughter said to a friend. But at last he drew to a conclusion, ponderously hoping that soon—perhaps before the year was out—Mr Patrick might bring 'some beautifu', wealthy, and accoamplished young leddy to the old house as a bride.'

The music struck up again. The older people began to drift towards the supper-room, whither Mr Drummond led Mrs MacTavish in a courtly manner which terrified her beyond measure; and Patrick set about his duties, burning with suppressed anger. How insufferable these people were whenever they became personal! He had to endure, with civil smiles, banterings on the accursed subject of the heiress. Anne was nowhere to be seen. He hoped and trusted she had left the room before the end of the speech.

Without her the place was blank, the people violently distasteful. His happiness had already been tarnished with a coarse hand. He could not shake off the thoughts aroused by that unlucky speech. He could not now say what, exactly, had been the future he proposed for himself and Anne. He only knew that he had looked upon all possible obstacles from a great height, and considered them of no account. The old people must consent; if not, he had some money of his own.

But from that height, in the last quarter of an hour, he had come down, and now he was approaching those obstacles on foot. They must be negotiated in a few days or hours.

When his uncle had wished him a Happy New Year he returned the wish with a pang of conscience. He knew well that he was preparing no such thing for the old gentleman. Before this he had more than once had uneasy premonitions of his uncle's plans regarding a marriage, and had pushed them aside, as we do distasteful thoughts. But it seemed now that other people had the same idea. The old man, once bent on a thing, was immovably stubborn. He pictured the old lady's rage, her merciless attack on Anne (the thought of which made him writhe), her cutting, blasting derision of them both. He saw nothing for it but that they must leave Kildowie whenever it was known. In many respects that was an open door of freedom. But it meant a life of comparative poverty, and that he had never intended to offer Anne. He had spoken of making her happy; and, for him, she should probably never see Kildowie again—Kildowie, that she was devoted to. More than that—he knew her well—she would never cease secretly to reproach herself because he had given it up for her. He had never hated it more. He looked impatiently round him; these people whom they now fed and entertained would be the first to raise a coarse laugh at that most unlucky difference in years. What an opportunity for sarcasm and vulgar amusement! And it was a tragedy—a tragedy already to him—that he might outlive her. He turned sharply from that thought.

The wonderful hour assuredly had passed. He felt that nothing but the sight of Anne would exorcise these black thoughts. At last he was free and hurried in search of her.

He was crossing the courtyard towards the house, when some one in as great haste as himself, coming from there, emerged from the shadow of the fir-trees.

'Anne!' he cried joyfully.

'Oh Patrick!' she exclaimed, stretching out her hands, 'I have been wondering when I could see you alone.'

Her voice had a note of such urgent anxiety and distress that he was greatly startled. In a moment he stood beside her.

'Beloved,' he cried with alarm, 'what is it—what is is?' He drew her towards the well, and taking her hands in his, forgot all his own cares as he asked anxiously what could ail her so.

She looked from one side to the other, like a creature hedged in, that cannot bear to face something that is before it—a gesture of terrible weariness, he thought.

'Oh! I have been longing for a chance to speak to you,' she said. 'Patrick, ever since I left you I have been thinking.'

'Well?' he said. He felt disaster in the air, but dared not think what it might be.

'This—this compact of ours must be at an end,' she said.

'Anne!' he cried.

'It cannot go on,' she repeated. 'You must see, on reflection, that it is impossible.'

There was finality in her voice.

At this opposition he seemed to rise above all those obstacles once again.

'Anne!' he cried desperately—'dearest, you cannot mean it! Oh, why have you changed your mind?'

'I have not really changed it,' she answered sadly. 'Remember, I said the same at first, only—you persuaded me. Oh! I was only too willing to be persuaded. I knew, and yet I shut my eyes to things for a little while. But now I see. Oh, I am so thankful that no one knows! I cannot think how it could have ended. You were throwing away your inheritance—and your duty—for me.'

'And what if I were?' he broke out vehemently. 'What is Kildowie to me? A wretched obstacle to freedom, a family fetish! Oh, I could curse it!'

She raised her hand imploringly.

'Don't!' she besought. 'Some day you will think differently. You will see it as I do—an old friend who is always the same, a dumb creature whose claim on you can never be denied. To me it is a tremendons claim—it is duty and honour.' She paused for just an instant. 'We will speak no more of this,' she went on in a low voice. 'It is over and done with—this past night; we will not allow it to count for anything. Ah! you were right, we were guizards; and there is only one night allowed for them. It could not go on.'

He was dumb for the moment, struggling with all manner of thoughts and humiliations. What she said was so fatally true.

Then he cried her name with a hopeless entreaty. But she made no answer, and he realised, with a shock of remorse, that he (of all people) was torturing her. That ended it.

'Oh Anne!' he cried, 'I'll do it. I would do it for no one else. But to save you anything, to please you, my dearest, I shall never speak of this again.'

Dusk though it was under the firs, he saw her make a movement as if a load had been lifted from her.

'Oh, thank you! thank you!' she said very low. 'Oh, thank GOD!' and the next instant she was gone.

The old well, in the silence, seemed to laugh under its breath at these two guizards who had supposed their play could be continued. It told, too, in a low-voiced, steady, relentless catalogue of the countless things that we cannot do here with money, with youth—and even with love.

It was what they call 'the turn of the night,' and the night had changed. A mild thaw-wind had risen, and was now soughing in the tree-tops, shaking the crusted snow from them; and on the frozen ground below had begun a slow, intermittent drip-drip that might have been the sound of tears.

. . . . . .

When Patrick hurried downstairs at six o'clock the house was very dark and silent. Outside was only a drear, bluish obscurity, through which dim shapes of trees and bushes loomed. But down in the long, low-roofed dining-room last night's fire leaped cheerfully, and with the candlelight played on a scene that would have comforted the eyes of a stranger. Here was light and warmth, and a room waiting for some one, a table set, the glint of firelight on old silver, a steaming kettle—and Anne. As he opened the door and looked in upon her it was such a picture as caused him a cruel, veritable pain. Something cried out within him, torturedly, that there was yet time—last thoughts are best—he might yet persuade her to overturn all. What a selfish, cowardly voice that was, and how near he was to obeying it! He trembled afterwards to think of that. She looked round and bade him good-morning with a pale smile. Yes, she was very pale, but otherwise absolutely as usual.

'You're in plenty of time,' she said; 'you've half-an-hour.' She began to make the tea, and he, from force of habit, sat down. The grave Covenanter behind her looked sternly upon him. 'You have half-an-hour,' he seemed to say too; 'see you spend it bravely.'

It came to an end at last when wheels were heard grinding the gravel outside.

Anne did as she had always done. She went to the door, spoke to the coachman, stood on the worn, hollowed old doorstep, and waved good-bye. She watched them turn the corner of the road, and then, as she had so often done before, went back into the silent house to face the long day, as bravely as her ancestor had faced the crowd in the Grassmarket.

It was dim daylight now, and a steady drizzle was falling. The fields were a blotched expanse of melting snow, through which patches of sodden grass were beginning to reappear.

They were nearing the white house at Kildowie gates, and Patrick fixed his eyes upon it. It had a connection with her; there she had been born. It had once sheltered her. He could not——

'What did you say?' he asked the coachman.

'I'm saying the keeper's twa bairns will be waiting at the gate, sir,' the man said. 'They ha'e to gang to the station, and I thought if ye had nae objection we might gi'e them a lift.'

'Take them up, by all means,' Patrick said.

As he spoke they turned into the high-road, and there were the children, who saluted him with bashful grins. They were two of the guizards of last night. Another minute, and they had scrambled up behind, with titterings and whispers. As the dogcart clattered downhill there was even a hint of a song under their breaths.

'See and behave yoursel's now,' the coachman said admonishingly over his shoulder, and then to Patrick, 'Thae bairns gang fair daft ower Hogmanay. My wee lassie was out wi' thae twa, and she was for taking the road the night again. "But," says I, "ye canna do that. Na, na, there's a time for a'thing, as Solomon says, and there's but the ae night for guizards."'

'I suppose there is,' Patrick said dully.

As the dogcart crawled up the steep brae a silence fell upon him and his fellow-mummers, whose song was now quenched. And yet, I think, they still retasted their words, and walked lingeringly 'in a vain show.'

The brae was the last point from which there was a distant peep of the long white house, and Patrick turned to get it. But the strath was thick with morning mist; even that was taken from him. The curtain had fallen. The play was over. It surely behoved the guizards to be gone.

# LITTLE MOTHER LOU.

BY ALFRED COLBECK,

AUTHOR OF 'THE DYSERTH DIAMOND,' &C.

## CHAPTER I.

WHEN Lou returned from the office, where all through the day she had been fingering the keys of a typewriter, and saw another woman, a stranger not much older than herself, seated in her mother's chair, she stared incredulously. Why was she rocking herself so comfortably there, with her soft and pensive eyes upon the fire, divested, too, of bonnet and cape, and wearing a lace-trimmed apron over a dress of silvery gray, as if she were quite at home? No sooner had the question suggested itself than Lou's swift mind leapt upon the only possible answer. A sudden blush swept impetuously over Lou's astonished face, and at the same time and for the same reason she stood transfixed and with an almost death-like stillness upon the threshold.

The stranger turned and rose to greet her.

But, aware that Lou was there, having indeed been listening intently and with a slight trepidation for her footsteps, her father hurried forward, and unconsciously made a second mistake after a conscious and deliberate first. It would have been wiser, with that first mistake, conscious and deliberate, troubling him, to have left the woman and the girl to themselves; the woman to reveal the new relationship in her own hesitant fashion, the girl to receive the timid overture with a possibly sympathetic response which might have prevented the breach, and saved them both, and himself as well, from many a heartache.

'Lou,' said he, and his tone was hard and self-repressed, for he knew that he had blundered—he ought to have told her what he intended to do—'Lou, here is your mother. We were married to-day.'

The introduction was like a blow. Lou stiffened beneath it. She threw her head back, and her eyes flashed dangerously. 'My mother is dead,' she replied, and the final word rang out with the emphasis of reproach and condemnation. 'This woman is not my mother;' and in the new tone there was a touch of scorn. Then, to hide the tears that rushed unbidden to her eyes, she darted past them and ran upstairs to the seclusion of her own room.

'William,' asked his wife, grieved at this unhappy beginning of an acquaintance with the only other member of the household, 'didn't you tell her?'

'No,' said he, nettled at his daughter's discourtesy. 'Lou is impulsive, quick-tempered, unreasonable in her sensitiveness. She might have left me if I had told her. I thought it was better to say nothing, to overcome any objection she might have by the suddenness of the surprise.'

'It wasn't right, William. She will blame you, and me too. And I was hoping she would be a companion!'

'W-e-ll,' he answered evasively, 'perhaps it wasn't quite right—not quite. She's old enough to have been told, certainly; and it must have been rather too sudden a surprise to find you here without the least previous intimation. Y-e-s, I can see that. But don't you trouble about it, Helen. You'll win your companion yet. She'll come round quickly when she discovers what kind of woman you are, and soon accommodate herself to the inevitable.'

She did not come round quickly, nor did she try to accommodate herself at all. Therefore Helen troubled about it continually, and at last abandoned her nervous approaches and tentative efforts to explain and conciliate, and sadly allowed her embittered stepdaughter to go her own way.

Lou refused to call Helen 'mother.' She was 'Mrs Kenyon' only. Her father ventured once, in private, to remonstrate with his refractory daughter, but only once; after that short and stormy interview he submitted silently, and locked the skeleton away in the cupboard.

Lou's refractoriness exhibited itself in a relentlessly cold and completely uninterested demeanour. In that little family of three she swerved apart and kept apart. When, as at meal-times, she was forced to be with them, she pretended to be bored by their presence. She was not sullen or scornful or sarcastic; nor did she betray herself by any ebullitions of temper; she simply maintained a frozen reserve. There was a studied disapproval in her excessive politeness. Behind that icy barrier Mrs Kenyon could not penetrate; and her father, remembering the lurid outbreak of their solitary interview, never tried.

One morning, about a week after the marriage, Lou, who was always down early, examined the letters, as her custom was, in order to secure her own. Through the name and address of the last a pen had been drawn, and the new name and address substituted. A glance was

sufficient to read under the scrawling lines, 'Miss Helen Ross,' and the place of her recent abode in a village several miles away, and to reveal also that the envelope bore a stamp not unfamiliar to Lou—for at the office she had seen many like it—the stamp of one of the Australian colonies. She dropped the letter instantly as if it had stung her.

During breakfast, when Mrs Kenyon opened it, and drew forth and unfolded the closely written sheets, she gave a delighted exclamation and her face lit up with the sunniest smile.

'What is it, Helen?' asked her husband.

Before replying she glanced across the table at Lou. The smile vanished, and she said rather wearily, 'From David,' and passed a cheque to her husband which she had found within the sheets.

Mr Kenyon raised his eyebrows and whistled.

Lou continued her breakfast as if she were deaf and blind to what was happening before her. She seemed to have no interest in it. Her girlish curiosity was severely repressed. Mrs Kenyon, scarcely more than a girl herself, would have liked to share the happiness with her. But how could she? Lou's stony silence chilled her. The warmth was driven from her heart. Extremely sensitive, with nerves rubbed raw by the week's experiences, she feared to call Lou's attention to the cheque or to make any open reference to it, lest she should evoke, if that were possible, a still more callous indifference to all her affairs.

'My word, Helen, but this is good of him!' responded Mr Kenyon, prolonging his whistle, and turning upon his wife a pair of shining eyes.

But his wife was absorbed in the letter. She kept her head down, and gave him no reply, more to conceal her annoyance than to decipher the handwriting; for beneath her moistened eyes the crabbed lines melted one into another and presented an indefinable blur. He placed the cheque beside him, glanced at his daughter, drew his eyebrows together, and proceeded with his meal in moody silence.

Relief came with Lou's departure. They thought, both of them—he with anger, she with pain—that Lou was impossible, a piece of flint, stubborn and unyielding, out of which it was useless to expect a spark of sympathy; then, that they might address themselves unhampered to the letter and the cheque, they dismissed her from their minds.

In the street, however, hastening to her work, and with the two no longer before her, Lou mused about the missive. Curiosity surprised her in the open, and interest asserted itself in spite of her resolve to keep it under; and she wondered who David was, and why he was in Australia, and how much he had sent them; until, as she came to the door of the office, she frowned upon herself and reproached the heart that was traitor to her will.

Lou had no need to follow the occupation of a typist. Her father, before his second marriage, could have given her a moderate allowance, and he would have been better pleased to have dispensed with part of the outside domestic help and kept his daughter at home. Not that he was a wealthy man—far from it. His business, however, as a master-builder, with a few men under him, was fairly remunerative, mainly because he devoted to it the closest personal attention. He worked himself, keeping the men under his own eye, and stimulating them by an example which they were either obliged to follow or make room for others who would. Contracts of a small kind fell to him readily, for in his estimates he was able to allow for his own work, and to save the cost of a foreman. He was his own foreman, and a competent artisan as well.

Lou, in the independence of her spirit, wishing, as she said, to earn her own living, became a typist, and paid a proportion of her wages into the domestic funds. Perhaps it was the force of heredity expressing itself in this practical form. Like father, like daughter. He did not interfere with her wish; she might need to earn her own living some day if not now, and it would be well for her to have something 'in her fingers.' Lou never suspected that he was dissatisfied. It never dawned upon her that her absence made him lonely; that she was to blame for the discomfort occasioned by the carelessness of a rough working-housekeeper, whose place she might have more adequately filled; and, therefore, that the thought of a second marriage had sprung in part out of her own neglect. And now, in her wrong-headedness, she felt grateful that she had the office to flee to as a refuge from her home, and the correspondence of the firm to engage in to the exclusion from her mind of the woman who had suddenly usurped her mother's place.

A new piano was provided for Mrs Kenyon out of the cheque, and for her husband a neat writing-bureau, two articles which added materially to the comfortable furnishing of the home.

'What shall we do for Lou?' asked Mrs Kenyon.

'For Lou?' queried her husband in amazement; and then, decidedly, 'Nothing!'

'Yes, we must do something,' quietly persisted the wife. 'There is a fair balance left.'

'She doesn't deserve it.'

'Do we?' and there was a searching tone, notwithstanding its sadness, in the wife's inquiry.

'You will only provoke retaliation.'

'I cannot help that. Lou must share. She is one of us.'

'It would hurt you if she were to retaliate.'

'It would hurt me to leave her out.'

'I am sorry, Helen; but do as you please. The money is yours.'

And so one evening Lou walked into her

bedroom, and found upon her toilet-table a handsome dressing-case daintily fitted with requisites such as she had often desired but never thought to possess. On a slip of paper were the simple words, 'With love.—H. K.'

Her first generous impulse was to rush downstairs and kiss Mrs Kenyon; but unfortunately she paused, reflected, and smiled bitterly.

'No,' said she; 'it is an attempt to purchase my consent to their union. I will never do that—never; for that would be a slur upon the memory of my mother;' and viciously snapping the catch of the case, and so closing her eyes to the coveted treasures, she carried it out and placed it in the corridor.

More reserved than ever, and with eyes as cold as steel, she sat at the tea-table and completely ignored the furtive and anxious glances of Mrs Kenyon. Had she seen the present? Mrs Kenyon queried inwardly. Surely if she had she would have given some sign of it, and not confronted her like an automaton. It was almost impossible for Lou to have missed it; and yet, in her hurry, and in the dimness of the room, she might. For in her distress, in her yearning for Lou's sympathetic companionship, Mrs Kenyon clung to the shadow of a hope that the gift might pave the way to a perfect reconciliation.

The shadowy hope vanished, and the ugly reality of Lou's implacable condemnation revealed itself when she retired to her room. Her foot touched something hard; she half-stumbled over it; and on her stooping to discover what it was, her fingers encountered the dressing-case. With a stifled cry she picked it up, ran to her room, and shut the door. There, safe from intrusion, she fell upon her knees and prayed that God would soften the heart of her obdurate stepdaughter.

God did soften her heart, but not until many months had passed, and Mrs Kenyon had become accustomed to her stony words and stonier silence. She had brought her mind to it, accepted it as an unpleasant, but unalterable, condition of her married life, and begun to forget it, or almost to forget it, in the glow of an expectancy which promised to bring into her life an absorbing interest, perhaps to the exclusion of Lou, certainly to the relegation of Lou to a subordinate place.

The time came when, as she was returning from the office one evening, Lou's footsteps were again arrested upon the threshold. Once more she stood transfixed, and with an almost death-like stillness, not at what she saw, but at what she heard. The wailing cry of an infant fell upon her ears. Her heart leapt within her. Unsealed in a moment by that pathetic cry, the deep fountains of her slumbering motherhood were released, and surged upward in an irresistible flood. The poor defences she had constructed with such perverse and elaborate care were instantly overwhelmed. Bounding up the stairs, she burst into the room with a face so radiant as to surprise the mother and to secure an answering smile.

Lou bent and kissed her.

With mingled joy and pride, and eyes suffused with tears, the mother folded back the coverlet and disclosed the tiny form snugly ensconced within the crook of her arm. Lou bent again and brushed the babe's soft forehead with her lips; then, raising herself, she gazed upon it with a touch of awe. From the face of the babe she turned to the face of the mother. It was pale and wan, but the smile was still there, and the tears.

'Forgive me!' whispered Lou, with a choking sob, and in a tone deeply contrite; and, without waiting for a reply, she rushed out of the room.

## CHAPTER II.

LOU was conquered, or partially conquered; for, strange to say, while she treated Mrs Kenyon with a tender solicitude and lavished the wealth of her affection upon the child, she continued cool—not so cool as before, but still cool—toward her father. She had not quite forgiven him. He was satisfied with the change, and waited meekly in the hope that he also would be restored to his old place in her heart.

'What will you call him?' she asked of Mrs Kenyon a few days later when she was softly hushing the baby in her arms.

'David Ross,' was the reply.

'That is your brother's name, is it not—the one in Australia?'

'The only one. I have no other.'

'And no father or mother?'

'No; we are orphans; and until your father met me we were all in all to each other.'

'And now?'

'There are other claims, of course—*you*, and your father, and little David Ross.' Her eyes shone with the maternal love-light; and, in the pride of possession, she delicately touched the rounded cheek of her babe. 'But,' she continued, 'my brother is very dear to me still.'

'I am not forgotten,' thought Lou, turning away, and hiding her blushes against the face of the child. 'She mentioned me first, and, oh, I don't deserve it!' With an effort she resumed her equanimity, and said, 'When were you left fatherless and motherless?'

'Long years ago,' returned Mrs Kenyon, 'when David was only four and I seven, children both of us. A great-uncle, who resented and neglected the guardianship, pretended to rear us—a bare and shameful pretence, for he left us at first to the severe discipline of a

sour-faced, heartless woman who kept house for him, and afterwards sent us to indifferent boarding-schools, where, perforce, we had to stay. Holidays were denied us. We saw very little of each other until our school-days were ended. Then for a blissful period, but far too brief, we were together. He went out to Australia. I became a teacher. My great-uncle died, and the money went to the housekeeper.'

'Your money and your brother's?'

'His—the great-uncle's. Ours, if there were any, must have been expended upon our rearing and education, or included in his. And yet my father must have left a will. But we never saw it, nor heard a word about it. David was only sixteen when he went away, with his passage paid, a situation found for him, and twenty-five pounds to begin his new life with. A similar amount was paid to me, as the paper said, which was presented to me for signature, in fulfilment of all claims.'

'And you signed it?'

'Certainly. I was in need, and glad to get the money.'

'Did David sign?'

'No paper was presented to him.'

'No!' mused Lou aloud. 'It was sufficient perhaps to get him out of the way, to send him to the other side of the world. Besides, he was under age. Were you?'

'Mine was paid me on my twenty-first birthday.'

'That accounts for it. You were a woman. You say there must have been a will. Have you made no inquiries about it? It seems to me to have been rather a shady business. Has your brother made no inquiries about it—since he went out, I mean?'

'He was young, you see, and went out without suspicion. I do not think he has. And I haven't. My suspicion—faint, I must say, and perhaps without foundation—has never led me to inquire. Indeed, I have scarcely thought about it, and not at all since my marriage. I am only a woman, Lou, and my happiness is here.'

'But now you are a woman with a son,' protested Lou, 'bless him!' and she snuggled her cheek softly and lovingly against the child's. 'You *must* think about it, if not for your own sake and your brother's, then for his. We must not deprive him of his inheritance;' and she nodded sweetly at the sleeping child.

'Lou, you are taking it seriously!' Mrs Kenyon exclaimed.

'Why shouldn't I? Somebody must, for the sake of little David Ross.—Shouldn't they, darling?' whispering to the child, who, as if in answer, opened his eyes and smiled.

And there, for a long time, the matter rested. In the intervals of her office correspondence Lou thought about it, but gradually, through the intrusion of other events, it faded from her mind. The conversation was not renewed. The shadows of her childhood were willingly forgotten by Mrs Kenyon in the sunshine of her happier life. Now that Lou was won over, and the growing child with his winsome ways was a precious link between them—an unbreakable link, for Lou was like a second mother, and the child loved her—she was quite contented, and desired nothing better than the continuance of these peaceful days.

On her birthday, when the child was seven months old, Lou entered her bedroom, and there, upon the bed, open, and with a note upon it, was the once offending, but now welcome, dressing-case. Her refusal of it had not been mentioned. Lest the wound should be opened, which the child had healed, Mrs Kenyon had refrained from any reference to it, and Lou was too heartily ashamed of her graceless conduct to refer to it herself. Her cry of delight was subdued somewhat, and checked upon her lips, by the thought of her unworthiness as she pounced upon the note; and the tears came when she read: 'From little David Ross to little mother Lou.'

The method of its representation touched her deeply, and appealed with irresistible force to her sensitive nature. The sting was taken out of the offer. She could do no otherwise than accept it, and show (without the humiliating necessity of confessing it) how much she regretted her former refusal by the excess of her present gratitude.

She examined the contents carefully, taking each one into her fingers as if it were a sacred relic, and replacing it with a mingled sigh of regret and satisfaction. 'From little David Ross' she murmured, 'but purchased with the money of big David Ross, and proffered the second time as a peace-offering. Through little David Ross rather—not from, for *she* has given it; but it is none the less acceptable on that account. I love her, and him—the little David Ross, not the big one;' and she half-blushed and broke into trilling laughter. 'What a foolish girl I am! Why should that thought intrude itself? I don't know him. "To little mother Lou." So she shares with me her dearest. Yes, please God, I 'll be his little mother, and cherish him, and he shall love me—he shall—and that shall make amends.'

Mrs Kenyon lifted her eyes a trifle anxiously as Lou came into the room. But the anxiety fled and her eyes brightened when Lou stepped forward to the baby. He was lying in his mother's lap, kicking and crowing, and greeted Lou with outstretched arms and a gurgle of contentment. She snatched him up and pressed him to her bosom.

'Thank you! Thank you! Thank you, little David Ross!' and thrice she kissed him. 'It is a beautiful present.—And you too, dear;'

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and she kissed the mother, though she did not speak the word. It was difficult yet to use it, a little too early perhaps; but Mrs Kenyon was quite contented with the affectionate substitute, 'dear.'

'And I am the little mother, eh?' Lou went on, fondling the child, and pretending to question him. With an answering coo, he pulled at her dress and nestled his face against her. 'A fortunate baby you are, with mothers two, big and little—eh?' And Mrs Kenyon listened, and laughed, and watched them with radiant eyes.

The difficulty vanished with the growth of the child. When he said 'mother,' Lou said 'mother.' It came easily and naturally to her with his first essays at speech. The formal 'Mrs Kenyon' was quietly dropped. His 'mother' at first was almost inarticulate, an indistinct attempt; but Lou's 'mother' was definite enough. Dropping the initial labial, he managed Lou's name quite early, long before he tried to say 'mother,' and greeted Lou with a prolonged dove-like sound which she always listened for and loved to hear.

This happy time, the happiest in the life of Mrs Kenyon, continued for two years or more. Little David Ross overcame the difficulty of the initial labial, and now shouted 'Lou!' and sometimes 'Little mother!' For the name Mrs Kenyon had appropriately given her—and as it proved predictively, as with an unconscious premonition of what would be required of her—was retained, and used as a term of endearment not only by the child, who set the fashion, but by the father and mother. Lou's heart slowly softened toward her father. She could not hold out against him. Her love for the child and for the woman he had married forbade it. All her defences were gone; he was her father still, and the father of the boy, uniting them in a tender and prized relationship; and she began to respond affectionately to his 'little mother Lou.'

The affectionate response saved her from the bitterest of self-reproaches. She would have eaten out her heart with sorrow if she had not been reconciled to him before the fatal catastrophe. Suddenly, without warning, he was taken from them. He went out in the morning in the fullness of his health and strength. He was carried in at night crushed and lifeless. A chain had snapped at the works, and before he could clear it a heavy beam had dropped and pinned him to the ground. His back was broken, and most of his ribs. He was too severely injured to suffer much, or to speak even; and while his men were raising the beam to draw him from beneath it, and the doctor, hastily summoned, was yet on his way, he had breathed his last.

It was a stunning blow to the wife and daughter. The child was their comfort, more indeed to the daughter than to the wife, for the latter was in delicate health, and it seemed at first as if the structure of domestic happiness, patiently and to all appearances securely built about her since her marriage, had fallen all at once into hopeless ruin. She recovered somewhat after the funeral. Not entirely hopeless was the ruin. The structure still stood. The child was there, and Lou, if through the great rent the spirit of her husband had fled.

Languidly she entered upon the sad but necessary task of examining books and papers, and discussing ways and means. Lou's assistance was invaluable. The business had to go. Neither she nor Lou could manage it; and when the affairs were all smoothed out it was ascertained that there would be only a very bare living for the widow. Expenses were severely curtailed, and even then it was Lou's full earnings ungrudgingly placed in the common funds which helped them to retain their present home.

The child was too young to realise his loss, or to do more than vaguely wonder at the sorrowful faces and subdued demeanour of the two women; and three months after the catastrophe a surprising event occurred, creating a new interest for him—an interest, too, of ever-increasing delight. The image of his father, naturally faint, was first obscured and then forgotten in the mysterious arrival of a tiny stranger. He stared at her in amazement, and his amazement was increased by her cries, the stretching of her arms, and the puckering of her face. And when he realised that she belonged to him, that she was his sister, and would stay and grow and play with him, he was quite demonstrative in his affection; and more than once she had to be rescued from his too vigorous embraces.

The coming of the second babe was an event of importance to Lou also, healing her sorrow and linking her yet more closely to the woman she had learned to love. Very frail was Helen, only the shadow of what she had been four short years before, when Lou was startled, shocked, indignant to see Helen in her mother's chair. How glad she would have been now to carry her to that same chair and place her in it, and arrange the cushions about her, and watch her gathering strength as she rocked herself to and fro! But, alas! it was not to be; her strength was waning. The sudden death of her husband, sensitive as she was when it happened, open to an attack so dire, had struck deeply, and remained quivering like a dart in the heart-wound it had made; and with the birth of the second babe her resources were gone. She lingered, but to Lou's dismay she did not rally.

'What shall we call her?' she asked feebly one day.

'Helen, dear, after you,' replied Lou.

'Would you like it?' and she smiled.

'If you would,' returned Lou doubtfully.

'I had thought of another name;' and her smile became sweeter.

'Any name you like,' said Lou, wishing above everything else to please her; then, because she was silent, and evidently waiting for a further question, 'What name?'

'Elizabeth.'

'Would you really like it?' asked Lou after a pause, during which her eyes glistened, and she had to swallow a sob that rose involuntarily and threatened to choke her.

'Better than any other. I think *he* would, had he been spared to see her; and you, Lou—wouldn't you?'

'I should, dear,' she whispered; 'but you are too good to me.'

'Nay, she is yours, Lou; and you will have to be a little mother to her as well as to David Ross—to both, Lou, to both, for they are both yours. I shall have to leave them.'

'Leave them!' pleaded Lou. 'And me too! Don't say so. You will recover. I will nurse you.'

'I cannot recover, Lou,' said Helen in tones so calm, so sure, so resigned that Lou made no reply, but simply bowed her head in tearful submission. 'It is settled, then, Lou,' she went on quietly. 'Her name is Elizabeth.'

It was Lou's own mother's name; and, unable to speak, Lou silently assented.

Quietly, in sleep, a few days later, the end came. Lou bravely faced the difficult situation. The children, one a helpless babe, the other still dependent, deprived of their mother's care, must find a mother in her. Really, and not in any pet sense or as a mere matter of affectionate sentiment, she must be to these children 'little mother Lou,' the only mother, probably, they would ever remember.

Her employers, reluctant to part with so good a servant, suggested, when she asked to be released immediately from her engagement, that she should place the children out with some competent nurse, or—and as generous subscribers they promised to use their influence in this direction—secure the admission of the children into some suitable Home. But Lou would not hear of it. The children had been left to her as a sacred charge. She must take up the task and fulfil it as best she could, resigning her position as typewriting correspondent that she might devote her time to them.

She was too proud, too independent, to tell them of the sacrifice it involved. The loss of her wages would sadly cripple her; but this she was prepared for, and more. For, with a seriously diminished income, only the remnant realised from her father's business and the little he had saved, she must sell most of the furniture, including the piano purchased with the cheque, and the bureau, and the dressing-case, and remove to a smaller dwelling. Lou, with her practical mind and her rapid reckoning, soon saw that useless expenditure must be ruthlessly cut off and the severest economy exercised if they were to live at all. For her own comfort she cared not, so long as the children were happy. As a loyal little mother she gave herself wholly to them.

## CHAPTER III.

DAVID ROSS was an indifferent and dilatory correspondent. His sister had written to him about her husband's death, and he had sent her a letter of sympathy, the only letter she had received from him since the one which contained the cheque: and now that the sister was gone, Lou—ignorant of his address, only aware, indeed, that he was in Australia—searched diligently for the letters, but failed to find them. They must have been destroyed. And yet she felt that he ought to know he was sisterless, that she had followed her husband into the invisible, and left the baby Elizabeth behind, as well as David, his little namesake.

How could she communicate with him? In the intervals of her attendance upon the children, and as she lay sleepless in the long, silent nights listening to their gentle breathing, she dwelt upon it, puzzled about it, wondered how she could do it, and drew no nearer to the solution of the problem.

The expenses of the smaller house rapidly swallowed up Lou's restricted means. Inexperienced in these matters, she was often appalled at the evanishment of the needful. Toward the close of the quarter, with the rent falling due, and barely sufficient to meet it, she was reduced to the necessity of limiting her own supplies. Fortunately the children were in the milk-stage yet; a very small quantity sufficed for Elizabeth, but David was clamorous, and required bread with it; and to feed them she denied herself, and kept the modicum of the quarter's income to satisfy the rent-collector, a wooden-faced, emotionless man, who dropped the money into his chamois-leather wallet and made his entries in the rent-book with the impersonality and precision of a machine.

Lou began to realise the altered position, to anticipate the struggle it would mean as the children grew older; and she entered upon the second quarter's housekeeping with trepidation, and a resolve that, however hard it was and whatever the personal sacrifice, she would never exceed weekly the thirteenth part of what was due to her from the investment of her father's money.

The forethought required to lay out her weekly allowance to the best advantage, the endless little economies she had to devise, with

a fear ever lurking at the back of her mind that in time the cleverest forethought and the strictest economies would not suffice, quickened the desire within her to communicate with David Ross in Australia. She remembered, too, the conversation about the father's will, if there were a will, the dubious manner of David's despatch to the Antipodes, his sister's ready signature for the twenty-five pounds 'in settlement of all claims,' and the shame it was—supposing, of course, that a will had been made and there were money available—that the sister's children should be reared in poverty. She could remove into a smaller house still—yes, and into a cheaper and meaner neighbourhood; for her it mattered little, but it mattered much for the children; and for their sakes she shrank from it, and felt that David Ross would not desire it, and could prevent it, and perhaps by inquiry and negotiation, or, if it could not be avoided, by legal procedure, lift them out of their straitened circumstances, secure for them a suitable education, and set them in the way toward a comfortable future.

Should she advertise in the Australian papers? She had no money to spare on a venture like this, needing, probably, a repetition of weeks, and after all maybe failing in its purpose. She recalled the appearance of the envelope with the cheque in it, the envelope with the changed address which she had lifted so carelessly that morning and dropped as if it had stung her. The stamp it bore was a familiar one, a stamp she had often seen at the office, its distinctive device the emu of New South Wales. The letter might have been from Sydney, and certainly was from some part of the colony of which Sydney was the civic centre, the inlet and outlet of the stirring colonial life.

Sydney! She had typed and addressed many letters to a firm in Sydney. If she were to send a letter to David, ready stamped, and under cover to Messrs Dering, Elwood, & Company (Limited), with a note of explanation, perhaps the firm would so far befriend her as to institute inquiries, try to ascertain his whereabouts, and forward it. Should this be too much to expect—a trouble they would scarcely be warranted in taking for a mere correspondence clerk personally unknown to them, and only a girl at that—they would probably be courteous enough to return the letter. It was a bare chance, a very bare one, as Lou downheartedly acknowledged, sensitive beforehand that nothing might come of it; but she could think of no better plan, and she resolved, hoping against hope, to carry it into effect.

Her letter to David contained the news of the arrival of little Elizabeth and of his sister's death. At present, she told him, the children were in her care; and that he might know who she was—for Lou was doubtful whether in previous letters her name had been referred to—she explained the relationship in which she stood to them. They were not in any immediate need. Her father, however, and theirs, cut off suddenly as he was, and in the prime of life, had not been able to make that adequate provision for them which he doubtless intended to do if his life had been spared. A veiled hint (delicately worded, which, to satisfy herself, she wrote and corrected, and wrote again, and once more corrected, before finally transcribing it) concluded the letter—a hint that, through the mother, money might be due to the children ample enough, if properly expended, to provide for their expanding needs in the days to come.

Her covering letter was carefully worded. She mentioned her late employment through which she had become acquainted with the name of the firm; excused her presumption in addressing them, and committing to their charge her communication to David Ross, on the ground that she knew not how else to reach him; thanked them beforehand for forwarding it, if his name and address were in the colonial directories, or (if the postal authorities at Sydney recognised the name and could send it on) for placing it in their hands; and suggested, if it were any trouble to them to make these inquiries, that they would kindly accept her apologies, and return it without delay.

Lou posted her double letter, one within the other, launching it like a toy boat freighted with her fears upon the boundless ocean of untraceable events, and wondered whether it would arrive at its destined port, or be cast back again, rejected, upon the strand of her life's experiences, a toy still, too slender to serve any useful purpose. Six months she resolved to wait, and then, if the enclosure were not returned, to consider the episode ended.

Little more than a third of the six months had passed, and Lou was contriving to meet the second demand of the mechanical rent-collector, when a knock, late in the afternoon, summoned her to the door.

'Miss Kenyon?' inquired the visitor, a tall man, bearded, his features tanned to a reddish brown and shaded by the ample brim of an almost shapeless panama. His suit of serviceable tweed hung upon him rather loosely, and over the thick muscles of his right forearm was curved the crook of a strong, light cane. He smiled as he put the question.

'You are not'—— began Lou excitedly and with a slight tremor, which, unconsciously to herself, affected her voice.

'From Dering, Elwood's?' said he, finishing the query not as she intended. 'Yes. I am one of the firm. May I come in?'

'Please;' and Lou, disappointed, made way for him. He stepped inside, and she closed the door. There was a pathetic tone in her 'Please' which awakened a corresponding vibration in the visitor's heart. 'This way;' and she

led him into the small front room. 'Excuse me a moment;' and she left him that she might make sure the children were all right. Elizabeth was quietly sleeping and David immersed in his play. She drew a long breath, slipped off her apron, glanced in the mirror, put back a stray strand of brown hair, and returned to her visitor outwardly composed, but anxious nevertheless to hear what he had to say.

During her brief absence his inquisitive eyes had wandered round the room, and he had observed approvingly the spotless condition and the neat arrangement of its scanty contents. When she appeared again he greeted her with a ready smile.

'I have called to tell you that your communication has reached us, Miss Kenyon,' he began, fixing upon her orbs of a clear gray, wonderfully steady and penetrative.

'It is very good of you,' she replied. 'Were you able to forward the letter?'

'No—that is, I left almost immediately—the following morning, in fact; but the matter will be attended to. I am in England on business. I thought your mind would be more at ease if I dropped in to say that we shall be pleased to serve you. Should anything transpire I will call again and let you know. Your letter was important, of course?' said he, tentatively, as a feeler, but not inviting confidence unless she were free to give it.

'Very, to me, and others,' said Lou, frankly returning his steady gaze. 'Mr Ross is my mother's brother.'

'Ah! your uncle, then?' and his smile deepened.

'No;' and Lou blushed slightly. 'We are not related. His sister was my second mother. She died a few months ago.'

The smile vanished and his face became grave. His eyes, too, were dimmed by a suspicion of moisture, and he swept his hand swiftly across his face to hide them, and at the same time to cover an emotional twitch of the lips. Lou gazed at him more intently.

'And your father?' he asked in a low tone.

'He was killed at the works before Elizabeth was born;' and her vision suddenly clouded. She could scarcely see him.

'Elizabeth! Then there are children?'

'Two.'

'I am very sorry for you, Miss Kenyon.' A sympathetic silence relieved the tension, and enabled them both to recover their equanimity. 'I understand. Your letter contains this information? Have you ever seen him?'

'Whom?'

'Mr Ross.'

'Never. But he should know.'

'Certainly;' and the smile returned to the visitor's face, with the steady stare of his almost disconcerting gray eyes. A faint gleam of amusement in them disturbed Lou a little, and caused her a shade of annoyance. She drew in her breath sharply, and half-regretted her confidence. He felt it, and as she searched his face keenly the gleam died out, but the smile remained. 'I will not'—'detain you,' he was going to say, reaching for his panama, when he was interrupted.

A pair of tiny fists began to beat a tattoo upon the lower panels of the door. Then, in a childish treble, a voice exclaimed, 'Lou! little mother Lou! let me in! 'Lisbeth wants you. She's awake. Lou! little mother Lou! let me in!'

'Who is that?' asked the visitor, in affected surprise.

'David Ross,' answered Lou, rising and going to the door.

'Why, that is'——

'Yes,' Lou interposed, with a smile, 'little David Ross, the namesake of the man I have written to;' and, as if this were an introduction, the door being now open, he ran into the room.

Lou hurried out to see to Elizabeth.

'A member of the firm,' she mused when she was alone with the baby. 'Which? Dering? No; he is too young. Elwood? Perhaps. And yet how can he be Elwood? He isn't thirty. Without his beard he would be barely twenty-five. He must be one of the company. Why didn't he give me a card? Strange! Was it an intentional omission? I wonder now—I wonder'—— and her gravity departed, the musing became amusing, and she bent her head and kissed the baby.

Footsteps surprised her. She looked round, and there, framed in the doorway, was the big stranger conducted by little David Ross. Hand-in-hand they beamed upon her.

'He wants me to look at Elizabeth,' said the stranger in a tone of apology. 'May I?'

'If you wish,' returned Lou, and again there was a tremor in her voice.

'I wish very much,' said he, yielding to David's eager drag upon his fingers. Lou was in a low rocking-chair with the child in her lap. He towered above them, perfectly silent, gazing tenderly into the eyes of the child, whose eyes were likewise fixed upon him. Suddenly, with a swift, bright smile, Elizabeth raised her little arms and cooed at him. He stooped and lifted her, pressing her to his breast. A great sob shook his strong frame, and he hid his face against the body of the child.

Lou sprang up in alarm, and with wide and pitiful eyes watched him.

'Lou!' he cried, with his face still hidden—'little mother Lou, can you forgive me? I am David Ross.'

'I know,' she replied in a whisper.

'You know!' and he raised his face and looked at her incredulously.

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'A moment ago, when you lifted Elizabeth, it came to me as a certainty; but I was suspicious before.'

'When? How?'

'Faintly, from the beginning, and afterwards when we were talking about your sister, and again as you smiled so curiously at the assertion that I had never seen you. It grew, and grew, until I was certain.'

'I tried to conceal my identity, and adopted these blundering tactics'——

'Yes?'

'In my lamentable cautiousness to make sure of you, to find you out, to discover whether the children were well cared for and in capable hands.'

'And?'

'They are undoubtedly. I am ashamed of myself, and yet I am satisfied. Forgive me, Lou!'

'There is nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to forgive.'

Every day for a week or more he came, and his acquaintance with Lou ripened so rapidly that he seemed to have known her for a week of years. The children simply appropriated him. He belonged to them. He was their own. The rent-collector never appeared at the end of the second quarter. David secured the book, and waylaid him, discharging not only the quarter's claim, but the claim for the quarter's notice, which he gave forthwith, but secretly, and the human machine was as silent as the grave. For one long day, in the second week, David was absent in the country, on business, he said, and Lou missed him.

'I have saved a lawsuit by a compromise,' said he the morning after his return. 'The children will receive their mother's share.'

'And yours, David?'

'I can manage without it.'

'Is it fair?'

'It may not be. But a lawsuit would have kept me. And my share would have gone in expenses. And the wretched woman who has wronged us—not alone, but with the connivance of our dead and gone great-uncle—would have ended her days in the workhouse.'

'Where she deserved to end them,' said Lou severely.

'Perhaps. But, Lou, the lawsuit would have detained me. And I cannot stay. I must return.'

'When?' asked Lou, vainly endeavouring to still her throbbing heart.

'I cannot definitely say. The incoming mail will tell me.'

'The incoming mail,' thought Lou; and if she could she would have delayed it for weeks, for months, for ever. But Lou was powerless. Like an approaching fate, inexorable, crushing, careless, the day of delivery arrived, and David received his recall.

'I must take the children with me,' said he.

'Y-e-s,' she replied, with hesitant lips and a blanched face, after a long and painful pause.

'And the children's little mother as my wife. I cannot separate them.'

'For that reason you would wish to marry me,' returned Lou, with a suppressed and almost dangerous quietness, and in enforced level tones.

'Lou!' he shouted, his voice vibrant with passionate reproach. Then, controlling himself, he whispered, 'Yes, for that reason;' and, taking her face softly within his strong palms and gently pressing it back, he looked long and ardently into her eyes with an expression she could not mistake. 'And for this,' he added, as, with a kiss, he released her.

'David,' said she a month later, when they were ready for the voyage, 'you are really one of the firm?'

'Admitted, dear, the day your letter came—a happy coincidence, and the turning-point of my life.'

## WAITING.

DEEP in a vale of doubt and long despair,
My eyes I never lifted from the soil—
That soil where buried lay all hope so fair—
The hidden fount whose draught could end my toil.
'Here,' said I, 'can I make my sorrow brief,
Precious oblivion may be mine at least.'
Then through the purple twilight thrilled each leaf,
Whispered a still, small voice, 'Behold the East.'

My shadowed eyes slowly from earth were drawn,
And I beheld Thy Soul, aloft, alight,
With all the promise of a glorious dawn,
Poised on a pinnacle, resplendent, white,
In the perpetual radiance of the Throne,
Waiting, alert, in joyful constancy.
So to my daylong task, till that be done,
I turned in hushed and reverent ecstasy.

# IN THE HANDS OF CHANCE.

BY CHARLES EDWARDES.

## CHAPTER I.

Y story is concerned with events which happened less than two years ago—a time when I was in the habit of dining at Caccioti's restaurant in Morea Street, Soho, on days when I had had no breakfast worth mention, and did not contemplate the extravagance of a supper. Five courses for a shilling, all toothsome, if slight, stimulated the imagination and cajoled the stomach.

The company, moreover, was generally absorbing at the right hour, and sometimes a quarrel, with the glint of knives—not blunt table ones—increased the entertainment of both kinds. Anarchists and stray experimentalising gourmands met at Caccioti's, and eyed each other with expressions of scrutiny.

The Signora Caccioti—with a dark moustache—sat at the receipt of custom by the window, and divided her attention between her miscellaneous patrons and the policeman who paced Morea Street with an alert air which was doubtless the result of official instructions.

If there was unlawful noise in the place when the constable came in sight to the signora, she hissed '*Basta!*' sonorously, with, as a rule, a composing effect for the time. The two waiters, Massini and Barbera, were geniuses at the kind of work required of them. Barbera especially had pleased me from the first; he was small and very young, with the blue eyes of a saint. The fact that he was a Levantine of Smyrna, where saints do not abound, made his anomaly the more gratifying. But his '*Signori! signori! Messieurs! messieurs!*' or 'Gentlemen, please, order! The police comes!' was as soothing in times of trouble as oil on disturbed water. He could also call other languages to his tongue when necessary.

One day, when I had known the restaurant several months, a swarthy gentleman of about thirty-five entered Caccioti's in evening-dress. He brought with him a commonplace stare of amused contempt for the fly-blown place, and drank champagne with his dinner. He was there the next time, and the next; and in a fortnight or so I regarded him as an habitué on a footing of his own.

Barbera informed me at this stage that he was a millionaire with Bohemian tastes. 'You observe the diamonds in his shirt? They are real stones, from his own mine; so he tells me. The signora is enchanted with him. He is very nice, even to me.'

I had observed this, as well as the diamonds on his white chest, and his gradual accommodation to the local atmosphere. Once, when I left, he was playing dominoes in a very obliging way with a Spaniard from Barcelona, who, I understood, was a rich democratic nobleman and a student of bombs. Another while he left Caccioti's before me with a couple of gay young Oxonians in dazzling neckties, whose table adjoined his. They had made acquaintance rapidly, these three. Beyond question, the newcomer was a man of the world with enviable powers of adaptability.

All this was no affair of mine, apart from my imagination, which toyed considerably with Mr George Marron, as the distinguished individual's name was, by Barbera's report. I wrote two or three dramatic little stories about him, giving him the strong part in each; and bore him no grudge for his lack of interest in me, which he showed sufficiently on the one occasion when a nearly full house constrained me to his vicinity. He looked me over then for the first time at such close quarters, and found me wanting. It happened that I felt but little interest in myself that evening. Besides, I realised that I had taken liberties with his personality, and my temperament is naturally a self-conscious one. I was content, therefore, that he should sip his Burgundy and devote his keen eyes to the rest of the company. Nor did I resent Barbera's faint shrug of I know not what exact shade of pity for me when he perceived that I was not congenial to my opulent neighbour.

So much in preface.

. . . . . .

Mr Marron and his diamonds had graced Caccioti's and brought her most fulsome smiles of welcome and parting salutation to the signora's lips (and moustache) several times in my presence, when Mr Rudolph Wilkington and his daughter Delia appeared at the restaurant.

It was a disagreeable, raw evening in September, and things were quiet in Morea Street. Two of the signora's most argumentative and passionate clients had gone on a mission somewhere. A quartette of others (the same kidney) had their elbows on the table and their heads very near to each other in one corner. All told, we were scarcely a score. The signora's bosom had heaved a snoring sigh not

ten minutes previously when she had numbered us off on her blotting-pad with her forefinger. Mr Marron was the only guest of consequence; sitting at the far end of the room, with the freshest nosegay flanking his bottle, and his diamonds sparkling as usual when they caught the light. I had grown a little weary of his monotonous diamonds, his impressive presence otherwise notwithstanding.

Mr Wilkington and Delia were personally conducted into the restaurant by a servant of the Hotel Curzon. His gold-banded hat in hand, the man bowed to them and left them, when Mr Wilkington had lifted his eyebrows with the same amused and half-contemptuous air that had marked Mr Marron's introduction to Caccioti's. The Hotel Curzon man's eyebrows had seemed to support his attitude suggesting that he had made a mistake which might still be rectified by withdrawal. But Mr Wilkington's grumble of 'Oh, never mind; we'll risk it,' settled him, and made the signora's bust rise an inch or two.

'We *will* risk it—eh, girlie?' he said next to Delia, as if the joke were a good one; and, apparently embarrassed by strangers who were so utterly ignorant of the courtesies of the place, Massini, the other waiter, led them in awkward ceremony towards the table on my left.

Mr Wilkington sat down with a mutter of 'Addled eggs, I fear me!'

He declined to have his coat removed by Massini. But Delia submitted to Massini's services, and in a moment or two was displayed the most beautiful vision of maidenhood I had ever seen in Caccioti's or anywhere else. She was dressed for Prince's or the Carlton, not a cellar in Soho. Her jewels and pale-mauve fineries—— But it is beyond me to describe them, and her own unconsciousness of them. As I have hinted, I was (and am) a shy man, and the meeting of her glance and mine when she was about to sit down made me oblivious of everything except her eyes—large dark-gray eyes with a sad expression, as pure as the breezes on a Highland mountain.

She sat, like me, with her back to a mirror, and I crumbled bread and wished, as sometimes before in weak moments, that I had been born to a gilded future.

Most of Mr Wilkington's remarks during the first three courses drifted to me. He was disgusted. If he had known it was such a rotten pothouse! He even criticised the macaroni *à la Napolitaine*, which was perfection, in very small portions. He reduced Massini to the extreme of obsequiousness, and lifted the signora to her highest height when in a sitting posture. Though innately amiable, the signora had a very complete estimate of herself; and she both saw and heard how her institution affected Mr Wilkington.

Delia ate like a machine, and said nothing. Her nods were hesitating concessions to her father's frame of mind. I saw them in the opposite mirror, and felt them as one feels a sacred suggestion.

But it ended at the sweets—an aromatic *confiture* of something.

From his end of the room, Mr Marron the millionaire had had his finger on Mr Wilkington's pulse these many minutes, and with the *confiture*, which passed him on its way from the kitchen, he sent by Massini a pencilled card to the newcomer.

Mr Wilkington read the message out loud:

'So sorry for you. But the wines are above reproach. Permit me to recommend'——

He couldn't decipher the name of the wine recommended, even with his glasses; gave the card to his daughter; and asked Massini what he knew about the gentleman.

Massini was nervously eloquent for several seconds; the word 'millions' reached me. I saw Mr Wilkington's eyes gain lustre. He rose and bowed to Mr Marron, who rose and bowed very cordially in acknowledgment. Encouraged by Mr Marron's geniality and appearance, Mr Wilkington then whispered, 'Half-a-second!' and plunged straight up the room to the man of diamonds. Hand-shakes and more bows were the result; and, returning, Mr Wilkington persuaded Delia to accompany him to Mr Marron's table. The enormity of the proceeding excited others as well as me. The signora looked as if she could have called for thunderbolts or the constable on his beat outside. Several of the regulars jerked their shoulders. But Delia went with her father like a daughter without will of her own; though, in the mirror, I saw her eyelids fall briefly, in dumb recognition, as it were, of the sacrifice she was making.

Soon afterwards all the three quitted Caccioti's together. With a flourish of extravagant politeness Barbera fetched a taxicab and did the honours in bidding them 'good-night' at the door. Delia went out first. The signora drew herself up for an effort of civility, but was not called upon to make the effort. Delia did not look at her; neither did Delia's father. Mr Marron, however, did something to atone for their forgetfulness, and the signora's deportment of an outraged Juno slightly relaxed.

There was a buzz when they had gone. The signora permitted herself to speak with unusual wrath. Such manners! And such an outrage! Here was she, a member of the old Bolognese nobility, treated—— and so on and so on. Her compatriots present agreed vociferously.

For the matter of that, I also agreed. But by this time I was perturbed for reasons of my own. In retrieving my napkin from the floor I had picked up something else also—an inch-long heart-brooch of diamonds and sapphires,

having a ruby centre; and I was busy with the thoughts that ensued.

Should I or should I not hand the little treasure to the signora?

My decision was against the signora.

While making up my small account, Barbera told me that the lady and gentleman came from the Hotel Curzon, and were American.

'They have natures of their own, those of the United States; is it not so?' he asked; and I left Caccioti's in a flutter of hope about my opportunity of seeing Delia again.

I knew her name was Delia, and this was all I did know about her or her father.

That night I wrote for a long time in my room in Silk Street, Bloomsbury, with the little jewelled heart under my eyes. The afflatus came upon me suddenly, and the dawn was at hand when I laid down my pencil and said, 'Enough!' I felt triumphant but tired. I had worked as seldom before, with this pale, beautiful Delia as my heroine and inspiration. Asleep, I dreamed of her. It was a dream of gorgeous nonsense, which nevertheless kept me quivering when I was awake. Men who live by their imagination are in grave peril of becoming slaves or perverts to their imagination. Even thus early I knew that I could love Delia if I would. It were, of course, love without hope of response, yet love all the same; an exacting emotion, certain to interfere with my professional energies.

But there was a letter that morning from my sister Meg, which came seasonably as both tonic and sedative for my jarred nerves.

Meg and I were almost without other kith and kin in the world, and while I was knocking at one of Fortune's doors in London she was knocking at another in Worcestershire. A brave, good girl, Meg, with a simple faith in my ability to become 'great,' in her own reading of the word, which sometimes seemed to me pathetic and sometimes divinely helpful. Her tastes were of the open-air kind. She and our old nurse Martha occupied a cottage and two acres of land, and sent early fruits and vegetables to market. Her letter this morning was to say that the year had been profitable. They had lived comfortably on the two acres. After all accounts were paid there was a balance in the bank; and I was to be sure and tell her if ten or twenty pounds would help me in my assaults upon Dame Fortune.

I breakfasted that day—nothing elaborate; but towards noon I made for the Hotel Curzon, well aware of the physical support of a bowl of milk and a penny roll.

Much as I would have liked to keep that pretty little heart of diamonds and sapphires a day or two, as an aid to work, I could not do so. It was wrapped in cotton-wool and soft tissue-paper, ready for Delia, and all I hoped was that my description of her at the hotel office would bring me once more into her presence. At the most, then, it would be a smile and word of thanks, perhaps a touch of her hand, and after that 'Good-bye' for ever.

But never was an imaginative man more wrong in his forecasts.

I was turning from the Strand into the recessed courtyard when Delia herself almost brushed my arm in movement like flight. The weather threatened rain, and she wore a light mackintosh and a hat bound with a purple motor-veil, which framed her face as a gifted artist would have framed it. Thus much I saw, and she was yards away before I resolved to follow her.

I lost her, however, very soon. There was a block at Wellington Street, and when I got across there was no trace of her. I asked a pavement-loafer if he had seen her. He had seen no one like her, and so back I rushed and ascertained that she had turned for Waterloo Bridge.

With such a start I was prepared now to be beaten, yet went on, and was striding over the bridge when I saw her again. She had taken to the Embankment, east, and there she stood against the granite apparently absorbed in the muddy current, then aswirl with recent heavy rains up the Thames valley.

The handicap of my temperament now oppressed me.

I approached her, but my tongue would not speak. The shot-tower over the water and Cleopatra's Needle on our side matched me for rigid stiffness. At a yard's distance I could do nothing more sensible than lean against the granite like her, and wait for her to help me. But instead of doing this she sobbed. The sound first thrilled me, and then killed my shyness like prussic acid a rabbit. I asked her what was the matter as if I had known her for years.

It was all up with my heart when she looked at me with her tears as well as her eyes. The evening before she had had the stamp of one accustomed to the world's homage without caring for it; but this morning she was just a lovely girl in distress, free from all reserve and pride. She was twenty, yet seemed a child—a child in tears.

She did not answer, and I hastened to justify myself.

'Here it is!' I said, giving her the little packet with a smile that was not easy, though well meant. 'I hope it is only this that is troubling you. I don't suppose it is, but I hope so.'

She did not seem to understand, but unwrapped the little heart with nervous fingers, slender and tapering.

'Oh,' she exclaimed then, 'how kind of you! I—remember you. You were in that place.'

Her next words startled me.

[*Christmas Number.*

'How *honest* of you!' she whispered, with her shining eyes upon me as if I were a marvel. 'But I beg your pardon. I ought not to have said that, ought I?'

She *was* a child. Down in a moment went most of the barriers which, when awake, my imagination had interposed between us from the time of her apparition at Caccioti's. And I laughed at her as at a child.

'I generally try to be honest,' I said.

With the jewelled heart tight in her hand, she faced the turbid river again, and again I heard her cry.

There we stood, she crying and I longing to comfort her as if she were Meg. Meg also used to have her low times, poor girl; but when my arm was round her away they would go, and we would ridicule their phantoms together.

This peculiar situation seemed to last for minutes. And then she looked at me through her tears, and said that she was not honest.

'Don't stay with me. I'm one of the bad ones!' she exclaimed excitedly. 'Yes, I am. You just don't believe me, I can see. That is because you are good yourself. But I'm a bad lot, and—no one knows how I hate it. I was going to sink myself. That is what they do in London when they cannot go on. The river Thames seems here for them on purpose. I have read of so many of them doing it, and I wanted to see for myself if I had courage. But I have not even that. I'm a coward.'

More tears and hiding of her sweet face followed. I was too astonished for words. All I could do was to tell her that she was talking foolishness. Of course it was foolishness.

'Let me get a cab for you to go back to your father,' I suggested.

'Not yet,' she said. 'I can't bear it yet.'

And then what must she do but turn to me and ask me about Mr Marron.

'I know nothing about him, except that I don't like him,' I replied.

'No, nor I,' said she, as if a bond of sympathy were already established between us. 'He lost five hundred dollars to papa last night. I guess it's nothing to him. I wish—oh! I just wish I were dead, or that I had a friend who—— What is your name?' she asked abruptly.

I told her, 'Louis Granger, a struggling nobody.'

'Yes; but you're honest and nice. I'm sure you're nice,' she exclaimed quite simply, with no garnish of smile or coquetry.

I shook my head.

'You are,' she insisted. 'Fancy taking the trouble to return this to me! You wouldn't do a mean thing, would you?'

'Not willingly,' I said.

'There, then, that proves it!' she declared. 'Louis Granger! I shall not forget it. Mine is Delia Wilkington. I was raised in—— But you don't want to know about me. I can see you don't. And we're not honest, neither papa nor I, though I've tried to be till I'm tired. It's no use. Yes, I'd better return to the hotel. He will be getting mad, that's sure. Good-bye.'

She darted off in her graceful, inevitable way once more, but stopped when a passing cabman appealed to her; and so I was in time to help her into the vehicle.

Another half-dozen seconds and she was out of my life as mysteriously as she had come into it.

'Do say something to make me strong and good,' she whispered from the cab, imploring me with her eyes also. I might have been the greatest saint alive.

'Be yourself,' I whispered in reply, on an impulse as sudden and extraordinary as her own. Though I hadn't known her half-an-hour, there was I holding her hand in mine and treating her as if she were Meg, or some one even better. And though she had my heart-strings already in her hand, I could let her go, and shout up 'Hotel Curzon!' to the driver like a shop-walker dismissing a customer when his firm's profit in her is exhausted.

## CHAPTER II.

MR MARRON was not at Caccioti's that evening, and my own dinner there was a waste of money. I did not want it, and so could not do justice to it. But I went early and sat where Delia had sat. Imagination makes absolute geese of some of us, does it not?

The signora was in a flashing humour this evening, and Barbera and Massini bustled like happy sprites. Three whole tables were tenanted by a new set of foreigners, about whom Barbera confided to me, with cherubic exultation, that they were 'delegates.' I made no further inquiries.

My time since putting Delia into the cab had been divided between a furiously forced work-fit and a corroding restlessness which impelled me to walk the streets with a magnetic tendency towards the Strand and the Hotel Curzon in its shadowed recess.

She had come and gone, but even then I believed that she had made a life-mark on me.

I worked far into the night again, and, though pleased by the quality of my writing, was not satisfied when I went to bed, and in the morning was almost a candidate for the nearest Bedlam. A sleepless night after a day and another night of such agitations had done that for me. Delia haunted me—herself and many thoughts and wishes associated with her.

This evening also I found no Mr Marron at Caccioti's.

But there was something else. Barbera exposed a corner of his tainted soul to my comprehension, and made me briefly mock at myself for my innocence. He had a few minutes to spare, and, having whisked the crumbs of an earlier customer from the table next to Delia's and her father's (mine again), sat down familiarly and passed some trivial remarks.

'Where is the gentleman with the diamonds?' I asked him when he paused.

His saintly eyes glittered like no saint's.

'How do I know?' he retorted. 'Plucking the pigeons, without doubt. Yes, and he keeps all the feathers this time, the miserable!'

My stare was wood to his fire; and in a fusillade of sentences he illumined my ignorance.

The signora had her suspicions about Mr Marron, but Barbera *knew*. He was a beast of prey, a professional fattener on the follies of the race; the fiction about his mine and millions was part of his stock-in-trade, and Barbera had a small interest in promulgating it. That was the arrangement. And he had done pretty well since his discovery of Caccioti's as a new field of operations. Barbera gave instances, and from these he dashed impetuously at Delia and her father.

'*Ecco!* The other night, *per esempio*, when that pretty American miss was here where you sit at this moment'——

I bade him go on.

'*Ebbene!* He has now changed his apartment. They tell me it this morning when I call, for civility. He has had a grand *coup*—that is what it means; and we others, who show him the ladder, may go to the devil since he has climbed it. Caccioti's will never see him again, word of honour! One would not believe there were such ungrateful ones in the world if one did not meet them!'

His grin was sardonic and his saintly eyes were baleful. But a rap on the signora's counter then recalled him to his duties, and with a brisk '*Pronto!*' he left me to my reflections.

These were gloomy and impatient. Was there such another idiot in London as myself, writing stories about life on such a sand-like foundation of simplicity? These weeks and months I had known that the restaurant was an establishment without integrity, save perhaps in the piquancy of its *plats;* and yet ever since Mr Marron and his diamonds had favoured it I had deemed him respectable and rich, nothing worse than eccentric and, to myself, unsympathetic! And he was a common sharper after all, now engaged, according to Barbera's evidence, in bringing his arts into play against Delia's father—maybe against Delia herself. There could be no bounds to the infamy of such a man, and Delia had mentioned him with tears in her eyes.

A banana, the fifth course, was before me, as tempting as a dish of dust and ashes.

I looked at my foolish face in the opposite mirror, and let my mind abuse its master as it willed. It called me many contumelious names, to all of which I would have assented if it had been worth while.

This was my condition when the door with 'Caccioti' on it in frosted glass swung inwards for yet another client, and Mr Marron appeared.

His customary bow to the signora completed, his gaze fell upon me. More still, instead of going to his own table, with a vase of bronze and amber chrysanthemums awaiting him in hope, he came straight to me.

Barbera flew to us both, but he waved the man away. He was not dining at the restaurant that evening, but they might expect him to-morrow.

And then he sat down and spoke to me, quite blind, it seemed, to my open detestation of him.

'I have a message for you, Mr Granger,' he said with much graciousness. 'You don't go a great deal into the world by the look of you, but you will be very welcome just as you are.'

I brought out an 'Indeed?'

'Yes, that 's so,' said he pleasantly. 'There 's nothing to be huffed about. We 're old acquaintances, you and I, and I confess I 've often felt sorry for you. But I know all about it. I 've built little Crystal Palaces of fame in my day, like other youngsters, and they 've died a natural death, all of them, I 'm thankful to say. I wish you the same luck, the same all-sorts-of-luck that I 've been blessed with. That young Italian harlequin tells me you write. Literature 's a mug's vocation, my boy, take my word for it; the odds against you are too great. And now just come along and let the girl whose precious thing you returned to her yesterday thank you again. Her father will be glad to see you.'

'What!' said I, all scruples in abeyance to this surprise.

'It 's a fact,' said he, as if he had had enough of my stand-offishness. 'Miss Wilkington feels much indebted to you. Still, you are at liberty to please yourself, though really I think I'd come, you know. He 's an amusing imbecile, the Yank.'

I met Barbera's eye.

'Come!' It wasn't likely I would not come. Weak things had confounded the mighty ere this, and in fancy I already saw myself playing Providence between this clever rogue and Delia's father. That was something. But Delia herself was immeasurably more.

'Very well,' I said.

Barbera received an extra penny of gratuity that evening, with the banana as a marketable further perquisite. If I could have got suitably

outside myself during the next minute or so, I might have doubted my own identity in contemplation of it. My bow to the signora was as successful as my companion's, and her ladyship's agreeable beam in requital seemed more for me than for him. But I was in a cloud nevertheless; aware just then of only one sparkling truth—that I was going to Delia, perhaps as a champion.

In the street Mr Marron took my arm and hummed a music-hall tune. The condescension didn't deceive me; I felt that it was a strategic move at my expense.

And then he hailed a cab, and with a 'Get in!' which in other circumstances would have provoked a retort instead of acquiescence, told the man to drive to the Hotel Curzon, and followed me into it.

'A cigarette?' he said, offering me the gold case which had been a conspicuous feature of his magnificence at Caccioti's.

I declined it, and, lighting one for himself, he very blandly informed me that I was a strange young man.

'I don't think you appreciate a good thing when you see it, Mr Granger,' he added.

'Do you mean the cigarette or yourself, Mr Marron?' said I, giving him blandness for blandness.

He threw back his head and laughed.

'Well,' he said, 'I've heard worse attempts. But I had Miss Delia Wilkington in my mind. What are you—poet, journalist, or what?'

'Question for question,' said I. 'What are you, Mr Marron?'

'My dear young man,' he replied, taking the cigarette from his lips and honouring me with a searching look—he didn't perhaps know how unmercifully the cab's lamp treated him—'you'll never get on in the world if you don't let your angles go. I'm playing into your hands, and here you are, claws out like a kitten that expects a fight for about the first time in its life.'

This was excellent—the necessary fillip. Even as he tossed his head and laughed, so did I. Afterwards I let him into some of the secret privations and torments of the literary life in my stage of it.

He seemed impressed.

'You mean to tell me,' he exclaimed, 'that you do it on about one meal a day? Charm the public on a shilling dinner every twenty-four hours, without wine?'

'More or less,' I replied.

'Then miracles are still being worked,' said he. 'You are an underfed miracle, my boy. That girl's got her instincts, right enough. She spoke up for you. Now look here, Mr Granger.'

His hand enclosing my left knee-cap as if it were an apple, this poor rogue then offered a bait to my ignorance with admirable coolness. He was glad I was going with him to the Wilkingtons'. Girls didn't appeal to him. He had spent several hours with Delia and her father already, and he saw the old man's tactics. The daughter was being thrown at his head for all she was worth. It was not even entertaining, for she was not clever, though undeniably handsome. But with me it ought to be quite another pair of shoes. The girl would set up very well in type. She might be worth pounds to me after an evening's chit-chat.

'Make love to her, Mr Granger, if it's in your line,' urged the rogue. 'Try your hand, anyway, if it isn't in your line. It's all experience and copy, whether you score or whether you don't. He raked his pile in Kentucky horses, did the father, and he's 'cute enough on certain tracks. What I want to do is to get some of my own back to-night. Do you see? Piquet at five-shilling points with him has unstarched my conceit up to date, but I'm on the job to-night. I've lost three hundred odd pounds to the old file, and I'm not putting up with it. Just remove the daughter from the battlefield, my dear young man, and keep her there, and I'll punish papa this time.'

This also was excellent in its audacity. I did not then quite see his innuendo, being sufficiently satisfied that he should thus callously unmask himself.

'You play cards with Mr Wilkington?' I said.

'I intend to play cards with him to-night,' he replied dryly. 'Hitherto he has played cards with me—he and the girl. At least, I'd stake something large that she's had a finger in it. There, Mr Granger, thank me for my warning or not as you will. They're a pair, in my opinion; but that's no reason why we shouldn't—both you and I—have a remunerative time at their expense. And here we are.'

We were in the hotel courtyard, and it was well the cab stopped when it did. Mr Marron's plain words about Delia were a galvanic shock to me. With them, moreover, recurred the memory of her own words on the Thames Embankment. She had said that she was one of the bad ones. I had disbelieved her completely, but she had said it, and she had thought of drowning herself.

'Jump out!' said Mr Marron just as he had bidden me 'Get in!' and presently I was following him to the lift and rejoicing that my tongue had not yielded to impulse ere quitting the cab.

How, if I had told him what I thought of him, could I have gone another yard with him? And I should then never have seen Delia again.

But I had bitter misgivings, reason struggling with instinct about the beautiful girl who was already so much to me.

Her father's reception of me was another shock.

So far from his being glad to see me, his eyes

expressed their 'What-the-deuce-brings-*you*-here?' with an unmistakableness which in common circumstances would have hustled me into my shell and soon sent me off. But Delia was in the room, and her eyes were more than kind. The brief smile of thanks she gave Mr Marron carried on its sunshine to me also.

'I have brought Mr Granger round,' said Mr Marron coolly, 'to mitigate your dullness while we're having our fun, Miss Wilkington. He'll talk poetry to you, and romantic things like that.'

Mr Wilkington's hand touched mine and dropped it.

'Well, that's all right,' he forced himself to say. 'So you keep off the poetic track with me, Mr Granger, I've no quarrel with you.'

He laughed coarsely and turned away; and I cared not how he laughed, for Delia's hand was in mine and rested there. But she seemed afraid to speak, and a plaintive little plait of wrinkles momentarily troubled her forehead.

Mr Marron's star was still in the ascendant. He took charge of the situation with all the cleverness one might have expected from him.

'My dear fellow,' he said, slipping his arm into Delia's father's, 'you don't realise your luck. The odds were about fifty to one Miss Wilkington would never have seen her brooch again if any one else in Soho had found it. I don't say it wouldn't have tempted even *me*. There, that'll do! I'm not going to waste time. Let's cut cards. I may be shooting partridges in Yorkshire to-morrow, and you must either lose or win a thousand or two before I go. Strict business, Wilkington, to-night, if you please.'

They were luxurious quarters, these of Delia's and her father's. The room was large and lofty, with three windows looking over the river; two with the blinds up. A merry fire glowed in the grate, and a card-table was near it, with the chairs grouped. Mr Marron cast himself into one of the chairs and spread out his chest.

Delia's father squared his shoulders.

'Well,' he said, 'that sounds right enough. The young man's no player himself, I presume?'

'Not this night, I'll answer for him,' laughed Mr Marron.

'Not any night, thank you,' said I.

'Mix Mr Marron a drink, girlie,' said her father, 'and Mr Marron's friend another.'

'Mr Marron isn't drinking anything, old man, till he's richer or poorer,' exclaimed that other compassionate rogue, still as if his spirits were inclined to run away with him. 'And I'll venture the guess that Mr Granger don't drink at all, except water. I've sized him up, you see.—But he'll explain the Lights of London to you as good as a guide-book, Miss Wilkington, I'll bet. And you'll like that, I bet again.'

Delia's clouded eyes went from him to her father, and then to me.

'Yes,' she said, 'I should like that.'

Mr Wilkington's face showed temper, but Fate ruled his tongue.

'The room'll hold four, I reckon,' he said; 'and if it won't, there's a balcony to this suite, and they don't forget it in their terms—not about half. Cut, will you?'

Mr Marron cut, and Delia and I moved to the window. Outside, the stars were bright. Summer had returned that morning, and chairs were left in the balcony. Delia looked at me with wonderful eagerness.

'Why not?' I whispered.

'We may really go on to the balcony, papa?' she asked timidly.

'On the roof if you like,' replied Mr Wilkington. 'But you'll also go to bed at ten, remember.'

In another minute we were side by side. She went for a wrapper, and then very quickly opened the window, and, drawing it partly, we were alone with London's lights.

I ought at once to have told her what I had heard of Mr Marron's character, but Delia herself began to speak.

'Tell me about yourself, Mr Granger,' she said; and, with a shy man's ineptitude, I told her that I was very happy in thus seeing her again.

'Seeing me again makes you happy!' she said. 'I can't think why it should. You remember what I told you the day before yesterday? I truly believe that papa will drive me to it. But do tell me about yourself. It must be lovely to write and influence people.'

It was challenge for challenge then, and I won. Instead of telling her about the limited sphere of my influence as a writer, I asked her why she had such a poor opinion of herself. What could she have done? And if she had done anything amiss, it was not, I was sure, her fault, but the fault of others.

And then, with her hands to her cheeks and her white forearms gleaming in the starry dusk, she opened her heart to me with a candour which soon set my own heart beating wildly.

Her father was the chief sinner, of course—the only sinner, I dared to assure her.

She had been used as a decoy for the fleecing of rich men these past three years in San Francisco, Philadelphia, and New York. Now it was London, and after London it was to be Paris. After Paris, who could say? And never until the day I had found her on the Embankment had she felt that she might have a friend on the side of the angels to help her to make the supreme effort and fight her fate.

'Papa thrashed me last year in Philadelphia

when I said it was more than I could bear; and I don't seem to have had a chance since.'

'Thrashed you!' I could only echo her words.

'Just that,' she whispered. 'And it was not the thrashing only that hurt. He would surely kill me if he knew I was talking to you like this; and it will come—it must come! Why shouldn't I drown myself and save him that crime? That was in my mind by the Thames on Thursday. I must either run away or end my life. It has become so plain to me that I just can't understand how there can be any other course. Papa has a soul like every one else, though he believes nothing about souls. It is all money with him. Nothing but money and'——

She stopped; and, carried away by feelings which were as new to me as they were bewildering and agitating, I was telling her that her life was her own, that she ought to break away from such a father, and that there must and should be help for her, worlds of it, when the window-pane was tapped behind us, and her father beckoned from within.

She darted inside.

'What is it, papa?' she asked, with extraordinary calmness after what had gone before.

Mr Wilkington's eyes were on me, however, not upon her.

'There's been a bit of a bother here,' he said calmly, in spite of his heavy breathing. 'Mr Marron's gone dead. Didn't you hear nothing?'

Delia swayed into a chair and moaned; then, with frightened eyes, glanced at the principal door of the room.

'I've had the sense to lock it, girlie,' said her father, still studying me with half-shut eyes. 'It's an inconvenient situation; but don't let's have any giving way to softness. It's got to be faced pluckily, or not at all.—I reckon you believe what I'm saying, Mr Granger, about his dying a natural death?'

In all save his clothes he was a desperado of the story-books to the life. His lapses of illiteracy were a revelation of him, as well as the bloodshot defiance of his eyes, combined with the beginnings of a smile that marked the quality of his self-possession. He also, like the still heap in the chair with (ironic detail!) an upturned ace of diamonds by his feet, had given hostages to duplicity which were all at once recalled.

'How do you know he is dead?' I asked, with emotions of my own which were beyond analysis in the presence of Delia's father.

'Know!' he ejaculated. 'It's not the first time I've seen a corpse on the floor. But I don't want any of your British inquests nosing into my private history. If a man comes here who's not much more than a stranger, and dies of heart-disease because I rubicon him first go-off at pound-points, why blame *me?* Mr Granger, shake hands and say you're backing me and my little girl here.'

I looked at Delia and said that I would help him in any way I could. There was a world of woe and beautiful weariness in Delia's eyes. No tears, but an expression of entreaty which might have moved a Lord Chief-Justice to perjure himself in his own court of law.

'Right!' said Mr Wilkington briskly. It was all one to him that I left his outstretched hand to itself.—'Skip into your togs, girlie. Nothing smart, to show, and an extra overwear. Gather your grit and little treasures, and leave me and Mr Granger to do what's got to be done.'

I nodded mechanically, and, rising, Delia seemed about to obey her father like a machine. But instead of that she went to him, and with her hand on his arm said in a tone that hurt me like a pain, 'Oh papa, papa, this is about as much as I can bear! It truly is. I cannot keep it up for ever.—Well, I'll go.'

There were two other doors to the room, and she glided towards one of them. Her 'Don't, please!' stopped me before I could open it for her.

Though a writer of stories about life and the incidents thereof, I hadn't the sense to know that it was not the thing to rush racehorse fashion at a girl's bedroom door, even in so unconventional a situation.

## CHAPTER III.

WHEN Mr Wilkington and I faced each other, and he put his hand on my arm. 'Don't you be upset by what my little daughter's just been saying, Mr Granger,' he said soothingly. 'Women ain't made for trouble same as men. It agrees with them at no time of life, and I'm not denying we've had our share, her and me. There! that's enough about it. And now for this poor chap.'

He wrinkled his brows at Mr Marron in the chair.

'It's what you may call tiresome of him,' he continued, 'just when the cards were going so strong with me. But it's no use worrying. I've pieced the notions together, and they fit neat.'

Realising the melodrama more deliberately now that Delia was away, I put a simple question to her father.

'Will you tell me the truth about this, Mr Wilkington?' I asked.

'Truth!' said he. 'Twenty truths, but not now. What we've to do is jockey the authorities. It's early yet; we'll have a twelve hours' start. I'm not going to have my little girl

insulted by your British attorneys with any posers about past life. You see the point, Mr Granger? When there's doubts about a man, the police in no land that I know of give him best on them, and our ambassador and me ain't what you'd call friends. Now, then, we'll have him in here.'

He strode to his own room, flashed up its lights, and returned to me. His bedroom was an arrangement in white and gold; so much information was shot upon me by its lamps.

The man's hardihood and confidence in me and his power to control me were astonishing, but I did not take it all in at the time. My imagination was at its pranks, with a certain curious appetite for sequels like that provoked in a theatre. It missed none of the details of Mr Wilkington's deportment and manner; storing them, I dare say, like hived honey, for future use. The literary life gives us this knack of impersonality, for what it is worth. It is sometimes a dangerous present, but habit makes us accept it almost as often as it is offered.

Approaching Mr Marron, Delia's father signalled me, and I joined him.

'Fellows ought,' he said, in the tone of a grumbler with a mere grievance, 'to know just how much excitement they can worry through when they've mischief inside them. He can't have been much sounder than if he was made of glass. We'd words; I'll tell you that. He went out like a burst balloon, with a snap and a sigh, and so on to Kingdom Come. Well, we've all got to go some time. Lift him by his arms, my friend.'

It was a short and blundering piece of work for me. I shouldn't have thought twelve or thirteen stone-weight of dead humanity could have pulled so hard. Moving backwards with unerring directness on his part, Mr Wilkington assented that the man was heavy; and when he had said that, my consciousness seemed more centred upon Mr Marron's three large diamond studs than upon anything else. His coat-tails swept the carpet, but I remembered how those gems of his had these past weeks sparkled in the Soho restaurant, and inspired my trivial tales about their owner. And now——

We laid him on the bed, which was decorously turned down ready for use.

'There!' said Mr Wilkington, and, having shut the door, he was again a desperado to the life in the bold smile with which he now favoured me.

'Say, sonny,' he asked, 'by the folks you're most fond of in this world and any other, you're doing this straight with me?'

'Judge for yourself,' I replied. 'I am helping you, as you see.'

'Yes, that's so,' he agreed. 'And when you quit this you'll think you dreamt it all? Anyway, you'll try, even if they get hold of you and ask questions. We'll talk it over on its dollar-value side after I've put him in the bed and made him comfortable. Rather leave that to me, I reckon?'

I said 'Yes' unhesitatingly. Mr Marron on the bed was not at all an afflicting sight; he was much as I had hitherto known him, save that his eyes were closed and his mouth was a little ajar. Nevertheless, even my imagination faltered at the task of aiding Delia's father in stripping a lifeless body and putting it to bed like a child.

'Right you are!' said Mr Wilkington. 'A quarter of an hour and I'll join you. I'm trusting you powerfully, with the key in the door and all. See it?'

'See it?' The reasoning part of me saw it and much more, over and through the mist of imagination which still encompassed me.

'Yes,' I said, 'you may trust me, of course, if only for your daughter's sake.'

'Put it at that!' Mr Wilkington exclaimed, after a quick, glittering gaze at me. 'Any port in a storm'll suit the ship. Cheer her up with some poetry-lotion till I'm with you. Now, then; time moves.'

I took the hint. A parting glance at Mr Marron, and he and the man who may have been no worse than himself, for all I knew about either of them, were shut up together.

And now a strange thing befell me. It was as if the veneer of self-command which had so far supported me through these cold-blooded proceedings was at once removed. The body was more at fault perhaps than the mind; I was not fed up for emergencies. Be that as it may, I kept my senses only to the divan at one side of the room; and there I collapsed in a sick faint.

There was a little silver clock on the mantel, and for a while the sound of its ticking was the only proof to me that I did not quite lose my head. It seemed to tick frantically in unison with the throbbing of my brain. With closed eyes I heard it and nothing else, until something set my faltering manhood on its feet again.

Delia was by my side, and her touch on my shoulder was more restorative than brandy or any stimulant under the sun.

She was dressed for a journey, her veil half-drawn across her pale face. A little, crimson leather bag was in one hand.

'Did I not tell you?' she whispered dejectedly.

I stood up, and somehow her hand went from my shoulder to my hand; and, as I thus held her, imagination and all its divinest hopes resumed their mastery.

'But,' she said on, 'you must not let papa mix you up in this. I will not have that.'

I looked at the locked door, and then at the other door behind which her father was engaged with Mr Marron.

'Oh, do go!' she gasped, gently imperative.

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'With you, yes,' I replied.

'With—me?' A sudden bloom was on her cheeks and a spring of light in her eyes.

'Yes,' I said. 'Let me take you from him. Your father trusts me. Won't *you?*'

I saw she would come. My hat was grasped, and in a second or two the key was turned and the door was open. Laying the little crimson bag on the divan, Delia darted into the corridor with a pant of fear, and I closed the door upon Mr Wilkington and all his works.

Our flight from the Hotel Curzon, after this first strong step, was as easy as if Nature herself had arranged it.

We went down in the lift. Delia did not even draw her veil, and she smiled and nodded a commonplace 'Good-evening' to some one in the great vestibule. The porter swung the door for us, and we passed out.

'Papa will be *glad!*' These were the only words she spoke until we were in the Strand; but once we were amid the bustle of the pavement, she lowered her veil so that it played fast and loose with her cheeks, and spoke eagerly.

'Yes,' she said, 'papa can look after himself best alone. It was clever of you to think of that; and—where shall we say good-bye? Oh, how cunning of you to see it! Let us find the river again, Mr Granger—London's quiet little river—*please*.'

She slipped her hand into my arm and laughed. I was at a loss for words, ideas, anything except a fool's joy in the hope that I could be of use to her. Her mention of a 'good-bye' called up no doubts.

'You have done with it now for ever,' I told her.

Her arm pressed mine as we turned into a street to the left.

'Yes,' she said. 'But I must tell you things first, when we're by that old Needle from Egypt again. I'll tell you there. I want you to know just a little about me, Mr Granger. I'm not like other girls, and that's a fact; but I know when a man's honest, and it's just lovely to meet one for once. I've done everything for papa, and he's made heaps and heaps of money out of me one way and another; but he hasn't cared for me more than if I were a trotting-horse or a lucky number.'

And then she shivered and said it was a comfort she had two coats on.

'I don't want to be cold yet,' she added.

'You're going to be happy from to-night onwards!' I said ridiculously.

'Am I? How do you know?' She spoke with an adorably coquettish trill to her voice. 'You *can't* know, Mr Granger. It's only guessing. But I do feel like a bird that has escaped from its cage. They must be worth twenty thousand dollars, the rings and brooches and other trash I've left for papa. Only supposing I had come off with them! I shouldn't feel like this, should I, Louis Granger? You see, I remember your name. It's a dandy pretty name, Louis!'

That swept me away.

'Louis Granger would die for you,' I said. 'He isn't much good to himself yet, but it would be all the same if he had the Mint. Louis Granger loves you, Delia, and he will not let you go until he sees you with people of the right kind.'

'Oh!' said she, and again she pressed my arm to her side. 'Fancy your loving me in that way! Papa's plan was to sell me by-and-by to the best bidder. He calculated I'd as smart a chance of becoming a foreign princess as others. But the notion of a man loving a girl and just saying "Good-bye" when he has got her into a home with some one else!'

'It is because you are too beautiful for me!' I said, still absurdly.

And then she laughed and seemed to cling to me, until, with a little cry, she dropped all acting and became again the Delia of that other morning when I had found her in despair.

'I hate my beauty, as you call it!' she exclaimed. 'Ever since my mother died and I've had to live with papa I have wanted to be good; and no one has helped me, not a solitary one. Papa was always too sharp for them. There was a minister once who got talking to me, but papa stopped it. Ah! here we are at your London river. How fine the lights look! But there's an awful lot of darkness on it as well. Now, Louis Granger, you must be patient for a little while. Let us nestle up to the barrier, and you are to listen. I want you to think nicely of me when I'm gone—as nicely as you can, you see.'

'Gone!'

For the first time since we had left the Hotel Curzon, I understood what was in her mind.

'You wouldn't be so wicked as to destroy yourself?' I whispered, with the blood cold in me.

'It is the only way not to become worse than I am,' she replied.

'It is the crowning badness,' I said. 'Don't tell me anything. I don't want to hear. Come away.'

'Come away!' she echoed. 'I wonder where?'

And then, fired by the most glorious hope in the world, I made my great bid for happiness.

I suppose every one has a certain little spring of eloquence inside him which, once tapped, flows and flows and flows as if it must.

It was not for her now to tell *me* things. All the talk for many minutes was on my side. I told her about Meg, about us both, and our insignificant yet very stern and incessant (and for all that exhilarating) battle for bread; but especially about Meg, and Meg's splendid courage among her strawberry-beds and early

potatoes and asparagus. I told her that Meg's part of Worcestershire was a garden, with more than its share of sunshine, and that Meg would do anything for me, and therefore for her. Heaven only knows what I told her over and above the truth. But whatever it was, I can forgive myself for the result's sake.

'She would love you in a week,' I said almost finally; 'nearly as much as I do now. That would be enormously, though I'm not going to think of it. All we must think about for the present is yourself, and that will be the best pleasure of our two lives.'

I don't in the least care what I said between the chiming of two quarters from Big Ben's clock, while, arm in arm, we stood facing the river, with the roll of vehicles behind us. The main thing is that I won.

'Is she like *that*—your sister?' Delia whispered once, in the midst of my chatter. And a little later, more faintly, 'But she'd hate me, wouldn't she?'

That started me on the crowning argument, which carried her last defences.

She began to cry, and it was in tears that she said, as humbly as if she had half the sins of the world to atone for, 'Take me to her, and ask her to let me work like her. Yes, I would love it, and try to forget things. I'm only twenty, and I might do that, mightn't I, in time?'

We clasped hands on the bargain, and left the river to itself.

That was a night of nights to me, with both of us under one roof. Mrs Gunstone, of Silk Street (worthiest of London lodging-letters), had a room fit for the best lady in the land, she said; and although it was a surprising hour for a new guest, she was an old angel of accommodation.

And then, next morning, away we went for Worcestershire, both of us; and never, I imagine, did a naturally shy man so successfully belie himself with a young lady as during that journey, much of which we made alone.

The Hotel Curzon and its incident were taboo between us. We made that compact the previous evening as the first step to Delia's life-programme of forgetting. There was every likelihood of Mr Wilkington being able to obliterate himself; and the rest of the drama—whatever its details—might take care of itself.

For a fortnight I was to read no newspaper, and in that time so little a bubble on London's sweeping current of life as Delia's father might almost be relied upon to have disappeared.

Meg was perfect with Delia, and after three days among the russeting leaves of her beautiful shire I returned to the old groove in town. The old groove—yes; but with imagination's tools sharpened and blessed as never before.

At parting Delia said, 'I'm going to be such a good girl, Louis, that you won't know me when you see me again. Meg says I'm full of smart notions already; but it's the being real good that matters most, doesn't it?'

Such sweet simplicity to one more than conscious of his own simplicity! But the look in her eyes when she said it!

There was no more of Caccioti's in Morea Street for me after this; and no printed word about Mr Marron and Delia's father has ever since come my way. How Mr Wilkington lives without Delia is his own affair; and whether he lives, or whether he is dead, concerns me only in so far as it concerns Delia. Eighteen months have passed since we left him shut up in the room with Mr Marron's dead body, its three diamond studs, and the money that was doubtless in his pockets; and any time meanwhile he had, I suppose, a father's claim of some kind upon the girl whom he had so long used as a decoy for his nefarious purposes.

But in another week he will have me to reckon with—even me—as well as Delia, if he is alive and discovers her.

Delia has been my inspiration these eighteen months and more, and next Thursday I am going to marry my inspiration.

## A SONNET.

THY verses lie but now upon my knee
At mine own fireside, where I late have given
A leisure hour, and faithfully have striven
To plumb the depths that thou hast shown to me
Of thine own soul's outpourings; but I flee
From troubled waters that with rocks are riven,
Flecked with white spectres, that, as foam, are driven
Restless, yet onward towards the eternal sea.

Fain would I find thee like a mountain stream
(That gathers heather-scent from higher hill),
With stepping-stones where I may halt and see
In limpid pools the half-awakened dream
Begotten of the visions strange that thrill
The printed pages thou hast sent to me.

J. C. S.

[*Christmas Number.*

# PEPITA.

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD,

Author of 'The Colonel's Murillo,' 'At the Sign of the Silver Bell,' &c.

'I HAVE just heard, Boimellier,' said the colonel to me, 'that a convoy will soon be here from Massena's headquarters with a large quantity of loot, including some wonderful sherry sent up from Cadiz for the Emperor. They have with them a battalion of infantry and half a regiment of artillery. They are on their way to Germany; but the squadron of cavalry is to return, so you will have to take yours to act as escort as far as the frontier. A Colonel Denis Lonneau of the artillery is in command. I remember him years ago. From his artfulness he was known as "the ferret." He was a very handsome, clever, but at the same time a spiteful, vindictive little devil, as you will find out if you don't rub his fur the right way; but you have more *savoir faire* than most, so I don't see, as I've told you what sort of fellow he is, why you should not get on.'

On the whole I was rather pleased to receive these orders, whatever the character of my commander might be, for it was June, and Burgos was an evil-smelling place, and the weather was frightfully hot; and I thought it would be a pleasant change to get into the fresh mountain air, in spite of the numerous bands of guerrillas that infested them.

Sure enough, a few days later the convoy arrived, and I soon found the colonel's description of my new chief was absolutely correct. There was no doubt about his good looks—his features were classically perfect, only his face was marred by his restless, furtive eyes—nor indeed about his cleverness. He had invented a range-finder. Of this he was very proud, though it seemed to me to be but a clever toy. To prove its efficacy, I heard that as they came along he had gratuitously fired at church steeples or even a flock of sheep. Lonneau said it had a good 'moral' effect on the natives, besides being practice for the cannoniers.

For my part I thought this very stupid; we were hated enough as it was, and it only exasperated the people more. The day after we started, though I begged him not to do so on my account, to show me how accurately his invention made the men shoot, he set a farm on fire with the very first shot. This cruel and idiotic proceeding was, as it turned out, one of the factors of our subsequent troubles. However, I may state that by falling in with his ways, and by doing my duty efficiently, I got on with my commander very well, and he showed a great preference for my company.

On account of the excessive heat, the mountainous country, and bad roads, and a scarcity of mules and horses, our progress was very slow—under two leagues a day. To avoid the scorching sun we would start at four o'clock in the morning, and, after a long siesta, start again at four in the afternoon.

It was about a week after leaving Burgos that we rested at midday at a small village where we learnt from our spies that we should probably very soon come in contact with a body of guerrillas under a well-known chief, Filipo Gomez, who as a lad had from his daring earned the name El Leonito ('the little lion'), and by this name he was generally known. This young fellow was said to have blue blood in his veins, but on account of the wild life he led, his family had disowned him. He had been a soldier in his time, and then he made a name for himself as a toreador; but on war breaking out he gave this up to become a guerrilla. Endless stories were told of his courage and his cunning, to say nothing of his gallantry where the *beau sexe* were concerned.

However, with so many men as we had, his presence did not trouble us much. Descending from the village, the road ran through open country; on either side of it were corn-fields, now nearly ready for the sickle. Then came a wood with very steep banks. *Tirailleurs* at once were, of course, sent forward to cover our flanks. Emerging from it, we came into open country once more. Close to the wood was a cottage. The owner came to the door as we passed, and I thought that he had rather a knowing smile on his face.

In front of us was another wood far larger than the first; in fact, on one side it stretched right up into the far-distant purple mountains. We were well in the middle of this when one of our videttes came galloping back, saying that a bridge a short way in front of us was destroyed.

'*Sacré bleu!*' cried the colonel savagely; 'I will go and see for myself.'

I and some others, including two officers of pioneers who were returning to France, followed him. The latter, as soon as ever they saw the bridge, told us it would take some time to repair, and advised us to go back to the village, where there was a woodyard, and get the

necessary timber. This Lonneau, who had sat motionless on his horse fuming and swearing, was at first very loath to do; but at last he ordered the 'retreat' to be sounded, and then he and I got off our horses and made our way to the rear through the wood.

Beneath us, in the narrow road, guns, caissons, wagons full of loot and wounded, were all jammed together at a standstill. Every moment we expected to be attacked, and if we were we knew we should indeed have a *mauvais quart d'heure;* but our enemies missed their opportunity, the men worked like bees, the golden moments slipped by, order began to reign at last, and soon the convoy began to move; and then the colonel and I made our way back to the rear, which was now the point of danger.

Lonneau had hitherto been too busy to think; but now the sharp, energetic look that action had naturally brought into them had gone from his eyes, and a spiteful, vindictive expression had taken its place. 'I will get level with these devils, you see if I don't,' he said bitterly; and while we hoped he might, we did not quite see how he was going to do it. For a time he remained silent, the only indication of his savage thoughts being the movement of his lower jaw. Suddenly the frown passed from his handsome face. Telling me to remain in the rear, he rode forward.

We had had with us a small two-wheeled cart containing a cask of Spanish brandy (*aguardiente*) for the use of the wounded; we had also, as I have stated, some casks of the extra fine sherry for the Emperor. On these the address, 'To His Majesty the Emperor, Les Tuileries, Paris,' was clearly and boldly written in French and Spanish, so that all the world might know their destination. Before we got out of the wood the colonel had one wheel of the cart containing the *aguardiente* smashed. The address from one of the sherry-casks was nailed to the one containing the brandy. This was rolled to the side of the road and the cart overturned on the top of it.

This had just been done as I came up with the rear-guard.

'You see, *mon ami*,' said Lonneau to me with a knowing wink, 'if that does not catch them. The Emperor's brandy will bring these rats out of their holes.'

'But they can't read,' I said dubiously.

'That fellow Gomez can; and, anyway, there are generally some monks among them, and they can just manage to do that.'

'But if it does bring them out of their holes,' I continued, 'what good will that do?'

'That's my affair,' he answered sharply. 'I mean to pay them out for breaking that bridge. Why, they will be doing it all along the line if we don't give them a lesson. I will teach these rogues not to play their tricks on me.'

Still I did not see it, for, after all, the disaster only retarded our journey for a few hours.

The colonel kept his plans to himself till the last moment, for he reckoned that if we did not know, the guerrillas, with all their spies, could get no inkling of what was coming.

At eight that bright summer night, as the sun was setting, he told the commandant he should want a company of infantry. Without the *clairon* sounding a note the men were silently paraded. Those who had served under the colonel winked at each other, for they knew him, and were not a bit surprised at anything he did. But we in the dragoons, and those in the line, were naturally surprised. Apart from revenge, we failed to see what earthly good could come from the capture (if he succeeded) of a few guerrillas.

In spite of ourselves, however, we, though taking no active part in the proceedings, were naturally interested. We had nothing to do; there was no pleasure in playing cards in the dark, flea-ridden *posada*, or in sitting outside with a drain in the middle of the road, so we ordered out our horses with the intention of just going a little way with them.

With a self-satisfied smile on his face, Lonneau told the captain of the company he was ready.

'*L'arme sur l'épaule! En avant, par file à gauche! Marche!*' said that officer in a low, sharp voice.

With a quick, measured step the men descended the hill, the commandant and I, Chalvet (my lieutenant), and some others following a little in their rear; and not till we saw them deploy into the wood did we turn our horses. We were nearly at the foot of the hill, only about four hundred mètres from the village, and Chalvet and I were trotting a little behind the others, when suddenly from behind a wall which bounded a corn-field on our right several figures sprang up and fired on us. We could do nothing; it was simply a case of tearing *ventre à terre* back to the village.

'*Diable!*' suddenly cried Chalvet; 'I'm hit!' His left arm dropped; but with his right arm he pulled in his horse; in fact, he almost turned it round.

'Confound it, so am I!' I exclaimed a moment later, as I felt a bullet strike my boot below the knee, though luckily it did not penetrate the leather. I had already seized hold of his reins, for I feared from the pallor of his face he was going to drop from his horse. Thus our steeds were facing the direction we had come from. I was about to try to wheel them round again, when a bullet just grazed Chalvet's steed. The frightened beast got the bit in his mouth and bolted down the road towards the wood. I still managed to hold on to the reins, and that was all I could do. As for poor Chalvet, he was right on the crupper,

and how he managed to cling on Heaven only knows.

A few bullets whizzed past us, but we were soon out of range. Bitterly I blamed myself for having gone out at all to see the beginning of Lonneau's stupid enterprise. It was not till we had nearly reached the wood that I got the horses into a trot and finally into a walk.

'*Que va là?*' cried a voice from the wood.

'France!' I answered.

It was a corporal, who with a couple of men had been left to give warning in case of any attack from the rear.

With the corporal's help we got Chalvet from his horse. The wound, which was in the left arm, was not really a bad one; but he had only recently come out of hospital, and had not yet got back his normal strength. We bandaged it as well as we could and gave him some spirit.

In the open at that time of the year it is hardly really dark all night; but under the thick cover of the trees, in spite of the moon, which was now shining brightly, it was not a very easy matter to see each other. With straining ears we listened intently, every moment expecting to hear that the colonel had got to work; but nought broke the stillness save the harsh note of a night-jar and an occasional groan from poor Chalvet.

'The game ought to begin soon, *mon capitaine*,' said the corporal softly.

''Sh! 'sh!' whispered one of the men. 'Look! I am certain I saw a fellow on the other side there, behind the corn—there, do you see him coming along crouching towards the wood?'

The corporal cocked his weapon. We were gazing intently, when we heard the sharp report of a gun, quickly followed by another, at the other end of the wood. The guerrilla, of course, heard it too, and foolishly stood up. Unfortunately the corporal and both the men fired at once. They brought down their quarry, for the fellow threw up his arms and fell forward, mortally shot; but no less than four others close to him bolted like hares, and we could do nothing. Our attention was quickly turned from this by the now continuous firing at the end of the wood; but it soon ceased, and all was still again. Suddenly we heard shots, right in the middle of the wood not so very far from us.

'*Prenez garde, caporal; il y a deux à droite!*' shouted a voice excitedly in the darkness. I had taken my pistols from their holsters at the first alarm.

'Don't answer,' I whispered as we rushed forward, as I did not wish the fugitives to know our whereabouts, 'and don't fire till they are close on us.'

Suddenly there was a rustling among the trees, but the fellows had heard us, and headed off.

'There he goes!' shouted the corporal. 'Missed him, *parbleu!*'

I too fired.

'He's down,' cried one of the men.

'No; he's up again,' cried the other.

'Look out!' I shouted to the corporal. 'There's one.'

This last was in such a fright from those behind that in his blind fear he came almost straight for us; and the corporal, who had loaded again by this time, shot him quite easily. But I and the other men kept on after the original quarry.

'Never mind; let him go,' I shouted, for the colonel's men, who were coming forward, had actually begun blazing into us. So, as we ran quite as good a chance of being hit by our own men as those they were after, we threw ourselves on the ground, and then as soon as we got our breath we went back, highly pleased with our little adventure in the dark.

'Chalvet,' I said after a time, 'I am going to see what is going on.'

'*Diable m'emporte si j'y vais!*' ('Deuce take me if I go!'), he replied with a groan.

'Of course not. I will come back for you.'

Mounting my horse, I rode through the wood. I had just emerged from it, when I saw that, close to the cottage, a firing squad was drawn up.

There was a regular volley, and the next moment about a dozen mangled bodies lay on the ground. A more villainous-looking set I had never seen. Perhaps the fact that many of them were dead-drunk on the brandy that had been so successfully used as a decoy when they were taken had something to do with the sodden, repulsive features I saw before me. But there was one exception. It was that of a tall, slim, and very handsome young man, with his hair brushed forward but cut short across the forehead after the latest approved fashion of a *majo* (dandy) of that time. He wore the short black coat of a *torcador en civile*, with a red tie over his frilled shirt. On his small, delicate hands I saw the glitter of gems, and round his waist was a blue-silk sash, and on it, worked in gold, were two hearts, with 'Inez' underneath.

The colonel was standing with his back to me, giving orders to search the body closely. On him was found a thousand-franc note, a Brequet watch, and a bundle of letters, which Lonneau carefully put in his pocket.

'We will have an auction to-morrow, *mes enfants*,' he said cheerily. 'You will find we have done a good night's work.—*Ma foi*,' he exclaimed on seeing me, 'where did you come from? Filipo Gomez won't trouble us again,' he continued, without waiting for an answer. 'He fought bravely, though. He deserved his name, and if he had not been wounded we should never have got him. We have got nearly the whole lot, for they set no guards, and we got right round them. They were all

drinking and playing cards. I told you the Emperor's address on the cart would do it. I said I would get level with the rogues, and I have.'

It was getting on for midnight ere we got back to the village. After the surgeon had seen to Chalvet and five others who had been wounded—and of these Gomez had accounted for two—we all drew near the table in the filthy inn, while Lonneau told his brother-officers what had taken place.

'Now,' he said, 'I will just look at this fellow's letters. Ah! ah!' he continued with a chuckle, 'what's this? "*Queridissimo mio* [my dearest one], what art thou doing? Art thou wounded? Why hast thou not come to me? Three nights have I waited for thee, my beloved, near the oak. You said my eyes had not their equal in all Spain. They are longing to look into thine.—PEPITA."'

By the dim light of the candles a smile came over the grizzled faces of the veterans as they listened, and some even laughed as the colonel read this; but I, who had seen by the bright moon's rays that pallid, handsome face, that lithe form still in death, was silent.

'Ah! and here's another *billet doux*,' laughed Lonneau. 'This is from a girl who lives with her guardian; and what's more, she has written it herself' (for the other had been in the large, plain writing of the *escritor publico*, or the public writer). 'She says that he will be away on business for four days.' This epistle was even more amorous than the last, the fair beauty urging her lover to make the most of his chance, and in a postscript begging him not to forget to wear her sash. It was signed 'Inez.'

There were two or three of the same kind, and from one of them we learnt that no one, so his fair friend thought, played the guitar or had such a lovely voice as 'El Leonito.'

We were laughing over these, when the colonel's face assumed a different aspect, for he had come upon a letter from Gomez himself, evidently only just written; and what's more, it actually referred to our convoy—ay, and even to him. It was to one of his lieutenants farther north, giving directions for setting what was known as a *ratonera* (a rat-trap) in a particular ravine. 'That devil who set your uncle's farm alight the other day is coming up,' he wrote; 'but they travel very slowly, and I am going to break down a bridge that will delay them, so you will have plenty of time to get everything ready.' Though the letter had never been sent, it was useful; and we took every care when we reached the pass indicated a few days later.

The next morning, after the effects of the guerrilla had been sold—which with the thousand-franc note brought nearly three thousand francs to the lucky company that had taken part in the expedition—and after we had provided ourselves with plenty of suitable timber, we set off again, and with a few hours' work the bridge was sufficiently repaired for us to cross it.

It was about a week later, shortly before midday on the 24th of June, when we arrived at Vittoria. It was the fête of San Juan, which is throughout Spain one of the greatest of fête-days.

On the previous evening, at the village where we were quartered, the festival had begun; bonfires being lighted and guns fired, amid the loud clanking of bells. When we arrived the chief religious ceremonies, some evidently of a semi-pagan origin, were over. Priests and people had retired to eat and drink, and take a long siesta after their exertions till three o'clock, when we were told that the horses, mules, cattle, &c., all bedecked with flowers, would be taken to the church steps to be blessed. Then in the evening the dancing and singing would commence, and would go on until far into the night.

We had had our *déjeuner*, and Chalvet, the medicine-major, and one or two others were playing cards in an adjacent room behind, but the bulk of my comrades were sleeping, and the colonel and I were alone in a room looking on to the curious old Plaza. I was gazing through the barred window (which bulged out at the bottom, so that it was possible to look sideways), waiting to see the farrier-sergeant about shoeing one of my horses, when suddenly, coming across the now deserted space, I saw a girl dressed entirely in black but for a bright scarlet sash round her slender waist, on which I saw afterwards the two initials P. B. and F. G. intertwined. On such a day the sombre hue of her dress alone would have made her noticeable, when, as at Easter and Pentecost, gayest colours and the white mantilla are worn. She evidently walked with a purpose, turning neither to the left nor right, advancing with a light, springy step that showed that she was probably bred in the mountains. From her dress, her carriage, and *tout ensemble*, I surmised that she was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer. Her face at first I could not see well from the shadow caused by her fan, which she held above to protect her from the blazing sun; but as she rapidly approached I saw that her eyes and features were worthy of her splendidly proportioned figure.

'*Ma foi!* if you want to see a real Spanish beauty,' I said, turning round to Lonneau, who was seated at a table smoking, with a flagon of wine in front of him, 'now's your opportunity. I swear I have not seen her equal during the whole two years I've been in this infernal country.'

In a moment he had sprung up; but the girl had practically got into the shade, and, as she lowered her fan, her face was almost hidden. Lonneau, however, had seen enough to excite his

admiration as she went straight to a passage at the side of the hotel and disappeared from our view.

'*Hombre*, you are right! What a face, what a figure, and what an entrancing walk! The major says these Spanish women get that gait from kneeling upright so long in church.'

'Here she is again!' I said quickly, for she had evidently been to make some inquiry, and had learnt what she wanted, and now she passed quite close to me. This time I saw her well; but I also saw a look in her fierce, flashing eyes that boded badly for some one. To my surprise, she went straight to the sentry outside the door.

'The colonel of artillery is here who is in command of your soldiers?' she said to the trooper. 'I want to see him.'

'Do you, my beauty?' he said with a laugh. 'Well, he 's having his siesta at present, so you can't;' and foolishly he tried to chuck her under the chin.

'You dog of a Frenchman—you *gafo!*'* she exclaimed, springing back, her hand going instantly to her right knee.

This latter movement told me at once she belonged to the famous Liga de la Liga,† and carried a *punalica* concealed in her garter.

'Colonel,' I said—for he had returned to the table—'she actually wants to see you.'

'Wants to see me—wants to see me? *Parbleu!* what luck! Tell the lady I am honoured,' he exclaimed with a sharp shake of his head and a self-satisfied smile on his handsome face.

'For Heaven's sake, be careful! She belongs to La Liga. I will swear she has a pretty sharp dagger in her right garter.'

'Has she, though?' he replied in a rather more subdued tone. 'Thanks; forewarned is forearmed. But, *caramba*, by all means we will have her in, for I like amusement, I like adventures. She will pass the time nicely. I understand women, *mon ami*, you see. Whatever humour she may be in now, she will coo like a turtle-dove before I 've done with her.'

Every one has different ideas of what constitutes amusement and adventure; but for my part, I should, ere that agile and beautiful fury was admitted, have given orders that she was to surrender her *punalica*.

Whom she wished to avenge I had no idea; but that her mission, from the expression in her flashing eyes as she passed the window, was murder I was perfectly convinced. However, as Lonneau desired it, I told the sentry to allow her to come in. One thing I knew, that the colonel had not earned the sobriquet of 'the ferret' for nothing; and though he was going to play with fire, I supposed he had some plan of his own to prevent him from burning his fingers.

Just as a bull coming out of the darkened *apartado* is for a moment dazzled by the light, so she, coming out of the bright sunshine into the semi-darkness of the room—for the yellow blinds were half-drawn—was at first puzzled.

On account of the extreme heat, both the colonel and I had taken off our tunics, so that she could not tell our rank.

'I wish to see,' she said, 'the officer in command.' Though outwardly calm, there was a slight tremor in her deep but beautiful voice that showed her inward agitation.

Chalvet and the medicine-major, hearing a woman's voice, had stopped their game of cards, and had quietly come to the door; then, winking at me, had as quietly retreated.

'At your service, señora,' said the colonel, standing behind the table.

'I wish to see you alone,' she said.

'Ah, my beauty!' he replied with a laugh, 'then I fear I must disappoint you. Perhaps that will come later, when I know who you are and why you honour me with this unexpected visit.'

The girl hesitated; she had expected to have only one to deal with. She had probably reckoned that she had only to make one sharp spring, and her mission would be finished; but ever since she had entered the room her intended victim, apart from keeping her at a distance, though he may have glanced at her lovely face and figure, had never really taken his eyes from her right hand. This angered and disconcerted her.

'I am Pepita Baranarga,' she said, with a slight tap on the floor with her little foot. 'You have got a letter of mine to Filipo Gomez. It was you, was it not, who ordered him'—and here her voice quivered—'to be shot? I want that letter back.'

'Pepita Baranarga!' repeated Lonneau. 'Let me see. Ah yes, poor fellow! I remember now. I was sorry I had to do that. But it could not be helped; he would have done the same to me. Had I only known that he was the friend, and, I presume, the lucky lover, of one so lovely as yourself, I swear I would never have shot him. You shall certainly have his letter if you wish it.'

Pepita had approached nearer to him as he spoke, and, moreover, her left foot was slightly in advance. He faced her, but in a perfectly

* Literally a leper. A word of unutterable contempt, and one of the five Spanish words forbidden by Spanish law.

† The league that took the punning title of the Liga de la Liga was founded by some Manolas or Amazons in Madrid after the massacres by Ney. They made a vow to carry a dagger in the right garter to kill every Frenchman they could, and that, too, by any means. Many, both officers and men, lured by their bright eyes, became their victims.

natural way placed his hands on the back of a chair, which would have effectually stopped a successful spring.

'He died like a lion,' continued Lonneau, 'and he was indeed worthy of his name, and,' he added softly, 'of your love.'

It may have been this speech, or that she saw for the moment that she was foiled; but at once her manner became more gentle and the fierceness of her eyes died away.

'But, señora, you are hot and thirsty; allow me to offer you some wine. Now take that chair, and I will have this one,' continued the colonel, as he placed another on the right of it.

'*No, no, me da la gana*' ('No, no, that does not suit me'), she said petulantly. 'I prefer to sit there, and you sit on my left.'

I smiled inwardly to myself as they thus manœuvred for positions, but 'the ferret' was firm.

'No, no; you sit as I wish,' he replied. For he knew that with her on his right, he could no longer watch the movement of her right hand. It would be but the work of a moment to draw and plunge her *punalica* into his breast.

Hiding her vexation, she sat down, and he drew his chair close, very close, to hers. Using only his right hand, he poured some wine into the two glasses, thus having his left to clutch her wrist if she tried to draw her deadly weapon.

'To your health, señora.'

She took her glass, but did not reply.

Slowly she unhooked her fan from its cord and placed it on the edge of the table.

'You are cruel, señora,' said Lonneau. 'What! may we not even clink our glasses?'

'Oh yes, if you like,' she replied carelessly, and in putting down her glass the fan somehow fell to the ground. Off his guard for a second, the colonel was stooping to pick it up when her hand stole down to her knee. Another second and her weapon would have been between his shoulder-blades; but he had seen the movement, and her wrist was in his iron grip.

'No, no, señora,' said Lonneau playfully, putting the fan on the table. 'Never mind that pretty little plaything—*la tia de usted* ['your aunt'], do you not call it?'

'Bah!' she replied scornfully, though a guilty blush spread over her handsome face. 'You fear that, do you? Well, then, I will throw it away.'

'Oh no,' said Lonneau; 'leave it where it is. It's all the same to me so long as it remains where it is.'

'No,' she replied; 'as you don't trust me, hold my wrist.'

He did so, and she drew out the poniard, sheath and all, and threw them into a corner. 'Now are you content?'

'Quite,' replied the other.

At his ease now, Lonneau turned his chair towards her. 'You know, señora,' he said in a coaxing tone as he placed his arm on the back of her chair, 'I can see now the truth of what poor Gomez told you when he said that your eyes were the loveliest in all Spain. I have seen many a lovely face'——

At that moment there was a rap at the door. It was the *maréchal-ferrant*, who wished to see me.

'On account of the *festa, mon capitaine*,' he said, 'they not only will not work themselves, but the blacksmiths will not open their forges for us. Shall I have the door of one of them smashed open? There is plenty of time to shoe your horse.'

'It is of no consequence,' I said hurriedly. 'Do it to-morrow. I will ride Bonne-bouche; tell Dubois [my servant] that.'

When I turned round I saw that the colonel had gone to get the letter that his fair visitor wanted from his tunic hanging on the wall, and Pepita was tapping the table with her finger near the stem of one of the glasses.

'Now, *bella mia*,' he said, returning with quite a bundle in his hand—'now I will ease your mind. Which one is yours. You see, poor Gomez was such a lady-killer; there are letters from so many others.'

The girl's face suddenly became deadly pale, and an incredulous look came into her eyes. '*Altros!*' ('Others!'), she exclaimed excitedly, half-springing from her chair. '*Altros!* You lie—you know you lie!'

A cruel, supercilious, malicious smile came over the colonel's face. 'You say I lie! Can you read? No. Very well,' he continued. 'In your letter—here you are—you say (this is dated the eve of St Barnabas, 11th June: "Three nights have I waited for thee, my beloved, near the oak." He did not come, señora, did he?'

The girl, whose hands were trembling, snatched the letter from him.

'Do you wish to know why?' She nodded, and in a cold, calm voice he proceeded to read the epistle of the amorous Inez. 'This, you see, is dated the 8th of June'——

But it was too much. With a shriek the girl sprang up. Like a tigress for the first time caught in a cage, impotent with rage and fury, and tearing her letter mechanically into a thousand pieces, she strode up and down incapable of speech, her bosom rising and falling. Suddenly she caught sight of her dagger on the floor, and she rushed towards it; but I sprang forward and faced her, with my foot upon it.

'Let me have it! I don't want it for you,' she cried fiercely. 'I want it for myself.'

Hearing the commotion, Chalvet and the medicine-major had appeared at the door. The colonel was seated at the table with a calm,

cynical smile on his face, apparently undecided if it were not all a fine piece of acting. His hand was round the stem of his glass. Mechanically he was raising it to his lips, when Pepita rushed forward and dashed it from his mouth, sending the contents all over the floor, but for a little gray powder which remained at the bottom of the glass. Brave as he was, Lonneau turned as white as a sheet.

'You shot him!' she cried. 'You did well. I am in your debt for that.' For a moment she stood transfixed, her left hand on her heart. 'And yet, *oh Madre de Dios*, how I loved him! How I loved him! What have I to live for now?' Then, woman-like, her mood changed; all her anger was turned on the girl who had robbed her of her lover. 'Where does that creature—where does that Inez live?' she asked fiercely of the colonel.

'*Quien sabe?* I have no idea,' he answered.

'I will find her!' she cried. Her lips were quivering, and the tears were now falling fast down her olive cheeks. For a moment she seemed undecided, when her eyes fell on the fan, and snatching it up, with a choking sob she went out into the blazing sun.

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## THE SONG OF THE NAVY.

FROM Colombo's heat and languor
To Britain's sea-girt isle,
To Fugi and its splendour,
We steam for many a mile;
From Shanghai to Coquimbo,
Manila to Japan;
Up the Amazon past Rio,
Yamada, and Fusan.

From Kudat in North Borneo,
Far north to Wei-Hai-Wei,
To the islands of Hokkaido,
We travel day by day.
Cyclones, typhoons, and heavy seas,
Dead calm, fierce storm, the rain,
The heat, the cold, the gentle breeze,
We've met with once again.

We've crossed the line quite lately,
And south to Java Cape,
Through Banka Straits so stately
To Krakatoa's shape.

The starlit sky, the palm-trees,
The Southern Cross so fine,
Are but for those who sail the seas
And those who cross the line.

From Land's End down to Vigo
We still will plough our way;
From Lisbon on to Teneriffe,
And thence to Table Bay.
They call us England's Navy,
And for ages long since past
No ocean but has known us,
No sea but we've traversed.

From Cape Farewell down to the Horn,
Rio to Simon's Bay,
'Cross Cancer and 'cross Capricorn
We still roam day by day.
Bad weather cannot stop us,
Fogs, ice, or scorching sun;
Our march goes on for ever,
Though we fall out one by one.

TAFFRAIL.

# THE LAST OF THE BOURBONS.

BY J. MORTON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF 'THE SENORITA DOLORES,' &c.

THE wind whistled down the slopes of Mont Pipet, bearing with it a fine, drizzling rain.

Simon Vauvert stood at the door of his inn and shook his head solemnly at the weather; then, as the rain beat upon his face, he retired inside and warmed his hands before the fire burning in the *comptoir*. For a few seconds he studied the fancy forms cast by the blaze, then rose and shivered. 'Tis miserable weather for June!' he said, glancing around the room as if speaking to the shadows. 'Miserable!' Drawing a chair before the fire, he took a copy of a Paris paper three days old from a shelf, and commenced reading it.

June 1852 was a memorable month for France, memorable in many ways. It was the wettest summer month within the recollection of the oldest inhabitants, and it was a month wherein much French history was made. Louis Philippe had been deposed and had fled to England, and in his place had been reared another of the Bonapartes, a man who neither possessed the brilliant qualities which marked his uncle nor was even a direct descendant of the 'Little Corporal' whom all Europe had feared.

Chosen President, he had made himself Emperor, and already faint murmurs of discontent were heard throughout the land; and, coupled with them, the whisper that somewhere in France, known only to a few, lived the grandson of the Louis they had killed.

A wave of Royalism swept the land, and many were slowly preparing themselves for the day when he should proclaim his identity. No less diligently were the followers of Napoleon the Third seeking him, so that they might once and for all safely place their master upon the imperial chair. A civil war—as yet confined to intrigue, but threatening every moment to break out into open fighting—existed; and somewhere, some said in Paris itself, there lay hidden the man who held the keynote to the position in his hand.

Simon Vauvert read the news with interest. Like many another, he was tired of the weak, vacillating man who was a Bonaparte only in name, and like many another he hoped that the day might come when a monarch would again sit upon the throne of France. For when the last word is spoken, all men, at the bottom of their hearts, are Royalists.

His eyes sparkled as he read through the long paragraphs, which somehow had escaped the strict censorship, to spread the news that another Bourbon had come to establish his claim to the throne upon which his fathers had sat.

So intent was he upon his reading that the sound of footsteps on the cobbled yard outside the inn escaped his usually keen ears, and it was only a gust of wind blowing upon him through the open door that told him two customers had entered.

He looked up from the paper and surveyed them. There were two men dressed in long military riding-cloaks.

'*Bon soir, messieurs,*' he said politely, rising slowly.

Their swords clanked in the scabbards as they walked across to the fire.

Ignoring his greeting, the elder of the two asked for meat and wine; while the younger, taking off his cloak, shook it until the water, rolling off, hissed as it fell upon the burning logs.

'You will have it here?' asked Simon.

'We will have it here, in front of the fire,' said the elder.

Simon brought forward a small table and laid upon it a white damask cloth.

'You do not get many visitors here?' asked the man.

Simon shook his head. 'My trade is mostly with the *vignerons;* occasionally a stranger comes, but not often.'

The soldier nodded and glanced keenly at him. 'Have you had many lately?'

Simon made an expressive gesture. 'But no, the weather!'

For a few moments the men ate in silence. So far the younger of the two had not spoken. 'There have been no strangers here lately, then?' he said suddenly, continuing aloud the train of his thoughts.

'You get a good many here when the weather is fine, I suppose?' said his companion.

'Yes, m'sieu,' replied Simon; 'they come to visit the ruins of our old theatre here. It is supposed to be Roman, but I would not answer for the truth of it.'

The elder man smiled. 'It is safer not to answer for the truth of anything save one's own speech, and it is not always easy then.'

Simon leaving them for a moment, he turned to his companion. 'We shall learn nothing

from him. For myself, I think it is a fruitless errand we have been sent upon. Louis is within five leagues of Paris, if he is not in the town itself. Though all the faults of the Bourbons be existent in his person, he would not tarry here. He must strike within the next week, or the throne of France is lost to him for ever.'

The younger man nodded. 'And yet if M'selle Nouchment is not misinformed, he has been seen here within the last seven days.'

'I do not trust these women-spies. They are too much governed by emotions to be of any great service to those who employ them.'

At the re-entry of Simon the elder soldier relapsed into a momentary silence, which he broke with a question to the landlord. 'You have lived here a good many years?' he suggested.

'But yes.'

'And know most of the inhabitants of Vienne?'

'As well as those in the hills know those who dwell in the valley.'

The soldier nodded, and meditatively stroked his iron-gray beard. 'I am seeking a friend here—a young man, tall and fair, with a nose that is somewhat like the noses of the Bourbons. Perhaps you have seen a portrait of that magnificent monarch who paid for his misdeeds upon the scaffold?'

Simon nodded, wondering at the fluency of his visitor's conversation, and wondering, moreover, to what it tended.

'You have? Then you could not mistake my friend if you saw him.'

'Perhaps if you told me his name?' suggested Simon.

For a moment the soldier remained silent. Then 'M'sieu Fou,' he said.

Simon shook his head. 'I know no one of that name,' he answered.

The soldier's stern countenance relaxed, and a hard smile showed itself at the corners of his mouth. 'No?' he answered in a tone that implied much.

Simon was puzzled. As if to seek enlightenment, he looked around the room, and his eyes fell upon the casement, which stood a little open, and in the second his gaze rested upon it a shadow passed across it—the shadow of a man's head.

The elder soldier rose and drew a handful of silver and gold from his pocket. 'It is time we moved on, Etienne,' he said, 'or it will be midnight before we reach the Abbe.'

'You will not stop the night?' asked Simon.

'No; we have business among those who dwell in the valley,' replied the soldier, and again that hard smile showed itself.

And Simon was not sorry, for though he

look of astonishment upon his face was corroborated by his tones.

The stranger smiled. 'You do not always want to see your friends, eh?'

'Always,' replied Simon truthfully. 'I give them a good welcome.'

Again the stranger smiled. 'And I shall welcome them.' And whether by accident or not, his hand came in contact with the rapier hanging by his side, so that it clanked in its scabbard.

As soon as he had finished he rose. 'You have a private room? I should like to retire there, as I have some business to attend to. And you will kindly have these things removed as quickly as possible.'

Simon looked at him. There was a note of command in his voice.

'Yes, m'sieu,' he said, and led the way into a smaller room, separated from the *comptoir* by a heavy tapestry curtain.

M'sieu Fou sat down in a chair before the fire and kicked the logs into a blaze. 'You can tell me when my friends arrive, but they are not to know I am here.'

Simon bowed. Vague suspicions as to the identity of his visitor began to fill him; and, returning to the *comptoir*, he stood in the middle of the room scratching his bald head in perplexity. Then slowly trying to reason it all out the while, he began to clear away the empty dishes.

Before he had finished, a voice from within called to him, 'Simon!'

'Yes, m'sieu,' he replied.

Drawing aside the curtain, he saw M'sieu Fou standing in the middle of the room. He had divested himself of his coat, and round his waist was tied a large white linen apron such as Simon himself wore.

'I have taken the liberty of inspecting your wardrobe and borrowing a few articles. On second thoughts I will serve my friends myself, just to practise a little joke upon them.' He laid his hand on Simon's shoulder. 'A little joke, you understand.'

He surveyed himself in the mirror above the fireplace. 'My face will betray me unless I can alter it.' He turned to Simon with a laugh. 'You have no rouge?'

'I, m'sieu!' The old innkeeper spoke as one in a dream. Astonishment was giving place to grave misgivings. He felt himself to be taking part in a plot, the depth and purport of which he was in ignorance.

'No, there is too natural a colour upon your cheeks for you to need to create one.' M'sieu Fou looked around the room, and seized a red cloth from off a small table. Moistening a corner between his lips, he dabbed it on his cheeks, then stood surveying the effect.

'Yes,' he murmured, 'a little black beneath the eyes, and I do not think they will recognise me.'

He bent down and picked up a piece of burnt wood from the grate, and shaded his eyes with it. 'You have no idea how useful amateur theatricals are, Simon,' he said during the operation.

Then he threw it away, and, turning round, faced the old innkeeper.

'*Mon Dieu!*' said Simon. It was M'sieu Fou, but M'sieu Fou disfigured. The regal aspect of his face was lost; he looked a country youth, one of many score that might have been found within a mile of Vienne.

'And now, Simon,' he said, 'I am ready for my friends.'

He sat down again in the chair, and Simon noticed that beneath his apron the sword was still buckled.

'You know they will come, sire?' he said.

M'sieu Fou looked at him quickly. He seemed about to speak, hesitated a moment, then, 'Yes, Simon, I know they will come,' he said. Lighting a cigarette, he crossed his legs and gaily hummed a light tune, a love-song of Provence, centuries old, from the days of the troubadours and King René. 'I hope they will not keep me long,' he said once, stifling a yawn. 'I am tired.'

'I can tell them to wait your pleasure in the morning, m'sieu.'

M'sieu Fou regarded the innkeeper sharply. 'You can tell them nothing of the sort,' he quickly responded. 'You will not even see them until I bid you.' And he continued humming.

Suddenly he stopped. His sharp ears had heard something unnoticed by his companion, the sound of footsteps on the cobble-yard. The door leading into the *comptoir* opened, and the footsteps sounded upon the wooden floor.

M'sieu Fou rose and threw his cigarette away.

'My friends have come,' he said in a whisper, a whisper laden with suppressed excitement. Then he drew aside the curtain.

'M'sieu, m'sieu, what folly is this?' said the old innkeeper when it had fallen back into its place behind him.

When M'sieu Fou entered the *comptoir* the two men were standing before the fireplace, their backs turned to him. For a second he surveyed them, and a smile lit up his features, a smile of triumph.

'Messieurs,' he said, and they turned sharply round.

Again the elder man spoke; he was on most occasions the spokesman. 'Some wine,' he said shortly. 'And where is the man who keeps this inn?'

'M'sieu Simon? He has gone to bed.'

[*Christmas Number.*

'Ah, we may have occasion to call him up again.'

M'sieu Fou made a low bow, and in it there was a sarcasm which escaped the men's notice. 'Perhaps I can be of service to you. I will go and get your wine.'

He retreated into the inner room. 'The comedy is just commencing,' he said with a gay smile to Simon, who stood trembling behind the curtain. 'Two glasses of wine for my friends.'

He returned with them to the *comptoir*, and laid them down upon a small table before the fire.

'You have been here before to-night, messieurs?' he said.

The two men looked at him, Etienne nonchalantly, the elder one keenly, his eyes scrutinising him beneath their shaggy brows.

'You were inquiring for a friend of yours, a M'sieu Fou. He is here now, but he does not know that name.'

The men leapt to their feet. 'Where is he?' cried Etienne.

The other laid a hand on his shoulder. 'Gently, *mon ami*,' he said.—'If he does not answer to that name, how do you know he is the man we seek?'

'From the description you gave M'sieu Simon. There is only one man in France to-day who could answer to that description.'

'Where is he?' asked Etienne again, excitedly.

'He is upstairs, asleep,' replied M'sieu Fou.

'Ah!' said the elder soldier, 'then your rooms are all occupied, and we intended staying here to-night.' He turned to Etienne. '*Mon ami*, we shall have to brave the rain again and go down to Vienne.'

'You have no need to do that,' said M'sieu Fou; 'there are rooms here to spare. I can give you one exactly opposite your friend, so that, if you wish to, you can speak to him—during the night.'

The elder man looked at him quickly and frowned. 'We should wish to disturb no man's rest,' he replied.

'No, m'sieu?' said M'sieu Fou, and there was a tentativeness in his tones. 'I will have the room got ready for you.' He retired behind the curtain.

'Simon,' he said, 'my two friends will stay the night; so we must prepare a room for them.'

'I will, m'sieu.'

'Pardon me, we will.'

The innkeeper looked at M'sieu Fou, then without further comment gave a barely perceptible shrug of the shoulders and led the way to the floor above.

The stairs opened on to a large landing. At the far end was a heavily curtained window, through which the moon shone. The dull, ceaseless patter of the rain upon the glass sounded drearily in the silence, and M'sieu Fou shivered.

'You have not had many visitors here lately, Simon?'

'No, m'sieu; the weather has been so bad.'

M'sieu Fou nodded, then, stepping aside, opened one of the doors and peered inside. The candle which Simon carried cast long shadows across the room.

'This will do for my friends,' said M'sieu Fou. 'I trust the bed is well aired and the sheets not damp.'

'M'sieu'—— began the innkeeper, when M'sieu Fou stopped him. 'I was only jesting. 'Twill do for them. They are soldiers, and often lie like dogs.'

Simon looked at him, his rubicund face expressive of his uncertainty as to the gist of the remark.

M'sieu Fou gripped his arm. 'Yes,' he said, as if for emphasis, 'they often lie like dogs.'

Then he crossed the corridor and opened a door which faced the one leading into the room they had just left.

'And I'm supposed to be sleeping here to-night.'

'Supposed to, m'sieu!' Simon spoke and moved as one in a dream.

'Yes, supposed to. I shall spend the night behind that curtain.'

The innkeeper followed the direction of M'sieu Fou's gaze, and shook his head mournfully. 'I do not understand,' he said.

'No,' responded M'sieu Fou cheerfully, 'not yet; but you will in good time.' He entered the room, and bent over the bed. 'You might bring that candle a little nearer, please, Simon,' he said. 'Thank you.'

He manipulated the pillow and bolster, and with the aid of a large curtain he discovered in a corner made it resemble the figure of a man. 'That is supposed to be me,' he said when he had finished. 'I possess the objectionable habit of sleeping with my head beneath the bedclothes.' Then he went out into the corridor again, followed by Simon.

'And if you spend the night behind that curtain,' he said, 'what do I do?'

'You can go to sleep as usual, and forget all about it.'

'M'sieu, I cannot go to sleep. I cannot forget.'

The look of despair on his face was comical, and M'sieu Fou laughed. 'Then you must stop in your room. If I choose to play a practical joke on my friends it is no business of yours. Hark,' he said a second later, 'they are calling me!'

From the room beneath came the sound of voices.

M'sieu Fou hurried downstairs. 'Messieurs?' he said apologetically.

'Where have you been?' said Etienne. 'We have been calling you for the last five minutes.'

'I am sorry, m'sieu. I have been getting your room prepared for you.'

'Ah! and now you can take us up to it?' he asked.

M'sieu Fou bowed, and led the way up the stairs. On the landing he flung open the door, and stood holding a candle high above his head, lighting them in.

'And our friend's room, you say, is the one opposite?'

M'sieu Fou pointed to the door. 'But yes, messieurs. *Bon nuit.*'

The elder man nodded curtly, and shutting the door, locked it. M'sieu Fou smiled softly, and looked at the closed door for a second. Then he crept down the corridor and secreted himself behind the curtain.

Below the frame of the window was a broad ledge, on which he seated himself. 'Tis not so bad,' he muttered. 'I have slept in worse places within the last six months. A king without a throne is like the proverbial beggar; he cannot be a chooser.'

Then lighting a cigarette, he looked out of the window. The rain had ceased, and the moon was at its full height, flooding the slopes. The trees were bending to and fro in the gale that had arisen, and in the near distance the ruins of the old Roman theatre loomed dark amidst the foliage which surrounded them.

M'sieu Fou gazed at it for some moments; then he drew out his watch. 'A quarter-past twelve,' he said. He rose and took off the white apron, and moistening a corner on his lips, he rubbed the colour from off his cheeks and the black from beneath his eyes. Then he lighted another cigarette.

He heard the half-hour chime out from the bells of the Cathedral of St Maurice in the valley, and almost following it another sound which caused him to leap lightly to his feet and peer round a corner of the curtain.

From the door of the room in which the soldiers were supposed to be sleeping a ray of light shone, and a second later he saw the two men walk softly across the corridor and open the door facing theirs.

Emerging from behind the curtain, he drew his sword, and stepping silently down the corridor, stood in the open doorway. Etienne was holding a candle, while the elder man, bending over the bed, was driving his sword through the figure beneath the sheets.

'That should have finished him, *mon ami*,' said the soldier; 'but I will see.'

He was about to pull aside the sheets, when M'sieu Fou stepped into the room. 'Yes, messieurs,' he said, 'that should have killed him. But it has not.'

At the sound of his voice the two men turned sharply round.

'*Mon Dieu!*' they exclaimed, as if with one voice. Before them stood Louis, the last of the Bourbons.

Etienne was the first to recover from his astonishment. Seizing the sword from his companion, he rushed upon M'sieu Fou; but the latter was too quick for him. He parried the blow, and gave a sudden lunge. There is a certain muscle in a man's body the severing of which paralyses the right arm and causes it to shrivel, and M'sieu Fou knew where that muscle was situated.

Etienne gave a scream of pain, and the sword fell from his hand on to the floor with a clatter. 'You have maimed me for life!' he cried.

Cruelty was ever a trait in the character of the Bourbons, especially cruelty in their moments of triumph.

'And you too, Colonel D'Angeron!' he cried with another lunge.

M'sieu Fou stepped quickly into the corridor; and Simon, standing trembling at the door of his bedroom, saw him point with his drawn sword, from the blade of which blood was still dripping, down the flight of stairs.

A second, and he heard him speak.

'Messieurs,' he said, 'go to your master, and tell him that is the message of the man who in a few months will sit upon the throne of France.'

For a second the two soldiers, whose right arms were rendered useless, stood and faced him.

'I have the advantage,' said M'sieu Fou, 'and to men who would have murdered me while I slept I show no mercy.'

Then they passed down the stairs through the *comptoir* into the moonlight.

At the door Colonel D'Angeron paused. A devoted Bonapartist, he possessed no reverence for the men who had sat upon the throne of France for generations. 'Louis Bourbon,' he said, 'we are maimed for life; but there are thousands more, men who would rather see our beloved country a mass of ruins than see another of your cursed family upon the throne.'

Then they passed into the night. For a few moments M'sieu Fou stood watching them, pondering over in his mind the words Colonel D'Angeron had spoken. Then, with a little sigh, he entered the *comptoir*.

There the old innkeeper was awaiting him. 'Sire,' he said, 'they called you Louis Bourbon!'

'Yes,' answered M'sieu Fou, 'I am Louis, the last of the Bourbons. Perhaps one day I shall sit upon the throne of my fathers, and perhaps not, for France is a strange country.'

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He laid five gold coins upon the table, coins which bore the head of the man who reigned in his stead and sat where he should have sat.

'This will recompense you for the trouble I have given you,' he said.

'But, sire, you will not leave to-night?'

'To-night I must go down to the valley, where I have friends who await me—better friends than those who have just left. And to-morrow I leave for Paris. *Bon soir.*'

'*Bon soir*, sire!' said the old man. Dazedly he walked to the door, and watched the last of the Bourbons climb down the slopes which led into the valley, watched him until the gloom swallowed him up and hid him from view. Then he picked up the gold pieces which M'sieu Fou had left upon the table each in turn, looked at the head upon it, and read the inscription. 'I wonder,' he said, 'if he will ever be King of France. He would make a good king.'

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## MY CASTLE.

We've emptied the milk-jug, we've eaten each bun,
And mum, with a laugh, says she thinks tea is done;
So it's time for the bricks, and I dart to the shelf
Where they're sure to be standing; I put them myself.
For I 'spect that you know, the first thing after tea
I build up a castle for mummy and me.

Although it's a castle it's not very tall,
So mummy and I just pretend to be small;
I call out to mum there is only one chair,
And mummy calls back, saying *she* doesn't care.
For if she's on the chair, and I'm on her knee,
There's nothing else needed for mummy and me.

There is only one room, for I've not many bricks
(I got them last birthday, the one I was six);
But mum always says that she doesn't want more,
For the very best castles are often one floor.
So I don't say aloud that I think it looks wee,
For I know it is home, just to mummy and me.

Some day, when I'm older, I'll have of my own
A monstrous big castle—I'll build it of stone;
And mummy shall sit on a blue silken seat,
With a white satin footstool put close to her feet.
But mum always says that no castle can be
Like the one I'm now building for mummy and me.

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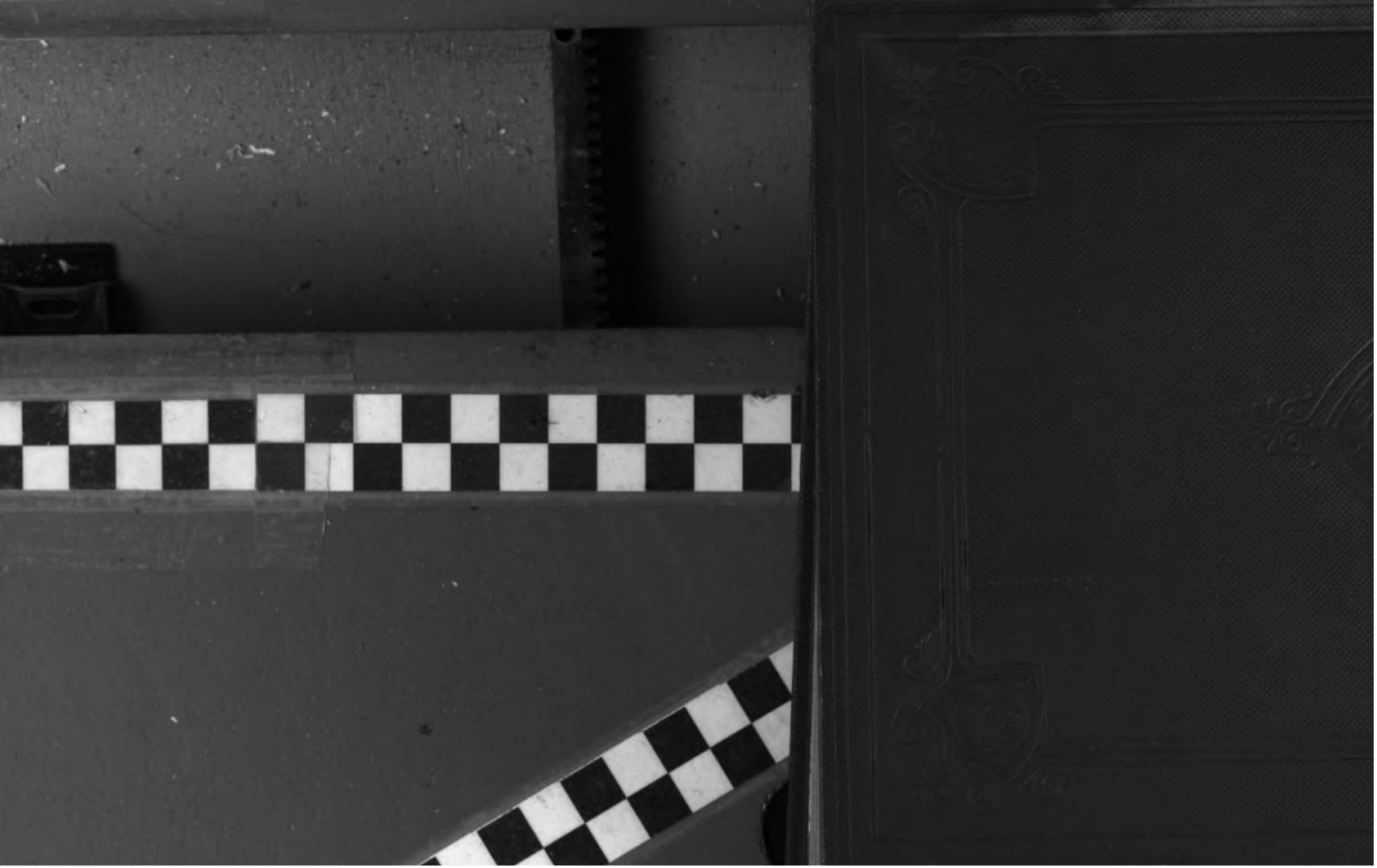
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